

The Southwark Schools Learning Partnership: 2022–23 Impact Report



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About ImpactEd

ImpactEd is a social enterprise that exists to improve pupil outcomes by addressing the evaluation deficit in education. We support schools and education organisations to evaluate their impact, learn from it, and prioritise what is working best to improve outcomes for young people.

ImpactEd is a winner of the 2018 Teach First Innovation Award and the 2020 Fair Education Alliance's Scaling Award, and was named a finalist for 'Supplier of the Year' in the Education Resources Awards. We partner with a number of the UK's leading school groups and education organisations to support high-quality monitoring and evaluation

How we work



Platform

We use our unique digital platform to make monitoring and evaluation easier and more effective, providing access to reliable measures of impact on both academic and non-academic outcomes, and automating data analysis.



Partnership

We provide a tailored support and training programme that helps partners identify what it is they are trying to improve, how they are trying to do it, and ways in which they might measure this. Our training and ongoing consultation builds staff capacity for research and evaluation.



Impact

Through this process we help our partners – both schools and education organisations – to identify where and how they can make the biggest difference for young people, and prioritise accordingly to achieve the greatest impact.

About the Southwark Schools Learning Partnership (SSLP)

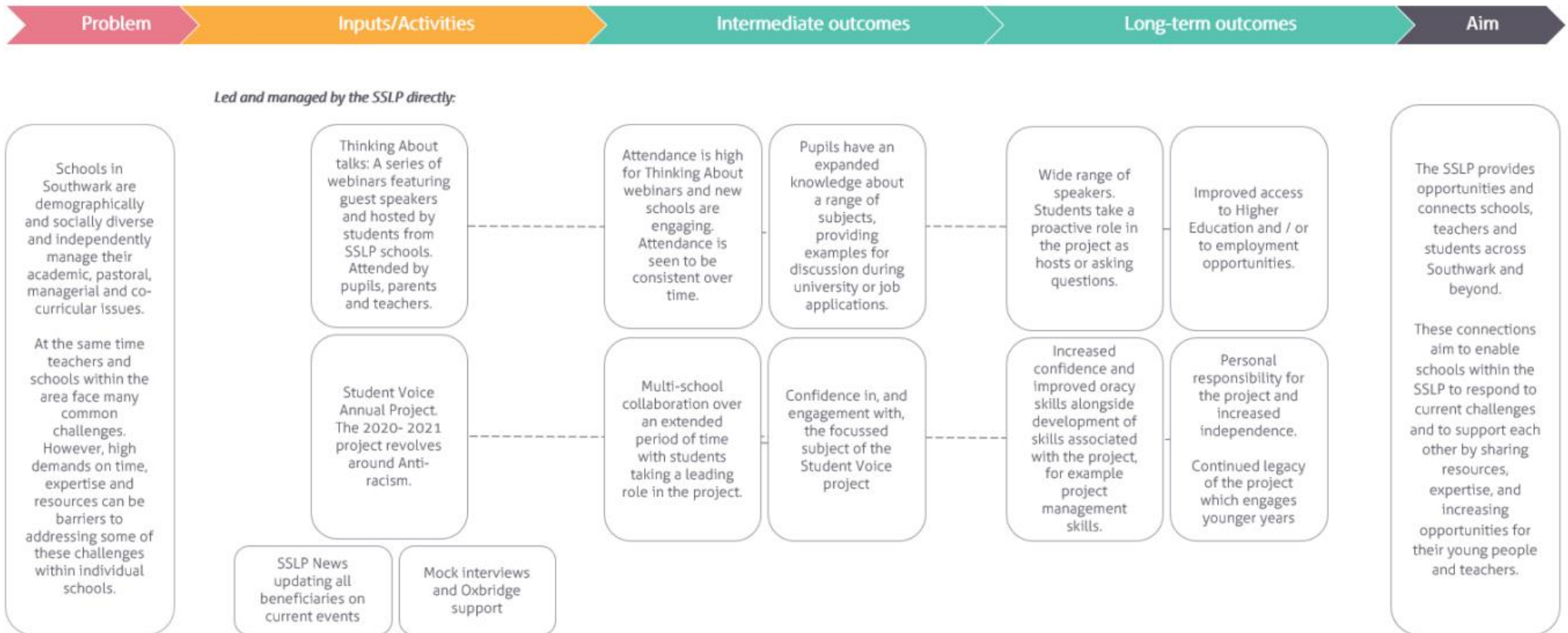
The SSLP brings together Partner Schools (from Southwark) and Associate Schools (from neighbouring boroughs). The partnership comprises both independent and maintained schools. What the schools have in common is a desire to provide academic and vocational opportunities both for students and for staff, where each learn with and from their peers. The SSLP run several activities for both staff and students, such as conferences, debating competitions and staff CPD, and a focus of the partnership is to increase cross-collaboration across schools in Southwark and neighbouring boroughs.

