



Report

2016-17

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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. Four case studies in schools from across Scotland will be detailed and the learning from these examined. Challenges to the programme will be explored and recommendations will be made .



Mentors from Braes High School and Paisley grammar School

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 addresses 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.

Mentors in Violence Prevention was introduced to Scotland in 2012 and has its' origins in America (Katz, 1999¹). 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 19 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 2015-16² there were 58,104 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland (a small decrease of 3.0% from 2014-15); this figure is probably only the tip of an iceberg as many affected do not report the abuse to the police. The potential reach of the problem was indicated by a study³ in a Scottish school that found that 32% of pupils disclosed anonymously that they were currently experiencing or living with domestic abuse.

A recent study⁴ 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

¹ Katz, J. (1995) 'Reconstructing masculinity in the locker room: The Mentors in Violence Prevention Project' Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 65, No. 2, Summer.

² <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/violence-women/Key-Facts>

³ Alexander, H, Macdonald, E and Paton, S (2005) 'Raising the Issue of Domestic Abuse in School', Children and Society, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp187-198

⁴ Scottish Government (2014) Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2014: Attitudes to violence against women in Scotland

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. One Scottish study⁵ 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.

Many young people are exposed to sexual pressures through practices such as sexting⁶ and pornography. A UK survey of secondary pupils⁷ found that while over half of 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 topics and consider what constitutes healthy, respectful relationships.

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.

Evidence of Impact

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

⁵ M and Cartmel, F (2005) Young People's Attitudes Towards Gendered Violence, Edinburgh: NHS Scotland

⁶ NSPCC (2012) Qualitative study of children, young people and 'sexting'

⁷ 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.

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.

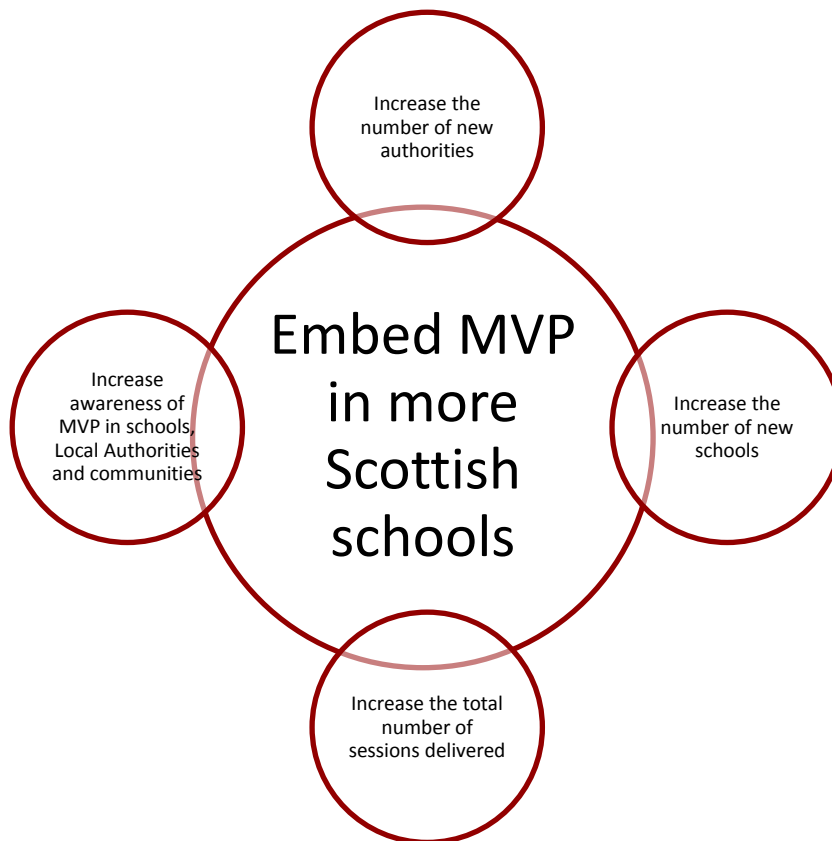
Both pupils and staff refer to an improved ethos within school and a reduction of barriers between older and younger pupils. Mentors and staff identify a positive impact on mentors' confidence and the enhancement of a range of skills such as leadership, team-work and presentation skills.

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.

What was the Plan 2016-17?

The main aims of the plan for MVP in Scotland 2016-17 were to embed the MVP programme in more Scottish local authorities and schools and to build sustainability.

Aim 1: To Embed MVP in more Scottish Schools



1. Has there been an increase in the 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 diagram below.

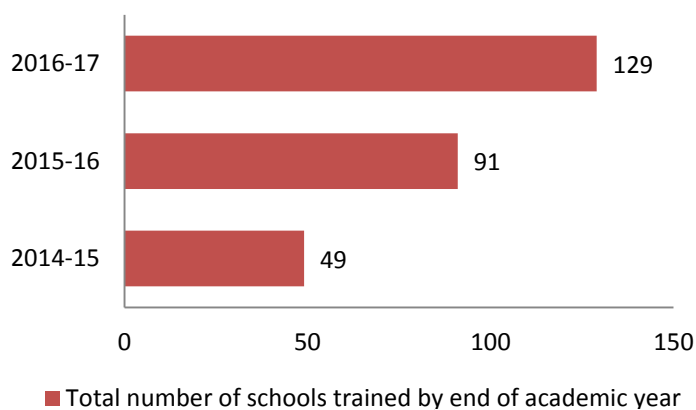


Figure 1

This data confirms that the number of school with trained staff has increased. However, it is also important to ascertain whether there is an increase in the number of schools delivering MVP as not all schools with trained staff will necessarily be delivering the programme.

2. How many schools with staff trained in MVP are actively delivering the programme?

- 2014-16 This number was not recorded during this period
- 2016-17 Seventy-nine out of the 91 trained schools were actively delivering (87%).
- 2017-18 Based on the number of newly trained schools that plan to deliver in 2017-18, added to the existing number of delivering schools, it is projected that 106/129 (82%) schools will deliver in 2017-18. This does not include schools which may restart the programme after a break in delivery.

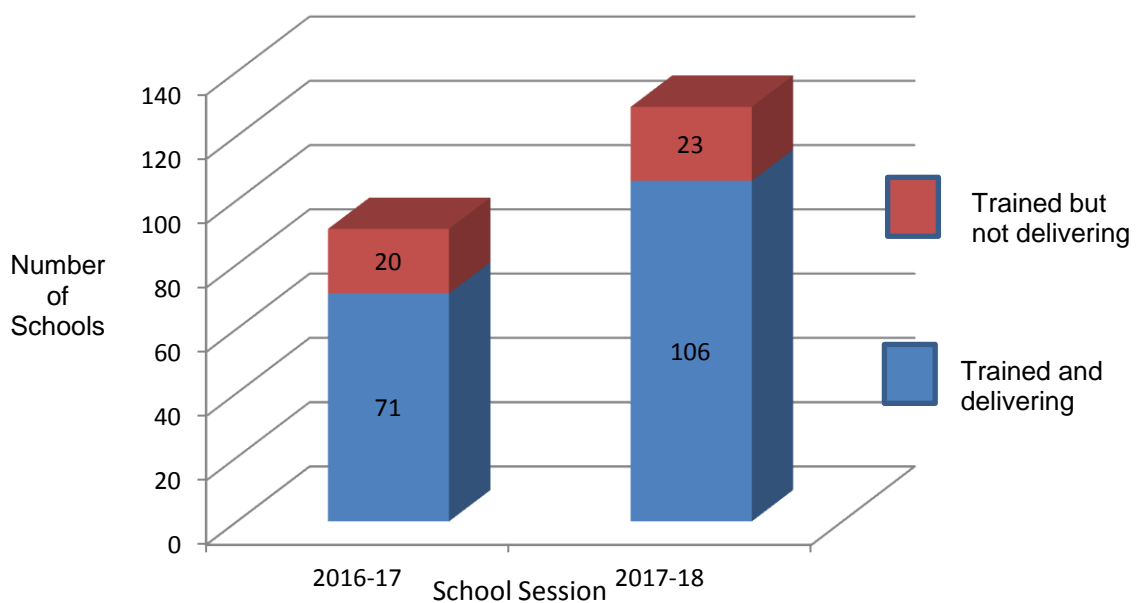


Figure 2 Number of schools actively delivering MVP

3. Do we know why not all schools with trained school staff deliver the programme?

Feedback from area co-ordinators suggests there has been a variety of reasons why not all schools with trained staff are delivering MVP. Some schools never start delivery (this number is small). This suggests the dialogue around readiness was either not robust enough or key circumstances changed significantly between staff training and the delivery of the school plan. Other schools stop delivering after a period of delivery. This can be due to: staff moving on, the original number of staff involved being too small, staff no longer having

availability on their timetable (perhaps showing a lack of commitment from senior leadership). Eighteen of the 23 schools which are not delivering, following training, are in Edinburgh and North Lanarkshire, two of the earliest authorities to come on board. This pattern has not been repeated in the other early authorities such as Inverclyde and East Ayrshire. Both these authorities are considerably larger than the other early authorities; it is potentially more difficult to ensure priority is given to a programme in a larger authority. While this is one potential factor the reasons for the variations across authorities are unclear.

4. Has there been an increase in the number of local authorities delivering MVP?

The figure below illustrates the increase in the number of local authorities engaged in the programme year on year.