About this research

ImpactEd have been working with the SSLP for the past three years to support with evaluating their impact on the SSLP community, for both pupils and staff. Initial work with the SSLP involved putting together a Theory of Change (ToC). A ToC is a planning tool that helps you to plan new work in line with overall strategy, communicate the purpose of what you do, and decide what information to collect to evaluate your programme or services. A ToC shows how you expect outcomes to occur over the short, medium, and longer term as a result of your work. It focuses on what you want to achieve, rather than what you want to do. ImpactEd worked with the SSLP to devise a ToC that covers as many aspects of the partnership work as possible, and a copy of this ToC can be seen on the following pages.

Given the significant number of outcomes noted in the ToC, throughout this report we will reference at the beginning of each section which outcomes are relevant to that particular research question. Findings from this report should be complimented by data held by the SSLP, such as attendance data at certain events, which will help to fully evaluate how the current outcomes fit with those from the ToC.

Theory of Change





Problem

Inputs/Activities

Intermediate outcomes

Long-term outcomes

Aim

Schools in Southwark are demographically and socially diverse and independently manage their academic, pastoral, managerial and co-curricular issues.

At the same time teachers and schools within the area face many common challenges. However, high demands on time, expertise and resources can be barriers to addressing some of these challenges within individual schools.

Continued support and facilitation of all SSLP network events, opportunities and outputs:

- Pupil opportunities
- Photography competition
 - Arabic classes
 - Debating clubs
 - Bursaries for trips abroad including Canada and Canada
 - And other smaller scale projects

Pupils

Repeated and sustained attendance to events and opportunities

Collaboration between pupils across schools

Knowledge and awareness of the partnership

Engaging in events by asking questions and volunteering

Feeling part of a wider local community

Parental awareness and engagement

Student body take a leading role in coordinating activities

Pupils feel connected and appreciate similarities to others across the network

Long term engagement, interaction and attendance to SSLP events and activities

Increased opportunities outside of their school curriculum that widens horizons

Increased confidence and self worth

The SSLP provides opportunities and connects schools, teachers and students across Southwark and beyond.

These connections aim to enable schools within the SSLP to respond to current challenges and to support each other by sharing resources, expertise, and increasing opportunities for their young people and teachers.



Schools in Southwark are demographically and socially diverse and independently manage their academic, pastoral, managerial and co-curricular issues.

At the same time teachers and schools within the area face many common challenges. However, high demands on time, expertise and resources can be barriers to addressing some of these challenges within individual schools.

Continued support and facilitation of all SSLP network events, opportunities and outputs:

- Classroom teacher opportunities
 - SSLP Hubs for various different subjects
 - Teacher training
- School and SLT opportunities
 - Access to paid training
 - Director meetings to enable strategic thinking across the partnership
 - Link teacher community across all SSLP schools
 - Reactive community meetings based on current educational challenges (e.g. response to Covid-19)

Teachers

- Access to resources and speakers
- Collaboration of teachers across multiple schools
- Teacher training goes ahead successfully and teachers attend
- More awareness of the SSLP
- Feeling part of a wider teaching community and able to call upon peers
- Increased attendance and support of events and opportunities

Schools and SLT

- Schools host activities
- Attendance to director meetings and link teacher community meetings
- Teachers and schools read and access SSLP news
- More awareness and expression of involvement publicly, for example on school websites

Teachers, SLT and schools

- Teachers and schools are connected and feel part of the network that can gain them connection, skills, and support through sharing and cohesion
- Teachers feel more confident in their teaching and have more resources in their toolkit to call upon to support their pupils
- Enjoyment of their experiences with the SSLP: Schools and teachers value and benefit from the partnership
- Strong awareness of the SSLP and encourage other teachers and schools to actively engage
- Each school in the network takes their membership seriously and contributes high quality and successful opportunities

The SSLP provides opportunities and connects schools, teachers and students across Southwark and beyond.

These connections aim to enable schools within the SSLP to respond to current challenges and to support each other by sharing resources, expertise, and increasing opportunities for their young people and teachers.

Key Findings

1 What is the impact of the SSLP activities on pupils, according to staff and pupil quantitative feedback?

- On average, pupils and staff rated the pupil facing events highly, with many stakeholders noting that they were 'excellent.'
- Pupils seemed to particularly enjoy meeting new students from other schools, and working with people that they wouldn't usually work with.
- Staff and pupils shared that they thought there would be a longer-term impact after the events, such as researching more into sustainability and making new friends.

2 What is the impact of the SSLP activities on pupils, according to staff and pupil qualitative feedback?

- Staff reflected on the variety of activities that were available to pupils, and how this had allowed them to learn new things outside of their direct curriculum. Activities run by the SSLP also encouraged schools to set up their own internal activities, such as a debating club.
- Staff shared that taking part in SSLP activities had allowed pupils to develop their confidence.
- Pupils and staff reflected on the positive impact of collaboration across schools. In particular, pupils noted that they enjoyed meeting new people, and that it had increased their feeling of community. Staff reflected on how beneficial it was for students to spend time with others that might have different backgrounds to them.

3 What is the impact of the SSLP Student Council on participating pupils?

- Pupils largely reflected positively on participating in the Student Council, sharing that they were encouraged to and had the opportunity to share their ideas, helped decide things like activities or rules and feel like they have a voice in the SSLP.

4 What is the impact of the SSLP on staff and teachers, according to staff quantitative feedback?

- Staff reflected positively on the Aspiring Pastoral Leaders sessions, with almost 90% of participants noting that they felt better equipped in their current role after taking part.

- Some participants in this programme reflected that they already knew a lot of the information shared. The SSLP may wish to consider which staff they target to take part, as it might be more suitable for those with less experience.
- Other participants in the programme shared that it was interesting and helpful to hear about careers in pastoral support, as well as to learn more about how to support pupils.
- 90% of link teachers reflected that teachers in their schools had taken part in activities that they wouldn't have had the opportunity to without being part of the SSLP community.
- The sense of the SSLP community was high amongst SSLP link teachers, with one noting that it had filled a much-needed gap where support might have been received by the LEA or a MAT in other schools.

5

What is the impact of the SSLP on staff and schools, according to staff and senior leader qualitative feedback?

- Staff reflected that the collaboration between schools offered by the SSLP was really helpful, particularly for smaller schools who could look for support from other SSLP schools for things like supporting with marking and sharing resources.
- Staff and senior leaders also reflected on the positive experience of participating in CPD sessions run by the SSLP and valued that they were able to meet other teachers in person through these trainings.
- Teachers and leaders shared about some logistical challenges with participating in SSLP events, such as finding a good time that works for everyone and finding staff to supervise. They suggested that the SSLP share activity dates and times as far in advance as possible, to make it easier for staff and pupils to engage.
- Some ideas about how to encourage further participation in the SSLP were suggested, such as creating a student friendly newsletter, having SSLP student ambassadors in each school, and setting clear expectations for what each school will contribute to the SSLP each year.
- Staff and senior leaders were of the viewpoint that the SSLP brand, and whether students knew whether an activity was run by the SSLP, was less important than the opportunities and collaboration that is offered by the partnership.



Methodology

Quantitative Research

Quantitative data was collected through post-event surveys run after SSLP hosted activities or meetings. Data was collected from pupils and staff at pupil-facing events, and from staff at staff-facing events.