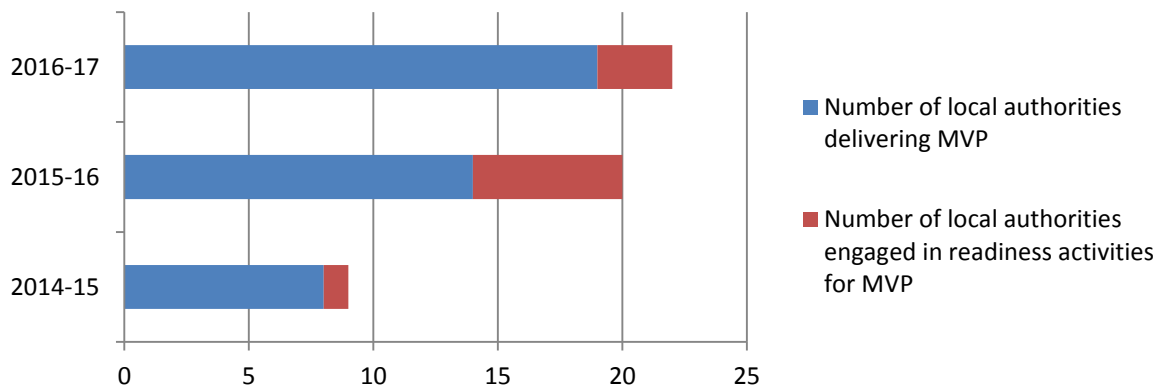


Figure 3 Number of local authorities delivering MVP

5. What Percentage of Schools within each Local Authority are delivering MVP?

The number of schools delivering in each authority is shown overleaf as a percentage of the total number of school in the authority. This diagram gives an indication of the number of schools which still need to be trained in MVP if full coverage is to be reached within the Local Authorities that are engaged in the programme.

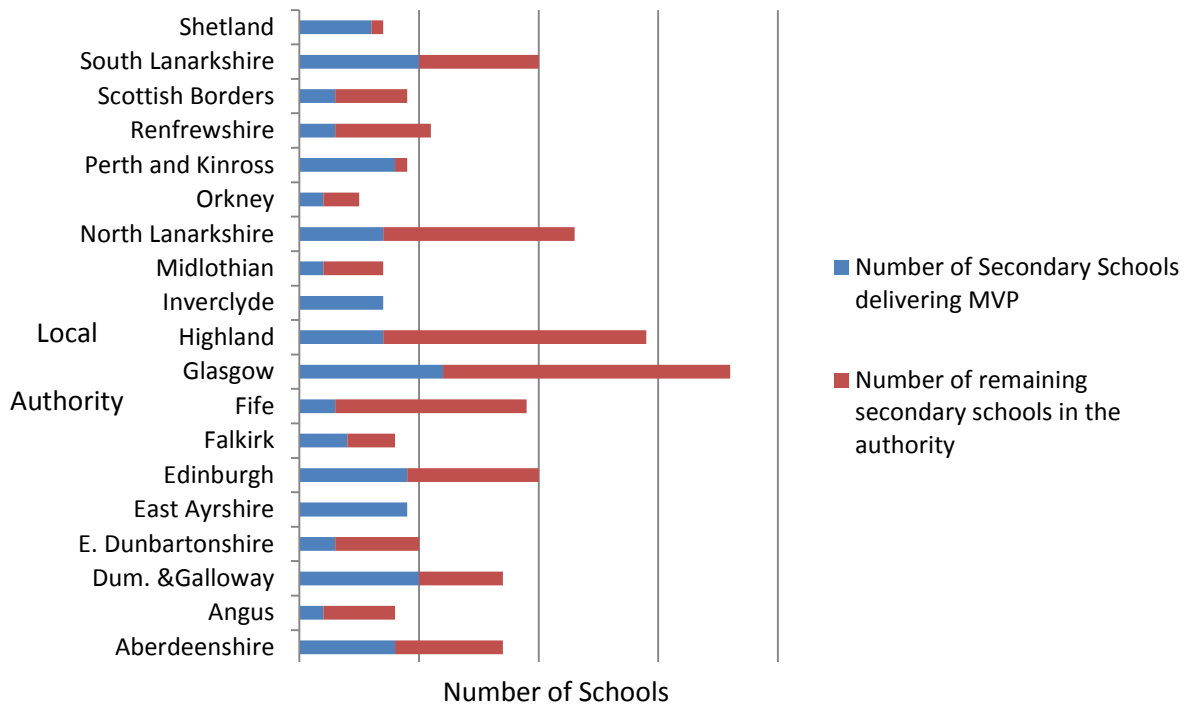
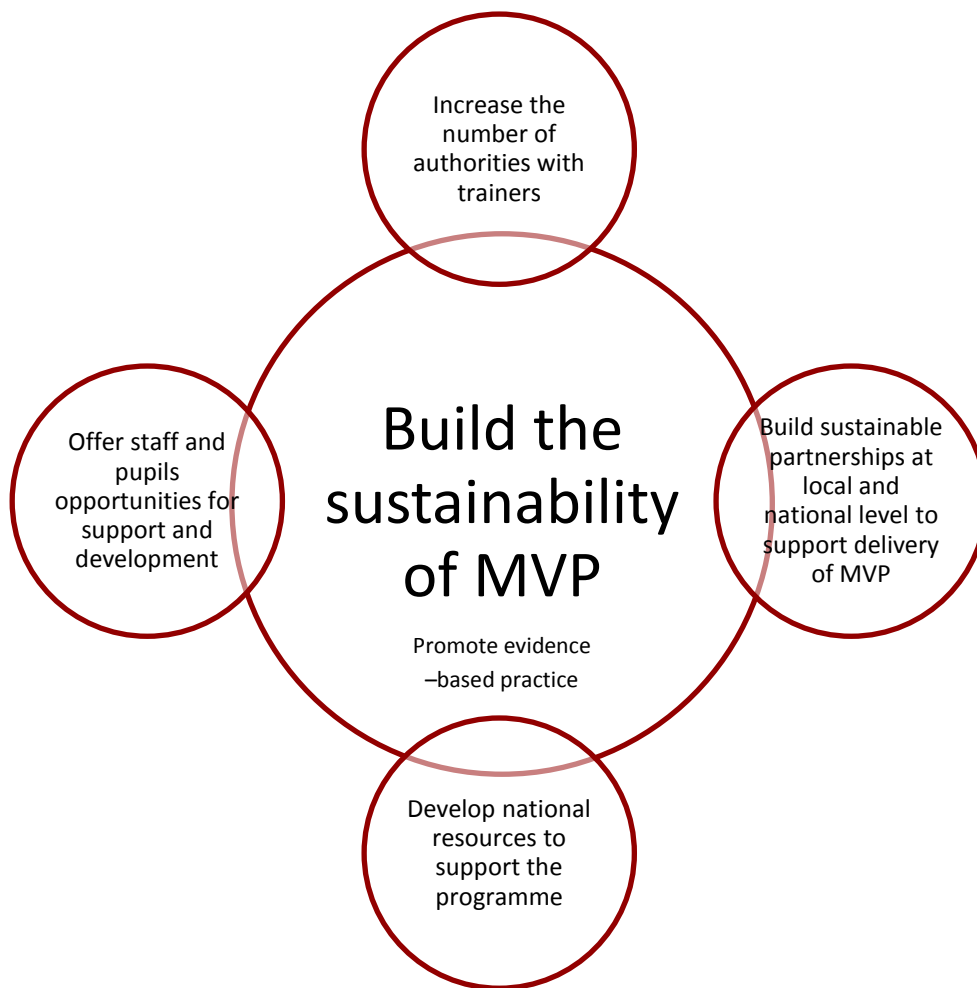


Figure 4 Percentage of schools within each authority

6. How many mentors have been trained in 2016-17?

In 2015-16 it was estimated that 1391 mentors were trained. In 2016-17 it is estimated that 1580 mentors were trained. This estimate is based on multiplying the number of schools delivering training by 20. 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.

Aim 2: To Build the Sustainability of MVP



1. What progress has been made towards sustainability?

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 overleaf in Table 1.

Traffic Light Key

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

Table 1

Table 2 on the next page shows the progress of each Local Authority towards sustainability.

Local Authority Progress towards Sustainability

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

Table 2

N/E=no longer engaged

E=Engaged

The table 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'.

2. Has there been an increase in the number of local authorities with trainers?

A Train the Trainer 2 day event was held in February 2017. This allowed existing authorities with trainers to increase the number of trainers and enabled trainers to be trained for the first time in four authorities. Turnover for trainers became apparent, however, when the trainers for South Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire all moved to new posts within months of their training. A further Train the Trainer event was therefore scheduled for October 2017.

3. What national resources have been developed to support the programme?

a. Development of scenarios

In 2016 a number of newly written scenarios were made available to staff and mentors. The newly written scenarios have been positively received.

Scenarios are delivered after two introductory sessions which look at violence, the bystander and gender. As part of the staff questionnaire, staff were asked which scenarios had been delivered in their setting. Sixteen staff answered this question. The pie chart below gives a depiction of the responses. In this very small sample the scenarios used in the schools address both gender-based violence and bullying. It would be helpful to have wider information on the use of scenarios.