Sample sizes for each activity vary and are only given at one time-point. To further increase the validity of this data, SSLP may wish to conduct pre- and post-surveys, to measure impact before and after particular programmes. This could be particularly impactful for the longer-term programmes, such as the Student Voice activity.

Qualitative Research

In June 2023, ImpactEd conducted focus groups with senior leaders, staff, and pupils at SSLP schools. The goal of these focus groups was to find out more about the impact of SSLP activities on pupils and staff, and to gain feedback on where stakeholders think that the SSLP is having the most impact. The qualitative sections of the report will share detailed qualitative evidence from pupils, staff, and senior leaders, sharing some key findings about the impact of the activities, as well as suggestions on how impact could be increased over the following years.

ImpactEd conducted three focus groups: one each with pupils, staff, and senior leaders. For the pupil focus groups, three schools were represented - two independent schools and one state school. Five schools were represented in the senior leader focus group - three state schools and two independent schools. For the staff focus groups, eight schools were represented - three independent and five state. These sections of the report are structured thematically, drawing out key themes mentioned in each focus group.

1

What is the impact of the SSLP activities on pupils, according to staff and pupil quantitative feedback?

Relevant outcomes from the Theory of Change

- Collaboration between pupils across schools
- Pupils feeling part of a wider local community
- Pupils feel connected and appreciate similarities to others across the network
- Increased opportunities outside of their school curriculum that widens horizons
- Confidence and engagement with the focused subject of the Student Voice project.

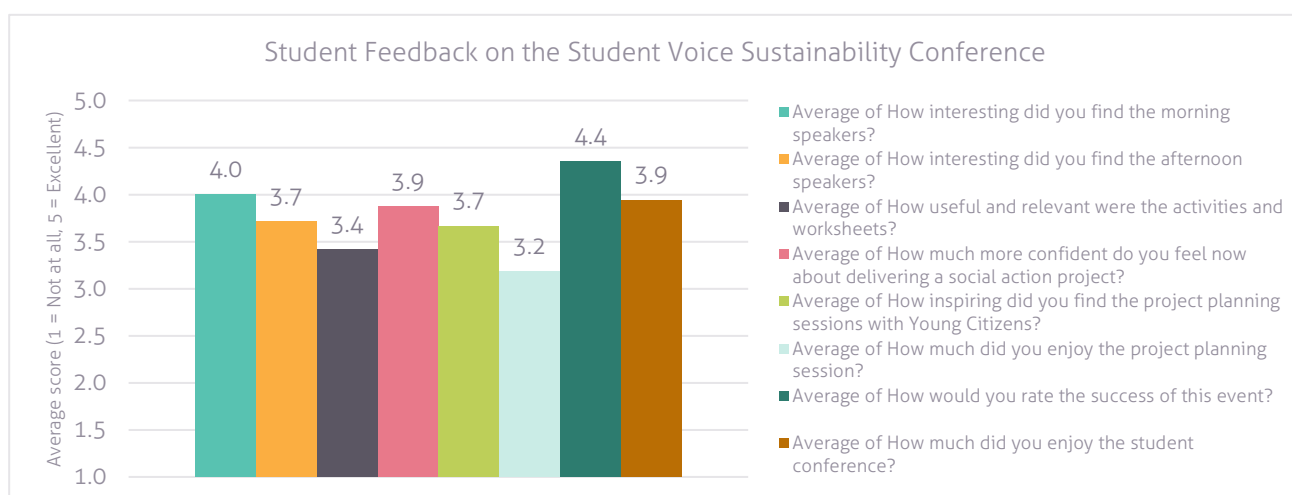
To better understand the impact of SSLP activities on pupils, this section looks at feedback from a select number of SSLP activities. A variety of activities have been chosen to analyse in more detail, based on the sample size of responses received and a focus on looking at different types of activities.

Pupil feedback

This first question will focus on feedback directly from pupils, collected by surveys after particular events.