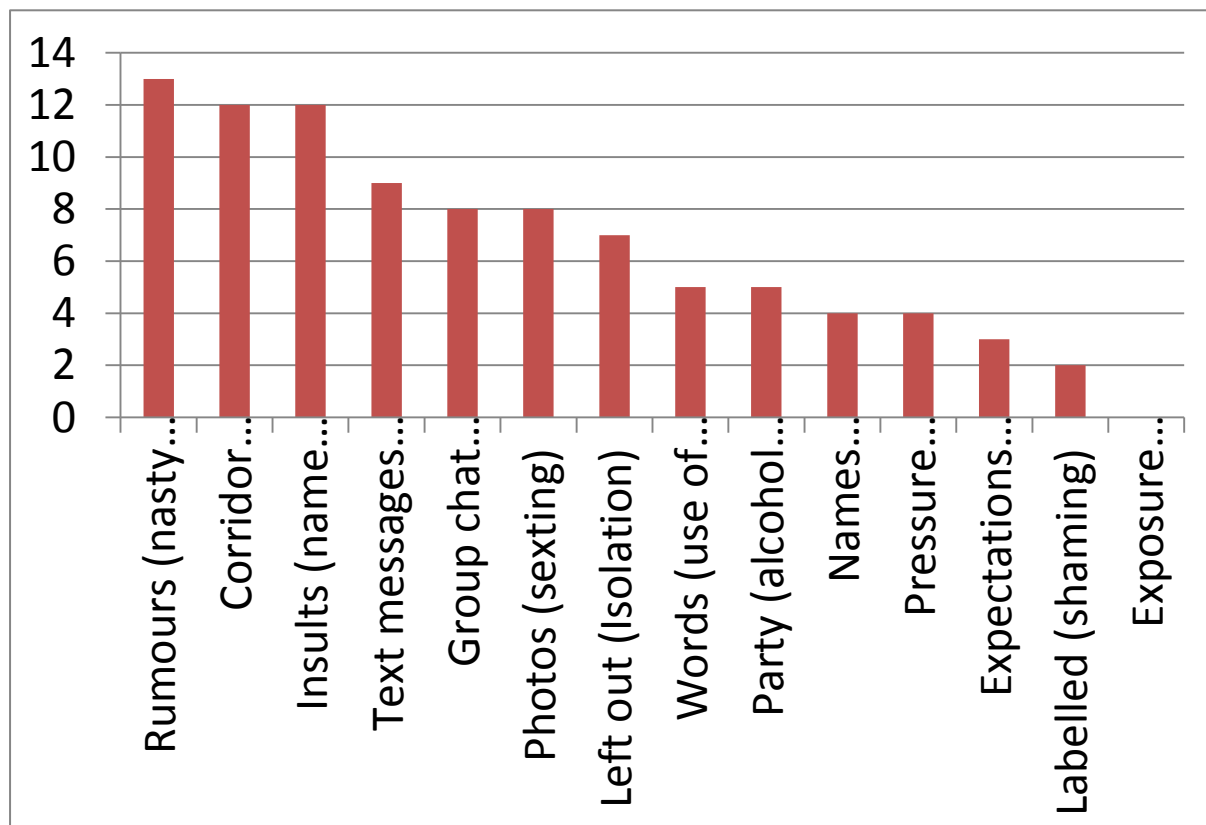


Figure 5 Use of Scenarios

b. Session plans

Staff have noted that these support the initial training of mentors and help keep mentors focused on the key issues when they are delivering scenarios. Trainers have also reported that during staff training the session plans have improved the quality of staff delivery of the scenarios.

In the staff questionnaire, staff were asked how helpful the session plans had been. Ninety-five per cent of respondents found the session plans very helpful or helpful. A respondent to the post-training staff attitude questionnaire stated that the session plans had been the most useful part of the training,

The lesson plans - very full and affirming important questions - great to have the numerous options to choose from (Practitioner, Aberdeenshire)

c. Animations

Animations to accompany each scenario have been created. These can be used by mentors as another medium to engage with mentees. There are also two new animations which introduce MVP and underline the core principles that underpin the programme. These have been made available on the National Improvement Hub to introduce staff to MVP.

4. What opportunities have been offered to staff and pupils for support and development?

a. Pupil Opportunities for Development



A national mentor event was held in December 2016. Over 400 mentors attended from across the country. The key refrain in the feedback was that the event had been 'inspiring'.

"This event and the speakers have given me pride in my work & inspired me to continue helping people after school"

"Extremely inspirational & thought provoking speeches. Feeling motivated"

Some mentors gave feedback that they would have preferred more opportunities for interaction with peers e.g. workshops.

b. Staff Opportunities for Development

Initial staff training sessions were held across the country. 'Refreshers' were held by local staff and by national staff. A session specifically for trainers organised by the national team was well received. This session focused on gender-based violence and on pornography.

c. Impact of staff training

Information was gathered from participants who received training in MVP on either a one or two day training. The data gathered consisted of 130 pre-course questionnaires and 141 post-course questionnaires which were given out at the beginning and at the end of the training. The sample covered 7 authorities and involved training days delivered by a number of different trainers.

Nearly all participants found the training worthwhile and would recommend the training to others. Of 137 respondents, 75% strongly agreed that the training was worthwhile, 21% agreed that the training was worthwhile while only 4 respondents (3%) disagreed or disagreed strongly. When asked if they would recommend the training, 76% respondents strongly agreed, 21% agreed, 1% were unsure and 1% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

Participants were asked to write their personal training goals at the start of the training. After the training they were then asked whether they had achieved these goals. 127 respondents out of 129 felt that the goals they had set themselves had been reached.

Most participants felt that their awareness of gender-based violence had increased (95% agreed or strongly agreed) while 2% did not. This is likely to reflect that some of the staff trained are already experts in gender-based violence and are on the course to become familiar with MVP. Nearly all participants felt that the training had been a safe space in which to explore this topic.

When participants were asked to comment on what they had liked best about the training, themes were similar to those identified last year and included the opportunity for discussion with peers, facilitation, new knowledge and an opportunity for personal reflection. Here are a sample of responses when participants were asked what had been valuable:

*Relaxed and friendly atmosphere - good structure, focus and lots of active involvement .
Excellent peer discussion (Fife)*

Challenging values and attitudes. The trainers' facilitation. (Fife)

It was empowering and interactive (Perth and Kinross)

The range of learning contexts - changing me as a person (South Lanarkshire)

Sharing experiences, listening, planning for implementation (South Lanarkshire)

Following training 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. See Figure 6 below:

Q12 I have the necessary skills to educate others about sexual harassment, dating violence and sexual assault in my work

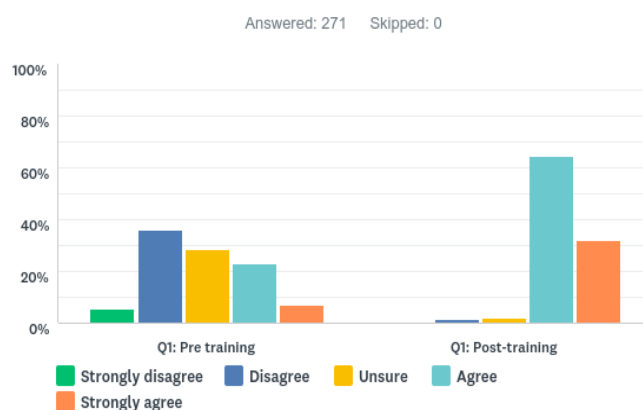


Figure 6 Participant Ratings of skills in relation to educating others about sexual harassment

The introduction of the bystander approach not only led to a strong increase in the proportion of participants who felt that bystanders could make a difference but also led to a rise in the number of participants who thought that they would intervene on witnessing gender based violence.

Impact on attitudes to victims and to consent was more mixed. There are 3 statements related to victim blaming. Following training there is a positive increase in those who 'strongly disagree' rather than 'disagree' with victim blaming statements. The number who are 'unsure' about the statements drops. There is a very small rise in the numbers agreeing with victim blaming. The direction of change for individuals cannot be charted as the pre and post questionnaires are filled in anonymously. It is likely, however, that a very small number of people express stronger victim blaming sentiments following the training. It seems that the opportunity to explore values and attitudes in this area has mainly a positive influence but this is not universally the case. It is concerning that any staff working with young people on areas such as sexual violence hold victim blaming views.

When participants were asked to discuss possible changes to training there were some suggestions including the future provision of background information before the course, making sure the right staff attend and giving more time to planning.

The staff questionnaire 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 were as follows:

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

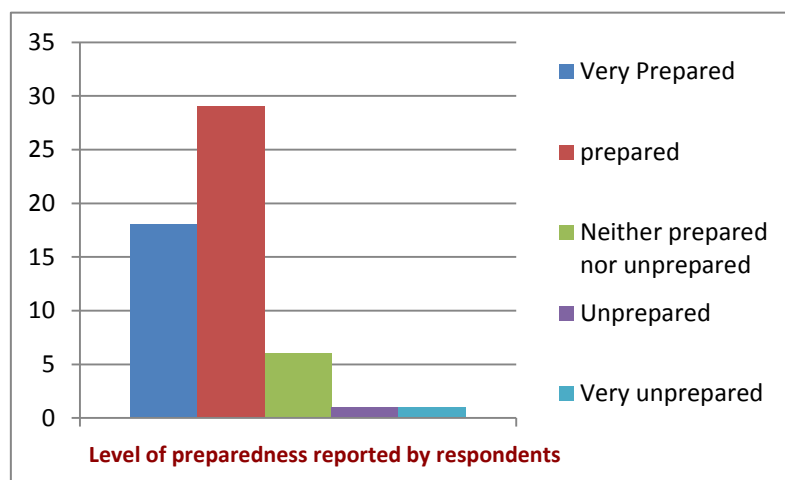


Figure 7 Extent to which participants felt prepared by the training to implement the programme

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

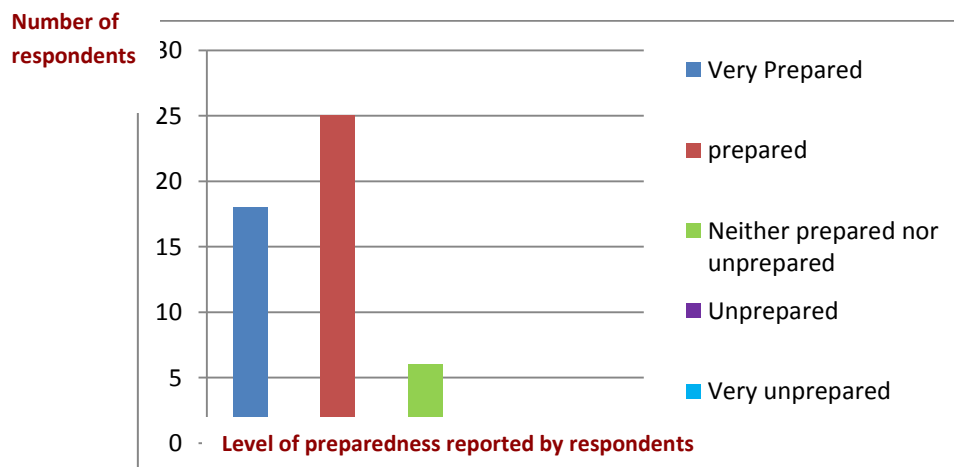


Figure 8 Extent to which participants felt prepared by the training to train mentors

One participants out of 56 skipped this question. The percentage of respondents who chose 4 or 5 on the scale (where 0= very unprepared and 5= very prepared) was 85% in terms of implementing the programme (compared to 75% in 2016) and 83% in terms of training mentors (compared to 76% in 2016).

Conclusion

The above evidence that has been gathered indicates that MVP is now more embedded in local authorities in 2016-17 than it was in 2015-16. In addition the sustainability of MVP has been increased.

Case studies

Purpose and Method

The purpose of the case studies was to contribute to the evaluation of MVP and learn lessons from the various models of implementation used. The information for the case studies were drawn together by the link MVP national development officers for the local authority in conjunction with the school staff. The information was gathered through attendance at various events in the year, discussions with staff and pupil focus groups, with both mentors and mentees, in May/June 2017.

The national team development officers ran the pupil focus groups. These were recorded and partially transcribed. The information for each school was written up by the development officers and checked for accuracy with school staff.

The full case studies are available in Appendix 1-4 and will be made available to local authorities as a learning resource.

The Case Study Schools

The four schools involved in the case study were chosen to represent a range of rural/urban settings, SIMD catchment areas and size of school.

School	Local Authority	Number of pupils	SIMD range of most pupils	Year of MVP school	Urban/rural in
Holyrood HS	Glasgow	2027	1 and 2	2	Urban
Paisley GS	Renfrewshire	804	1,2,9,10	1	Urban
Braes HS	Falkirk	1001	2,6,8	3	Mix
Dumfries HS	Dumfries & Galloway	750	1-10	1	Rural

Table 3 Information on the case study schools

Recruitment

All schools recruited mentors through awareness raising assemblies and personal encouragement of potential mentors.

Training and Support of Mentors

Training of mentors was delivered in a variety of ways: locations varied from school to external venues. For one school the external location and casual clothes were felt to have helped a new relationship to be forged between staff and pupils. Some schools joined with other local schools for 'Kickstart days' allowing staff and pupils to network with a wider group.

In some schools a group of staff were identified as support for the mentors while in others a key member of staff was identified. The latter appeared to be a preferred option of mentors. Support varied from lunchtime drop to timetabled classes.

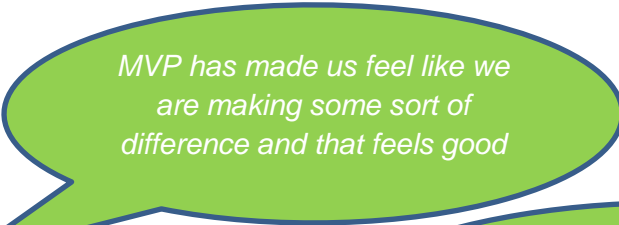
Mentors valued the opportunity to have time to prepare sessions and explore the challenges of delivering the session. Teacher presence during class delivery of sessions had the positive of supporting behaviour but had the potential negative of reducing the lead role of the mentors in delivering the session. Where teachers were not present during class delivery of sessions the need for small class groups was emphasised.

Timetabling

Schools delivered to S1-3 classes during PSE and RME. Some mentors were timetabled for support.

Staff Views of the Impact of MVP

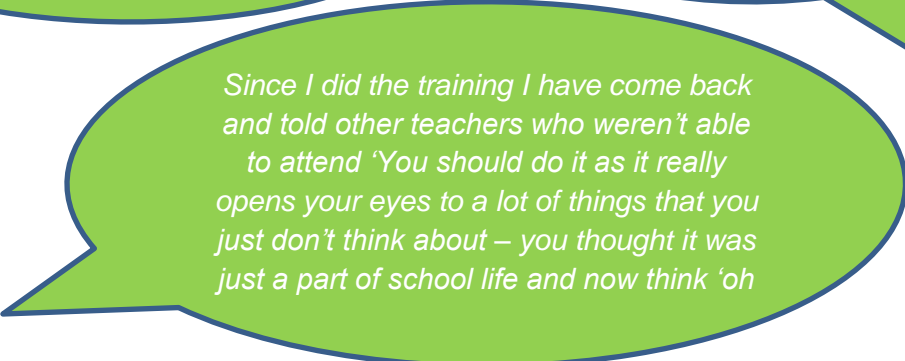
Staff commented on the lasting relationships built with mentors. They felt mentors had an increased sense of purpose as they felt they were making a difference in the school. The programme was felt to improve the ethos of the school and provoke deeper thinking in pupils. It also equipped staff to develop other equality work in the school e.g. to develop support for LGBT learners.



MVP has made us feel like we are making some sort of difference and that feels good



It supports equality and diversity beyond the gender based approach to violence

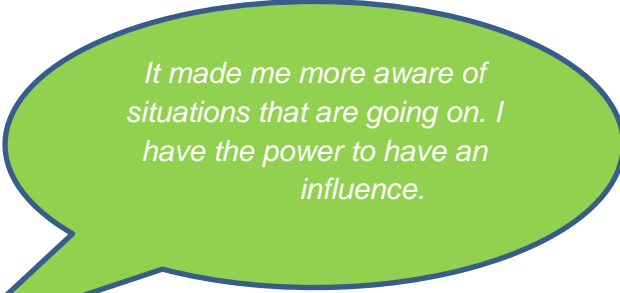


Since I did the training I have come back and told other teachers who weren't able to attend 'You should do it as it really opens your eyes to a lot of things that you just don't think about – you thought it was just a part of school life and now think 'oh


Mentors' Views of the Impact of MVP

Mentors felt part of a team and felt they could have an influence on the options chosen by younger pupils. The programme was felt to develop a 'special connection' with the younger pupils and increase the likelihood that they would confide in the older pupils. Mentors felt that they had an increased awareness of the situations of others and of gender-based violence.

MVP was viewed as a 'lifeskill'. Many commented on their increased confidence following involvement in MVP and the development of their leadership skills was noted. They could recount examples of both their own intervention in problem situations and that of mentees.



It made me more aware of situations that are going on. I have the power to have an influence.



It was good to talk about gender as some of the young people just didn't know what they were saying was harmful

I got a job recently working with children, I used MVP as a big focus on my interview

It's widened my view of things and what can happen, and let me think about what I might do in certain situations

Being a mentor has given me the confidence to challenge attitudes and behaviour and has made it more likely for me to spot what is going on

Being a mentor has given me the confidence to be myself

Mentees' Views of the Impact of MVP

This varied from school to school and is likely to have been related to the level of input received. In a school where the introductory sessions were not delivered the younger pupils were vague about what they had learned although they enjoyed the methodology and activities. Where the pupils had received sessions preceded by the introductory sessions which explored gender and violence they were clearer about the key messages received.

Pupils valued the opportunity to talk to older pupils and felt they could be more honest with mentors than with teachers. Mentees felt that mentors had gone through similar experiences to them. They appreciated MVP sessions as a time when they were listened to and could share their opinions. They knew they could go to mentors if they had witnessed behaviour that made them uncomfortable. For some gender was a topic they hadn't really considered before.

It helped us think about what we might do to support or challenge people in difficulty

If someone calls someone a name as a joke, now we can remind them that the other person might not be finding it very funny.

The stereotypes activity was really good, it makes you realise we take certain things for granted

I am more confident now about stopping rumours

The MVP's are just like us, they get it across easier and they understand us

It made me think about the consequences of actions and how they can affect other people. It has changed my behaviour 'cause I think more now, before I say something

I think it's had an impact when people hang out together out of school – name calling and stuff is getting less

I know I could go to an MVP Mentor if I needed to

Key Messages from across the Case study Schools

- ✓ Regular meetings of the mentor support staff are facilitated by the senior leadership team
- ✓ Mentors need sufficient training so that they feel prepared: there needs to be sufficient time to explore facilitation skills and delivery challenges.
- ✓ Ensure introductory sessions are not missed out to ensure that the key messages of the programme are delivered.
- ✓ Consider splitting classes into two groups if teachers are not present
- ✓ Link the programme to wider curricular topics and equality work.