Student Voice – Sustainability Conference

The graph below looks at feedback from the Student Voice Sustainability Conference. As can be seen in the graph, pupils rated the success of the event as a 4.4 (where 5 is equal to 'Excellent'). The lowest scoring question was related to how much pupils enjoyed the project planning session, although this was still above a 3.



When asked what they enjoyed most about the conference, the most popular response was 'meeting students from other schools' which 41.2% of pupils responded with. This was followed by 'working with other students to tackle challenges around sustainability,' suggesting that a key

element of the activity that pupils enjoyed was working with others. When asked to reflect on what they enjoyed about working with others pupils noted:

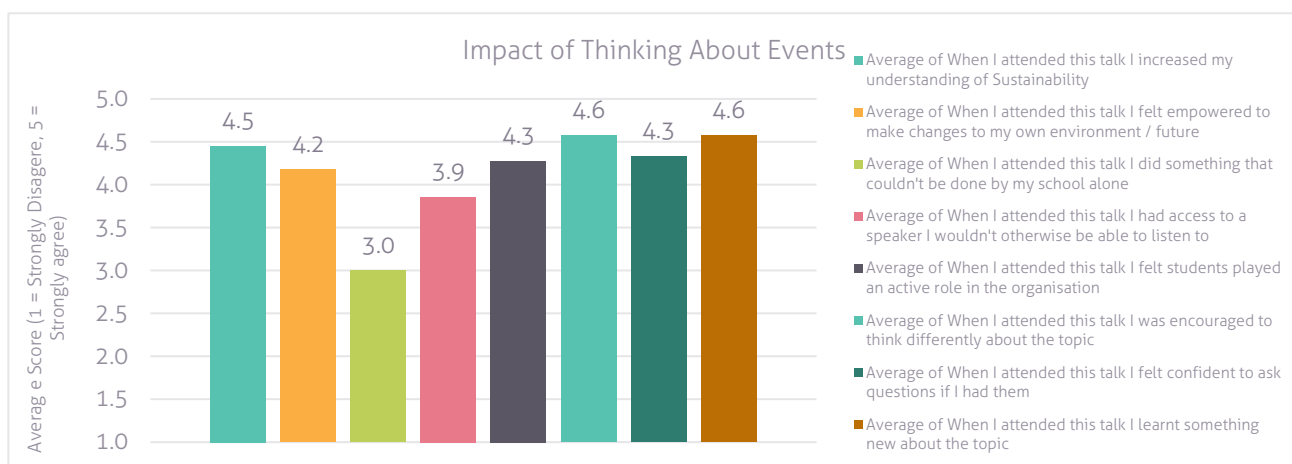
- ◆ *I liked it as it teaches you to leave your shell and learn about other people's view on global warming*
- ◆ *Most of the people in my group were very respectful and great to work with.*
- ◆ *It was nice as I got to make new friends!*
- ◆ *It was great to meet so many new people with different ideas*

Oxbridge Mock Interviews

7 pupils in Year 13 responded to the feedback survey after their Oxbridge mock interviews. Following this mock interview process, all pupils who responded said that they felt better prepared for their real interview, and all but one pupils said that they had ideas for further reading or activities to help with their preparation. 5/7 pupils also said they had increased confidence about their application to Oxbridge.

Thinking About Events

For this section of the report, we look at feedback from the 'Thinking About' events. This brings together feedback from several different events, such as the Thinking About event on Conspiracy Theories, and the event on Material Transformation. As can be seen in the graph below, participants were largely positive about these events, particularly about learning something new, and being encouraged to think differently about a certain topic. Pupils were seen to take an active role in the organisation of the event, and they felt confident to ask questions if they had them.



When asked if the talk had inspired them to take any action, participants responded with:

- ◆ *Inspired me to research more about sustainability and what people can do every day to impact that.*
- ◆ *It has made me research more upon the subject matter and found out they are even attempting to make bulletproof wood of which is also lightweight.*
- ◆ *When buying clothes, I will do more research into the sustainability and life cycle of the specific product*

Student Voice Projects and Workshops

Pupils rated the success of the student voice projects and workshops as a 4.1/5. When asked what they enjoyed most about the event, again the most common response was 'meeting students from other schools' which 42.1% of pupils responded with. The next most common response was 'hearing from the project groups.'