Challenges to the Programme

- Potential gaps in staffing as funding nears end in March 2018 will compromise the support that can be offered to existing local authorities.
- Future levels of funding will impact on whether new authorities can be brought on board
- The pre/post attitude survey for young people was not being consistently used. Despite many schools filling in pre or post intervention surveys, hardly any schools completed both pre and post surveys. It was therefore agreed not to continue using this survey. This has highlighted the need to improve the collection of data in relation to the programme.
- MVP sits within a busy landscape. There is a continual need to demonstrate the part MVP can play in meeting current priorities.
- The reorganisation of Education Scotland in response to the Governance review will need to be reflected in future planning for MVP.

What Next 2017-18

- Devise a new evaluative tool to commence usage in Session 2018-19
- Develop a scenario which includes the exploration of knife-carrying
- Continue consolidation and expansion of the programme

Appendix 1

Holyrood
Secondary School



MVP PROFILE: Holyrood Secondary

1

WHO TOOK PART?

- 46 S5 and 6 pupils delivered MVP Sessions to S1 pupils (39 Female, 7 Male)

2

MENTOR SUPPORT TEAM

- 15 Staff trained (8 Female, 7 Male)
- 9 Teaching staff and 6 external (CLD, School Chaplain, Sports Coach, Campus Officer and Youth Work Agency Staff.)

3

SESSIONS DELIVERED

- Rumours and Group Chat

4

MENTOR RECRUITMENT

- An awareness raising assembly for all senior pupils
- Mentor Support Team also identified potential mentors and encouraged participation

5

MENTOR TRAINING

- One Day Training took place off-campus in May 2016
- One Day refresher took place in late 2016

6

MENTOR SUPPORT

- Support provided by the staff when required. Mentors made aware of this at training
- A number of the Staff supported smaller groups of mentors. This ratio was 1:20

7

WHEN WAS MVP DELIVERED?

- Sessions were delivered when S1's were timetabled for PSE.
- Multiple classes received workshops in the school hall
- Mentors worked in groups of 4 to deliver content to smaller groups
- Ratio of mentors to younger pupils was 1:5

8

ACCREDITATION

- Holyrood is currently exploring opportunities to accredit work of Mentors

9

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Mentors have represented MVP at a variety of national events
- MVP messages were reinforced when participating in White Ribbon Campaigns, Holocaust Education work and other work on wider equality.
- Many Mentors used their MVP training whilst supporting the schools Paired-Reading Programme'

10

IMPACT

- "MVP is fantastic at helping us create a more positive culture in our school." (Teacher)
- "Once you have done MVP you feel part of a team." (MVP Mentor)
- "It made me realise how harmful rumours can be." (S1 Pupil)

School Information

Holyrood Secondary is a Catholic School based in the south of Glasgow. MVP was introduced in May 2015, with Holyrood being one of the initial 6 schools in the authority to be trained in the programme. The school has a population of 2,027 pupils, which makes it the largest in Scotland. Those who attend Holyrood are from predominantly SIMD 1 and 2 backgrounds. The following case study captures some of the key learning experienced by staff, mentors and younger pupils as they participated in the 2nd year of MVP in the school.

Planning of MVP

- Planning the 2nd year of MVP took place in March and April 2016. The Mentor Support Team met during allotted staff meeting time to complete it.
- Leadership within the school ensured staff were allowed to attend the planning meetings.
- Staff awareness had already taken place the year before to introduce MVP. The Head of Year for both S1 and S5 were given an update of the programme to maintain their understanding before starting any work with these year groups.
- Recruitment of mentors was 2 fold: There was an awareness raising assembly for all pupils who would be entering S5 and the Mentor Support Staff also identified potential mentors and promoted the programme as an opportunity to gain leadership experience.
- There was a difficulty in achieving a 50/50 gender split as there were very few males who were initially interested.
- Out of the 100+ pupils who expressed an interest in being trained, 46 were trained (7 male and 39 female). Many of those that had expressed an interest but did not do the training could not attend the dates that were arranged or had a lack of enthusiasm at a later date. Initial training took place in May 2016 during exam leave. This could have contributed to the drop-off in pupil participation.

Staff Feedback

Staff were unavailable to participate in a focus group in May/June 2017 due to increased work commitments. However, they had met with the MVP National Development Officer who

was linked with their authority. Written below are the comments and observations that were collected throughout the year.

Support to Mentors

Staff who delivered the initial training to the mentors were extremely enthusiastic. This training was completed off-campus; this allowed them to develop relationships with the pupils that might not have been possible whilst in the school. Pupils and Staff wore casual clothes and this instantly changed the dynamic of the training.

Training was divided between staff who had been trained the previous year and those who were recently trained in MVP. The mix between those experienced in the material and those who had received the updated content from the MVP National team was extremely well received. It allowed the staff to share best practice. As there were a large number of staff trained, it was not possible for them all to be available for the training day. Some staff attended when they had space in their timetable to do so and the school lead (DHT) was in attendance at the start and end of the day.

After the training, support was provided by staff to the mentors when required. It was felt that there was no possibility for this to be timetabled every week/fortnight. At the training, mentors were encouraged to contact their 'link teacher' when they needed support with the preparation of MVP. Four staff in the team volunteered to be this contact for the mentors.

The Mentor Support Team also had many examples of where they had been able to link the content of MVP sessions with their wider remits within their jobs. Examples of this include a History Teacher using the activities which focus on abuse in conjunction with Holocaust Education curriculum material and the Campus Police Officer linking MVP with the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers (PSYV) programme.

Support to staff

Staff met a total of 4 times throughout the year to share planning and progress of MVP in Holyrood. The school Lead (DHT) arranged these meetings. Due to personal circumstances, the lead took a leave of absence in Autumn 2016. This resulted in no meetings being arranged and progress of the project slowing down. Staff did keep in communication via email and also shared practice with staff from across Glasgow at Local Authority Meetings.

Mentor Feedback

Six mentors from Holyrood Secondary participated in a focus group in June 2016. Each of them said that they enjoyed being part of the MVP Programme. When asked about what they learned; the following responses were given:

“It made me more aware of situations that are going on. I have the power to have an influence.”

“It’s helped me notice the signs when someone could be down.”

“MVP gives you options, it’s nice to know there’s more than 1 option .”

When asked what they have done differently since being a mentor, many of the participants shared examples of when they have intervened when they have seen something which is causing someone harm. An example given was when a mentor explained that she stopped a confrontation in the Girl’s toilet. A younger pupil said to another that she shouldn’t be in there as they are ‘a guy’. The mentor went on to explain how she spoke to the two of them about the harm of name calling; whilst also asking the girl to apologise to the other. The mentor also made sure the girl that was called names was okay and assured her that she wasn’t happy with the incident.

Many of the mentors acknowledged that a lot of the Gender Based Violence which occurs in their school and in the wider community occurs due to a lack of awareness of the harm which could be caused. One participant commented that they enjoyed having a positive role in changing attitudes.

“It was good to talk about gender as some of the young people just didn’t know what they were saying was harmful”

Another Mentor shared that *‘It’s good to see the younger pupils come up to us after the sessions when they have a problem.’* They said that they had been approached by S1 pupils on more than one occasion after delivering MVP to them.

The length of time between the initial MVP training and delivering sessions to S1 pupils was highlighted as a concern by the Mentors. Some of them felt *“unprepared”* and *“had forgotten”* key information in the months when they had little direct contact with the support team. The group explained that they would have preferred to have had one teacher who they met with regularly; instead of multiple staff members available when they approached for help.

As MVP had been delivered in Holyrood in the 2015-16 academic year, pupils were able to share their pride at being involved in the programme. Many of them explained that:

“Once you have done the MVP Training, you feel part of a team”

Mentee Feedback

Six S1 Pupils took part in a focus group in June 2017 to share their experiences of MVP. The participants initially found it difficult to recall any of the content or specific activities of the workshop. One of them said that: *‘We done something on that ages ago.’*

However when prompted, some of the group shared that they enjoyed the games and talks that the Mentors gave them. They explained that it was nice to talk with the older pupils; as this was something they didn’t often do.

The group shared that they felt they did not have much knowledge of MVP as they had only taken part in *‘one or two’* sessions. When asked to explain how this was delivered, they shared that the workshops had been delivered small groups in the school hall. They felt that this was a positive experience as it was *‘different’* and *‘fun’* to be involved in.

One participant shared that their favourite part of being involved in MVP was designing a badge in Art. They explained that it was nice to create something for the school. This example shows the potential for schools to expand the MVP programme more widely than than the delivery of scenarios.

Whilst the pupils could not explain in great detail the messages that stayed with them from the MVP sessions, they were all in agreement that they would like to do more work with the senior pupils and have the opportunity to participate in future workshops

“It would be good to learn more about this”

Key Learning from Holyrood Case Study

- ✓ Schools need to deliver a minimum of 4 sessions (x2 Introductory Sessions plus x2 Scenarios). Without this, pupils do not retain the key learning points from MVP.
- ✓ Ensure that the Mentor Support staff maintain communication throughout the year and meet at least once per term.
- ✓ Focus on the quality of training for mentors, not quantity of mentors trained. Large schools should start small to allow the programme to be manageable.
- ✓ Link the MVP sessions with additional programmes that schools have introduced around equality and diversity.
- ✓ Mentors preferred a key member of staff as a link rather than the whole staff team
- ✓ Mentors recommended that there is not too long a gap between training and delivery of sessions

Appendix 2

Paisley Grammar
School



MVP PROFILE:

Paisley Grammar

- 1** **WHO TOOK PART?**
 - 39 S5 and 6 pupils delivered MVP Sessions to S1 pupils (31 Female, 8 Male)
- 2** **MENTOR SUPPORT TEAM**
 - 9 Staff trained (5 Female, 4 Male)
 - 6 teaching and 3 external staff (CLD, HomeLink, and Parent)
- 3** **SESSIONS DELIVERED**
 - Left Out, Photos, Group Chat and Party
- 4** **MENTOR RECRUITMENT**
 - An awareness raising assembly for all senior pupils
 - Principal Teachers with a Pupils Support remit also identified potential mentors and encouraged participation
- 5** **MENTOR TRAINING**
 - Took place in the school over 2 consecutive days in August 2016
- 6** **MENTOR SUPPORT**
 - Support provided by the staff once a week/fortnightly to the pupils
 - Pupils were timetabled to approach the staff member they were linked with to 'check-in'
 - Each of the Staff supported a small group of mentors. This ratio was 1:6 or 7
- 7** **WHEN WAS MVP DELIVERED?**
 - Sessions were delivered in either PSE or RME class time
- 8** **ACCREDITATION**
 - School is currently exploring opportunities to accredit work of Mentors
- 9** **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**
 - Mentors delivered awareness raising assemblies to every year group
 - Delivered one scenario (Insults) to P7 classes in their learning community
- 10** **IMPACT**
 - "It has opened my teaching practice to a whole load of other issues that you would never think about" (Teacher)
 - "I got a job recently working with children, My experiences with MVP was a big focus in my interview" (MVP Mentor)
 - "If I see someone bullying, I would go to an MVP mentor" (S1 Pupil)

School Information

Paisley Grammar is a non-denominational school based in Renfrewshire. MVP was introduced in May 2016, with Paisley Grammar being one of the first 3 schools in the authority to be trained in the programme. It has a population of 804 pupils from socio-economic backgrounds predominantly within SIMD 1,2,9 and 10. The following case study captures some of the key learning experienced by staff, mentors and younger pupils as they completed their first full year of MVP.

Planning of MVP

- The school lead and original staff (6 in total) were involved in the planning of MVP after their initial training.
- Leadership within the school ensured staff had adequate time to complete planning.
- Staff awareness input took place straight after the initial MST Training- this kept up the momentum and enthusiasm of trained staff.
- Parent council was made aware of the programme at this point.
- The recruitment of mentors was 2 fold- there was an awareness raising assembly for all senior pupils and PT's with a Pupils Support remit also identified and encouraged potential mentors. There was a difficulty in achieving a 50/50 gender split as there were very few males who were initially interested.
- Out of the 60 pupils who expressed an interest in being trained, 39 were trained (8 Male and 31 female). Many of those that had expressed an interest but did not do the training because of other commitments or a lack of enthusiasm at a later date.

Staff Feedback

Feedback from staff about the MVP programme was extremely positive. Those that took part in a focus group in June 2017 explained that:

“MVP has made us feel like we are making some sort of difference and that feels good.”

The consensus of the group was that although it is in its early stages, MVP in Paisley Grammar is allowing staff to build lasting relationships with the mentors that they worked with over the year. One teacher commented that MVP *“made me more aware about what*

young people are dealing with” and another added “I never realised the mind-set of the pupils; I used to think they would all think about issues the same as me.” This illustrates the positive impact MVP has had on those who are involved in the Mentor Support Team.

Positive feedback was also given by the staff towards the ‘Session Plans’ which were piloted in 2016-17 by the MVP National Team. They felt that having these made the initial training much *“easier for them to deliver”* and also helped the mentors *“focus their sessions on the issues that we need to cover.”*

While MVP was timetabled there could be challenges when delivery periods for mentors clashed with assessments in the senior classes.

The timing of planning was also reflected upon,

“If we could have everything planned to start earlier, I think we could get more done.”

The staff had already ensured that earlier planning would commence before starting MVP in Year 17-18 as they have identified this as “key to the success” of the programme.

Mentors also valued the support the staff had given over the year. One said that *“knowing that they were there to talk to...was a great help.”* The continuous support from staff when Mentors are preparing, delivering and reflecting on their sessions is an aspect of MVP that Paisley Grammar valued from the start of the programme.

Furthermore, the relationships between staff also developed; with one staff member sharing:

‘It’s been nice to see a group of staff that wouldn’t normally work together and come together for MVP’.

Mentor Feedback

Seven mentors participated in a focus group in June 2017. Each of them were very complimentary of MVP and could identify specific skills they had learned by taking part in the programme.

“It has given me leadership skills”

“It has given me a confidence boost”

“I can now speak to large groups.”

These examples highlight the impact MVP is having on the mentors who participate throughout the year. Furthermore, one pupil shared how they were able to transfer the skills gained into securing a part-time job.

“I got a job recently working with children, I used MVP as a big focus on my interview.”

The training that the mentors received from the support team in Paisley Grammar was also well received; the focus group stated that the training activities delivered to them and session plans provided were *‘really helpful’* in understanding the complex issues surrounding gender-based violence.

Some of the mentors, however, commented that they would have felt more confident in delivering MVP sessions with ‘more time to prepare.’ One mentor commented that:

“I think the S1’s knew when we hadn’t prepared enough because they could see we were nervous and were getting confused.”

This was a common theme from the focus group, as they shared that the biggest challenge was ‘controlling the class’ at times when S1 pupils were not engaged in the sessions.

As MVP was only in its first year of implementation in Paisley Grammar, the mentors also shared that they thought it was “too early” to say if the programme was having an impact in the wider school. They were able to articulate how they now understood what options they had as bystanders to intervene but felt many of the pupils in other years would not have this understanding.

Every mentor that participated in the focus group said that they would recommend MVP to other pupils. One pupil said:

“I wish I had learned about MVP sooner... it has given me so much”.

Mentee Feedback

A small number of S1 pupils participated in a focus group in June 2017. They could all remember the sessions they participated in and also the varied activities that the mentors delivered. The group were in agreement that their favourite activity was the Agree/Unsure/Disagree statements as “We got to share our opinions.”

Whilst the group felt that it was good to learn from another pupil, they shared instances of times when they felt the mentors struggled with the class. One pupil shared that they would:

“Bring the seniors in, I would also have a teacher in at the same time. It sometimes got out of hand”

This concurs with staff observations that working with the whole class was challenging for the mentors and that dividing the classes into two groups would be more effective.

The S1 pupils also recalled that the main message that stayed with them from the MVP sessions was that they could go and speak to the mentors if they saw something that made them uncomfortable. Despite this message, the vast majority of focus group participants commented that they did not feel like they could approach a mentor out with a classroom. One mentee suggested that the school should create an area where mentors could be sitting at lunch and could be spoken to there.

The MVP badge was the main way for the pupils to identify mentors in the corridor. This suggests that an enhanced presence of MVP logos in the school and mentors being visible to the wider school might also allow more pupils to approach them for support.

Key Learning from Paisley Grammar Case Study

- ✓ There needs to be an explicit conversation at all levels on Gender Based Violence. Pupils can find it difficult to make the link between MVP and GBV if it is not made clear to them.
- ✓ MVP needs to be visibly promoted for the programme to have a presence in the wider school life.
- ✓ Bring planning forward in the cycle
- ✓ Mentors need time to prepare for MVP Sessions and additional facilitation training for mentors is crucial.
- ✓ Younger pupils have a better experience in MVP sessions when the class is divided into 2 groups with 3/4 mentors supporting each group
- ✓ Mentors value the continuous support from staff
- ✓ As a next step it may be useful to explore a dedicated space where mentors can be available to younger pupils e.g. at lunchtime

Appendix 3

Braes High School



MVP PROFILE: Braes High School

1

WHO TOOK PART?

- 49 S5 and S6 pupils (33 Female, 16 Male) delivered MVP Sessions to S1 pupils

2

MENTOR SUPPORT TEAM

- 10 Staff trained (6 Female, 4 Male)
- 4 teaching and 4 external staff (CLD, Police, NHS, Family Support, Barnardos)

3

SESSIONS DELIVERED

- Rumours, Photos, Group Chat

4

MENTOR RECRUITMENT

- An awareness raising assembly for all S4, 5 and 6 pupils
- Members of the Mentor Support Team also identified potential mentors and encouraged participation

5

MENTOR TRAINING

- 2 day training on campus
- Previous Mentors delivered part of training

6

MENTOR SUPPORT

- 1 group of Mentors received 3 periods of support per week,
- 1 group of Mentors received 1 period of support per week.
- Staff were available to meet with and support Mentors when required
- Mentors were also invited to attend Steering Group meetings

7

WHEN WAS MVP DELIVERED?

- Sessions were delivered in either PSE or RME class time
- Ratio of Mentors to S1 pupils was 1:5
- Mentors delivered sessions in groups of 4

8

ACCREDITATION

- School is currently exploring the SQA Module in Leadership to accredit work of Mentors

9

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Mentors run a lunchtime drop-in for pupils to receive additional support
- The school has had many good news articles published on their work on MVP and have provided support to schools from neighbouring authorities.

10

IMPACT

- "Young people are challenged in a positive way by the training to provoke deeper thinking and debate and discussion on the issue of violence and how society contributes to this." (Teacher)
- "You have a life skill that you can take away and use for the rest of your life." (MVP Mentor)
- "I am more confident now about stopping rumours" (S1 pupil)

School Information

Braes High School is a non-denominational, fully comprehensive six year school situated in the Reddingmuirhead area, which is approximately 4 miles from Falkirk. MVP was introduced to Braes HS in 2014, with it being one of the initial 3 schools in the authority to be trained in the programme. The school has a population of 1001 pupils from socio-economic backgrounds predominantly within SIMD 2, 6 and 8. The following case study captures some of the key learning experienced by staff, mentors and younger pupils as they participated in the 3rd year of MVP in the school.