Staff Feedback

This section focuses on staff feedback about pupil events, and what they see as the impact having been. This data was also collected through surveys after the event. For this section, feedback from several events is combined. Some events that are included in the feedback are: the Debating Competition, Song Writing Workshop, the Student Voice Sustainability Project and Thinking About sessions.



As can be seen in the graph above, most events scored highly with 4 events scoring a 5 ('Excellent'). The lowest scoring event was the 'So you want to be an Energy Specialist.' Looking at specific feedback from this event, teachers shared that it was logistical challenges (such as the time of the session), and technical issues that resulted in it being scored lower. One individual noted that *'the talk was really great, and the speaker gave an excellent presentation that was well pitched.'*

One of the highest scoring events was the 'Student Voice: Sustainability Conference.' Staff who attended noted that they hoped that pupils would gain awareness of sustainability and be invigorated to start their own project, and they wanted their student council to gain experience in putting forward plans and seeing them through. All teachers noted that these expectations were met with the event. All staff who responded noted that they thought the event put students at the heart of the SSLP, and 80% of responses noted that it encouraged the SSLPs on-going conversation about sustainability. One staff member reflected that this activity was a *'brilliant project,'* that has a *'great outcome that will create lasting change.'*

Key Findings

- ◆ On average, pupils and staff rated the pupil facing events highly, with many stakeholders noting that they were 'excellent.'
- ◆ Pupils seemed to particularly enjoy meeting new students from other schools, and working with people that they wouldn't usually work with.
- ◆ Staff and pupils shared that they thought there would be a longer term impact after the events, such as researching more into sustainability and making new friends.



2

What is the impact of the SSLP activities on pupils, according to staff and pupil qualitative feedback?

Relevant outcomes from the Theory of Change

- Collaboration between pupils across schools
- Pupils feeling part of a wider local community
- Pupils feel connected and appreciate similarities to others across the network
- Increased opportunities outside of their school curriculum that widens horizons
- Increased confidence and self-worth.
- Collaboration between pupils across schools

Impact on pupils

All stakeholder groups talked about the positive impact that SSLP activities had on participating pupils. They referenced the huge variety of activities that were available for pupils, that gave them many opportunities to engage, particularly topics that were outside of their direct curriculum. For example, one senior leader noted that *'the event I did was brilliant, there was really good uptake and so the atmosphere was fantastic. There's been loads of things that have happened and the diversity has been really good ranging from the music and the debating and quizzes. So I think the diversity is amazing.'* Another staff member noted that *'through SSLP activities, pupils have gained confidence, presentation skills, working independently, leadership and creativity.'*

Debate mate was particularly mentioned as an activity that had a positive impact by teachers. One noted that debate mate helped to launch a debating society at their school, whilst another noted that it was particularly nice to see younger pupils engage with this, as they had been most hit by the pandemic, so it was really valuable to see them communicate with each other and build their confidence in that way.

Pupils reflected on enjoying being able to use the knowledge that they already know (such as in the quizzes), as well as learning new things through lectures led by external experts. Pupils also talked about enjoying the sustainability project, as they gained ideas about how their own school could be more sustainable, and heard from other pupils at other schools.

Impact on pupils – collaboration across schools

A particular area of impact that was mentioned frequently in reference to pupils, was the positive impact that collaboration across schools had had on them. Pupils themselves shared that they enjoyed meeting new people from different schools, and learning from them. For example, one pupil noted that *'I think socialising is a big part of these events and I'm very happy to meet other people who have the same interests that I have,'* and another reflected on how the SSLP events helped them to build a network. Pupils also reflected on how it was beneficial to speak to pupils who were in different year groups to them, and another said that *'it's increased our feeling of community because we all live in the same area.'*

Staff also reflected on the positive impact that working with other pupils had on their students, with one noting that *'I think it is fantastic for students to meet and connect with students from other schools as well as for teachers.'* Another reflected that it is particularly helpful for pupils who aren't as loud, as when they collaborate with others with different personalities, it helps to build their confidence. Debating was again mentioned as a positive activity, emphasising that it was the collaboration that helped the activity to work really well, and students who have similar interests often fed off each other.