Planning of MVP

- This was Year 3 of a 3 year plan. MVP took place throughout 2016 with year groups S1-S3 receiving an input.
- Leadership within the school ensured staff had the time to attend the planning meetings.
- Staff awareness sessions to introduce the MVP programme take place regularly.
- Recruitment of mentors was through an awareness raising assembly for all pupils in S4, S5 and S6 and as a timetabled course choice. Staff also identified and encouraged potential mentors.
- 49 young people (16 male and 33 female) were trained as mentors and the training took place over 2 consecutive days in June 2016.

Staff Feedback

Staff were unavailable to participate in a focus group in May/June 2017 due to increased work commitments. However, they had met with the MVP National Development Officer who was linked with their authority. Written below are the comments and observations that were collected throughout the year.

" It is about young people making a difference to themselves and others by developing leadership skills and delivering vital MVP sessions to improve their own school community and ethos as well as society!"

"It supports equality and diversity beyond the gender based approach to violence."

" Young people are challenged in a positive way by the training to provoke deeper thinking and debate and discussion on the issue of violence and how society contributes to this."

Staff welcomed the new session plans and scenarios developed by the National Team and commented on the ease of use of these.

Staff met regularly throughout the year to share planning and progress of MVP in Braes High School. The school Lead (DHT) arranged these meetings. Staff also shared practice with staff from across Falkirk at Local Authority Steering Group Meetings.

Mentor Feedback

The training to mentors was delivered by both experienced and newly trained staff over 2 consecutive days. It took place within the school with lunch and snacks being provided. The school lead (DHT) was in attendance at the start and end of the 2 days.

The Mentors have ongoing support as follows: 3 periods a week (if chosen as a Course Choice) or 1 period a week; they are supported by 3 members of staff. During these times relevant speakers are invited in to discuss topics covered by the scenarios or to develop the skills of the mentors.

Seven mentors from Braes High School participated in a focus group in June 2017. All of the mentors were very positive about their role in the MVP Programme. When asked about what they learned; the following responses were given:

“It made me more aware of the situations people can be in and prepares you to deal with these yourself or to help others.”

“You have a life skill that you can take away and use for the rest of your life.”

“Being a mentor has given me the confidence to be myself .”

The mentors commented on Gender Based Violence and the attitudes towards this. They also recognised how this has impacted on them:

“I got into the feminist community online. I started thinking about gender. MVP pushed me forward in my thinking and understanding of this”

“MVP explains gender and violence really well. Also the focus is not just on females”

When asked what difference being involved in MVP has had many of the mentors shared examples. One mentor volunteers in a community café and has noticed that the behaviour of the young people who attend has improved and they will go to her for advice. Another

commented on the intervention of an S1 pupil who stopped 2 boys fighting on the street. They felt having the MVP badge made them visible and the younger pupils would approach them. There is also an MVP drop in at lunchtimes that mentors participate in.

“Being a mentor has given me the confidence to challenge attitudes and behaviour and has made it more likely for me to spot what is going on”

The mentors felt they were well supported at Braes High School. They enjoyed meeting as a group and felt that having the time to prepare the input, practice and receive feedback was really helpful. They also said they enjoyed working with the S1 classes and using the session plans and ice breakers had made it easier to build the relationship.

“MVP builds a strong relationship between the junior and senior pupils”

“We get a special connection with the S1’s because we go through the same things they do”

All of the Mentors were very positive about their involvement in MVP :

“I’m quite a shy person and going up in front of the S1’s has increased my confidence greatly”

“It’s great to be part of something that is important to everyone in the school”

Mentee Feedback

Seven S1 Pupils took part in a focus group in June 2017 to share their experiences of MVP. The main comment was that they enjoyed being able to have their say and have people listen to their opinions.

When asked about the topics ‘Gender’ came out strongly as one they had not really thought about before MVP.

“The stereotypes activity was really good, it makes you realise we take certain things for granted”

All the pupils enjoyed the variety of activities and the scenarios. They liked the sessions being delivered by mentors as it was easier to understand and they felt they could talk more honestly with them. The group felt the mentors related more to the scenarios than the

teachers would as it is more common for them to have experienced these situations. They all said there are some things they wouldn't talk to a teacher about.

"The MVP's are just like us, they get it across easier and they understand us"

Four inputs were delivered to the S1 pupils: the 2 introductory sessions and Rumours and Words. One pupil commented that going through the scenarios made you more confident and even if you don't experience that issue you know what you can do to help. They were all confident talking about being an active bystander and a good friend and could identify what a healthy relationship looked like.

"I am more confident now about stopping rumours"

The S1 pupils identified the Mentors by their badges and felt they could speak to them if they had any concerns and knew of other pupils who had done so. They had also seen the posters around the school and were aware of the lunchtime drop in.

"I know I could go to an MVP Mentor if I needed to"

Key Learning from Brae High School Case Study

- ✓ Delivering the minimum 4 sessions (x2 Introductory Sessions plus x2 Scenarios) helps mentees to grasp the key messages of the programme
- ✓ Ensure that the Mentor Support staff meet regularly to update
- ✓ Prioritise the Mentor Training and ensure 2 days are allocated. Involve previous mentors as this is good practice.
- ✓ Link the MVP sessions with additional programmes that schools have introduced around equality and diversity.
- ✓ Preparation time for MVP Sessions and feedback to mentors is essential.
- ✓ The MVP drop in session has offered pupils another way to gain support

Appendix

Dumfries High School



MVP
Scotland
mentors in violence prevention



Dumfries
High School

MVP PROFILE: Dumfries High School

- 1

WHO TOOK PART?

 - 24 Mentors from S5 (delivery to S1) and 27 Mentors from S6 (delivery to S2)
 - Mentors - 60% female, 40% male
- 2

MENTOR SUPPORT TEAM

 - 12 Staff trained (7 Female, 5 Male)
 - 9 teaching and support for learning staff plus 4 external staff (School Librarian, Campus Police Officer and CAMHS Primary Care Worker)
- 3

SESSIONS DELIVERED

 - S1 - 2 introductory sessions plus Insults, Words, Left Out and Group Chat
 - S2 - Rumours, Corridor, Pressure, Photos
- 4

MENTOR RECRUITMENT

 - An awareness raising assembly for all S5 pupils
 - Mentors who had trained in year 1 and who were now in S6 (year 2) were invited to continue as Mentors to deliver further sessions to S2 pupils
- 5

MENTOR TRAINING

 - New Mentors attend a full day 'Kickstart' training day, off campus, alongside new mentors from neighbouring schools
- 6

MENTOR SUPPORT

 - Each team of 4/5 Mentors were assigned to a member of MST staff who helps them to plan for delivery and all Mentors receive planning time with the school lead for MVP
- 7

WHEN WAS MVP DELIVERED?

 - Sessions were delivered when S1 and S2 pupils were timetabled for PSE
 - Ratio of Mentors to S1 pupils was 1:6
 - Mentors delivered sessions in groups of 4
- 8

ACCREDITATION

 - Dumfries High School is currently exploring routes to accrediting the work of mentors
- 9

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

 - MVP messages are also delivered during the school assembly programme.
- 10

IMPACT

 - "MVP gives the seniors a sense of purpose - they're gaining respect by delivering this in classes." (Teacher)
 - "I just have more confidence in challenging things that I see or hear around school ...I've had a chance to think about why it's wrong, and I know that I could do something to help." (Mentor)
 - "It made me think about the consequences of actions and how they can affect other people. It has changed my behaviour 'cause I think more now, before I say something." (S1 pupil)

School Information

Dumfries High School is a non-denominational school in Dumfries & Galloway. MVP was introduced in term 1 of 2016/2017, in the second round of local authority training. The school has a population of around 750 pupils, which makes it one of the largest within the local authority. Those who attend Dumfries HS are from a vast range of socio-economic backgrounds ranging deciles 1-10. Dumfries High School has recently moved to a vertical guidance system, and MVP is in their whole school improvement plan. The following case study captures some of the key learning experienced by staff, mentors and younger pupils as they participated in the 2nd year of MVP in the school.

Planning of MVP

- Planning the 2nd year of MVP took place in April and May 2016. The MVP school lead worked with a subgroup for MVP sustainability, to complete a Year 2 plan.
- Senior Leadership Team support within school ensured staff were allowed time to attend planning meetings.
- Full staff awareness had taken place during Year 1 to launch and introduce MVP.
- There was an awareness raising assembly for all pupils who would be entering S5, and the Mentor Support Staff also identified potential mentors and promoted the programme as an opportunity to gain leadership experience.
- Whilst more females than males volunteered, Mentor Support Team staff did well to achieve a 60/40 gender split in the final mentor team.

Staff Feedback

A full staff team were unavailable to participate in a focus group in June 2017 due to increased work commitments. However, some had met with the MVP National Development Officer who was linked with their authority and a couple were able to share their views in June. Written below are the comments and observations that were collected throughout the year.

When asked about the difference MVP can make to Mentors, one member of MST staff told us:

“The kids got an assembly and a few of the lads came up and asked me about it, said they didn’t want to do it. I explained about the difference it could make so they put themselves forward. One of the boys is now deputy head boy – MVP really changed his view on being more involved in the life of the school.”