Staff members also reflected that it was valuable for pupils from different backgrounds to break down barriers in both directions, and that it was particularly helpful for them to know that whilst they're studying for their exams, *'the world is bigger than just the confines of their own campus.'* One staff member noted that pupils took it upon themselves to keep in touch with the other students that they had worked with, noting that they swapped emails with each other to keep in touch outside of the activities.

Senior leaders also mentioned the benefit of working across other schools and noted that seeing the students work together *'has been really excellent.'* Particularly in reference to the debating competition, one senior leader noted that pupils *'grow from the experience of seeing students of different ages and different schools being treated equally on all platforms.'* They also shared that the in person events were particularly great, as students are encouraged to break away from their friends and work with others in other schools, and they noticed that the pupils were really talking to each other and sharing experiences. They noted that this was *'really, really super valuable.'*

Another senior leader spoke about the publication that was developed across the schools, and shared that *'it was great for the students to see that we're all living in the same borough but we're all from different walks of life.'* This senior leader noted that they think this will be particularly beneficial for the pupils' future. They shared that *'it's not just state school pupils learning from private school pupils but private school pupils learning from state school pupils too, and they're able to ask questions around misconceptions and things like that too.'*

Key Findings

- ◆ Staff reflected on the variety of activities that were available to pupils, and how this had allowed them to learn new things outside of their direct curriculum. Activities run by the SSLP also encouraged schools to set up their own internal activities, such as a debating club.
- ◆ Staff shared that taking part in SSLP activities had allowed pupils to develop their confidence.
- ◆ Pupils and staff reflected on the positive impact of collaboration across schools. In particular, pupils noted that they enjoyed meeting new people, and that it had increased their feeling of community. Staff reflected on how beneficial it was for students to spend time with others that might have different backgrounds to them.

3

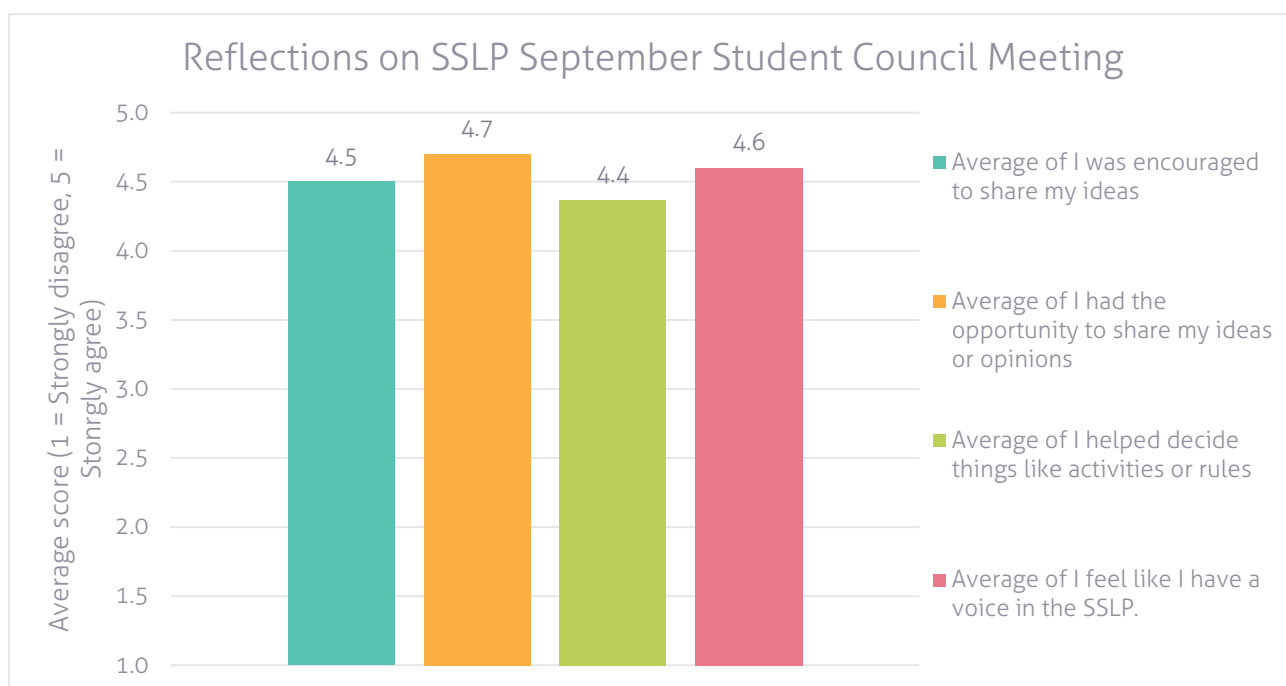
What is the impact of the SSLP student council on participating pupils?