Staff were also able to recognise their own learning and development through MVP and how it links with other initiatives in school. One member of staff explained:

Myself and another teacher were setting up the GSA – the Gender and Sexuality Alliance – and through my training (for MVP) it has worked out so well ... We have LGBT students here ... I’ve found that with the training I can step in and challenge students to question their language / comments.”

Training and Support to Mentors

Staff involved in training the mentors were extremely enthusiastic. An initial ‘Kickstart Training Day’ in Year 1 (2016/2017) was delivered by Dumfries & Galloway local authority training team staff who have completed the MVP Training for Trainers course. This was held off-campus and involved mentors from all newly trained schools. The Kickstart Day is something the local authority training team offer to all newly engaged / trained schools and enables mentors to learn about the core messages and components of MVP whilst networking and building relationships with their fellow mentors in neighbouring schools.

This is an effective way to train, and MST staff in Dumfries High School recognised the value in this model of delivery. As the local authority training team do not have capacity to offer this to all local MVP schools on an annual basis, if Dumfries HS wanted a Kickstart Day it was up to them, and their counterparts in neighbouring schools, to arrange it themselves with support and materials from their local training team. This is what they chose to do. Lead staff from each schools coordinated the training and invited along other trained staff for parts of the day.

A Principal Teacher Pupil Support coordinates and drives MVP in Dumfries High School, with leadership and support from the trained Depute. Dates are blocked out in the Health and Wellbeing Programme at the start of the year for the MVP sessions so that staff know the mentors can deliver outside high pressure times in their academic calendar.

Approximately 4 weeks prior to the start of their 3 week delivery sessions they work with the

Principal Teacher Pupil Support for an hour a week to ensure that in their small delivery groups, they are confident with the materials and their approach.

Mirroring mentor recognition in regards to teacher involvement in sessions, one member of staff explained:

“There was a staff member in sometimes supporting a class, and it was difficult to know where to draw the line ... They (mentors) perhaps wouldn’t pick up on comments pupils made that a teacher might recognise as warranting further exploration.”

Another member of Mentor Support Team staff countered:

“We always let the mentors lead, we just help them IF they request it ... we give out what they need and move things around - but it’s their class. The messages need to come from the mentors.”

Staff also recognised that an S3/4 ‘gap’ currently exists where S1 and S2 are receiving MVP sessions, and S5 and S6 pupils have opportunities to train as Mentors:

“It’s a shame ... they are missing out.”

The MVP National Team recognises that there are opportunities for MVP sessions to be delivered within S3 and S4, if not by Mentors, then by trained MST staff.

Staff would recommend MVP to other schools, with one member of staff explaining:

“MVP gives the seniors a sense of purpose – they’re gaining respect by delivering this in classes. I would definitely recommend other staff and schools to be involved with MVP. Since I did the training I have come back and told other teachers who weren’t able to attend ‘You should do it as it really opens your eyes to a lot of things that you just don’t think about – you thought it was just a part of school life and now think ‘oh we could stop this’.”

Mentor Feedback

Eight mentors from Dumfries High School participated in a focus group in June 2016. Each of them spoke of their enjoyment in being part of the MVP Programme. When asked what they felt were the benefits of a peer education approach to MVP, the following responses were given:

“Younger pupils are probably more comfortable because the kids talk to us outside of class. They probably talk to us more than they would a teacher.”

“We’ve been through it so we can talk from personal experience.”

It’s made the first years more comfortable to talk to us. They come up to us to speak outwith classes, and I wouldn’t have done that in S1 with an S5.”

When asked if there were disadvantages to a peer education approach, Mentors told us:

“We don’t have as much authority or control of the class. Sometimes we needed the teacher to tell them to listen to us.”

“Maybe it took the first lesson for them to get comfortable with us, ‘cause we’re sixth year maybe we were a bit scary. We got there eventually.”

“When classes are dry and you need to try to get them talking, it can be hard.”

When asked about the difference MVP had made to them, their school and their wider learning community, the following responses were given:

“MVP has made me more confident. My confidence this year has increased a lot because I was speaking to a class of 20-odd first years and they were listening to what I had to say and they were respecting me.”

“It’s widened my view of things and what can happen, and let me think about what I do in certain situations.”

“You can tell some staff respect that you are involved with MVP and it can change the way they see you.”

“Pupils are more open in talking about things they are dealing with.”

“It helps pupils think critically about what THEY would do apart from just copy what their friends would do in some situations.”

When asked what works / doesn’t work about MVP in school, mentors shared the following:

*“Working in our groups helped with both planning and confidence in delivery. In recruiting mentors it is definitely important that pupils **volunteer** to take part. It would make delivery difficult if you were in a group with others who didn’t want to do it.”*

“The introductory sessions made pupils feel more comfortable in understanding what we were talking about in MVP.”

“Enough planning time with your link teacher is very important in how confident I felt delivering. When I felt I hadn’t had enough time to plan, I didn’t feel the lesson went as well.”

“Having a teacher in the room while we delivered made it easier to control the class but sometimes they step in a wee bit too much and get involved in our delivery.”

When asked what they have done differently since being a mentor, many of the participants shared examples of when they have intervened when they have seen something which is causing someone harm. One mentor explained:

“I just have more confidence in challenging things that I see or hear around school, or when I’m out ... Because I’ve had a chance to think about why it’s wrong, and I know that I could do something to help.”

When asked, all Mentors agreed they gained a lot from their involvement in the MVP programme and would like to remain involved. As one Mentor explained:

“I’d definitely recommend being a mentor. I think our new 5th years are delivering this year ‘cause they are away training today. I’m not sure if we’re still involved or not but I’d like to still do it. I hope we can be involved.”

Mentee Feedback

Nine S1 (new S2) pupils took part in a focus group in June 2017 to share their experiences of MVP.

They told us during the focus group that they enjoyed the peer education approach:

“I think it was quite good, ‘cause we were able to relate to them a bit more. They went through these things as well, so you know they understand.”

“They’re more our age so this made it easier to talk to them about some stuff.”

“We can connect to them a bit more.”

Whilst younger pupils told us they found the sessions and the games within them fun, they appreciated the opportunity to take part in some issue-based learning, with one pupil telling us:

“It felt quite safe because anything that was said we weren’t allowed to talk about it outwith the class. We covered that on a group agreement at the beginning, so we could be honest.”

They also told us that they would approach a mentor for help if needed, with one participant explaining:

“Talking to a mentor might be a more subtle approach to solving issues than going to a teacher.”

Participants had retained a good amount of information about the sessions and were able to tell us that the MVP programme covered:

- *Bullying in all forms – different ways of making fun of someone*
- *Peer pressure*
- *Bystanders*
- *Name calling*
- *Homophobia*

With regards the opportunity to explore Bystander Options within the scenarios, participants told us:

“It helped us think about what we might do to support or challenge people in difficult situations.”

If someone calls someone a name as a joke, now we can remind them that the other might not be finding it very funny.”

When asked whether MVP is making a difference to them, their school or their community, participants explained:

Personally

“It makes you think more consciously about what you say to others and what they say to you.”

“It made me think about the consequences of actions and how they can affect other people. It has changed my behaviour ‘cause I think more now, before I say something.”

School

“It’s having an impact on our year. The messages have got through to quite a lot of the pupils, but some people still haven’t got the message.”

Community

“I think it’s had an impact when people hang out together out of school – name calling and stuff is getting less.”

Participants were able to recount examples of when MVP had changed their behaviour in terms of bystander involvement. One pupil was able to tell us about a time her friends had fallen out and one was calling the other particularly horrible names. She felt able to intervene and mediate to resolve their friendship:

I was able to intervene ‘cause I had done MVP sessions and knew what my options were, and could also see it was wrong.”

When asked if there was anything they would change, participants told us they’d like sessions to be longer, and more of them. One participant wondered if MVP could be timetabled as a class so they would have *“more time to talk about stuff.”*

Another pupil suggested that perhaps their usual teacher could leave the room, and instead *“... bring in a teacher you don’t know so you can be more honest and not feel your teacher is judging you.”*

One pupil felt sometimes 4 or 5 Mentors were too many and instead 2 or 3 would be enough. The MVP National Team advocates for teams of 3 Mentors to deliver to half a class to promote discussion, although we recognise that space and capacity hinder this in many of our schools.

Participants enjoyed their MVP experience, and when asked agreed they would definitely recommend MVP to other pupils or schools:

“I would definitely recommend MVP as a good thing as it makes you more aware of what is happening all around you.”

“Other schools should do it right across Scotland.”

Key Learning from Dumfries High Case Study

- ✓ Continuity in link teacher is very important for pupils to feel confident and comfortable in their planning and delivery.
- ✓ Adequate time to explore facilitation skills and delivery challenges during Mentor training is invaluable in equipping Mentors with the skills to effectively deal with difficult classroom scenarios and to enhance their skills in recognising key learning opportunities.
- ✓ The introductory sessions help to set the scene for MVP and support younger pupils to understand key concepts.
- ✓ Roles for Year 2 mentors should be clearly identified. Once trained, mentors on the whole want to remain engaged in the programme in some capacity. In addition to supporting the recruitment and training of new mentors, they should have clearly defined roles in the life of MVP in school.
- ✓ There are opportunities for MVP sessions to be run with S3/4 classes, perhaps delivered by trained MST staff, if not mentors.
- ✓ Consider your mentor / mentee ratio. Mentor teams of 3 support delivery if someone is off, but perhaps consider smaller delivery groups, if space and capacity allow.
- ✓ Link the MVP sessions to additional programmes or initiatives that schools have introduced around equality and diversity.