Relevant outcomes from the Theory of Change

- Long term engagement and interaction and attendance to SSLP events and activities
- Increased opportunities outside of their school curriculum that widens horizons

A small number of pupils (approx. 25), across the SSLP are part of the SSLP Student Council, which works with pupils to help develop SSLP activities. This section of the report will look in particular at the impact of the Student Council on participating pupils. Quantitative data was collected through surveys during the Student Council meetings.

A first data collection was run at the end of September 2022 and pupils were asked to respond to a selection of questions.

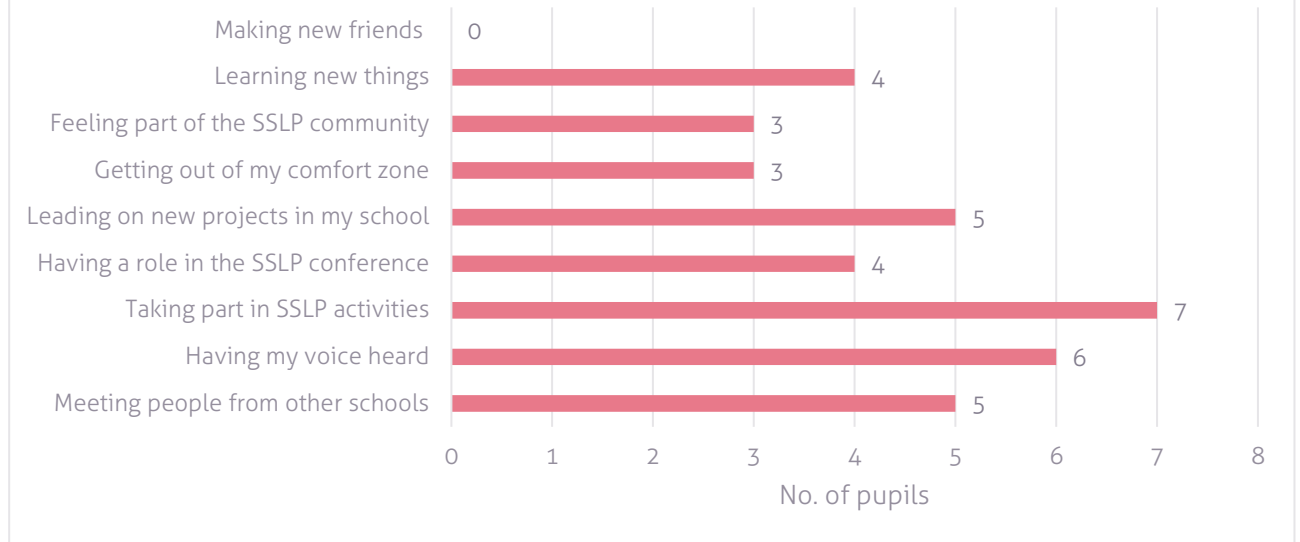


As can be seen in the graph above, all statements scored above a 4 (Agree). The highest scoring was 'I had the opportunity to share my ideas or opinions.'

In the second Student Council meeting (January 2023), pupils were also asked what they have enjoyed most about being part of the Student Council. Nine pupils responded to this survey.

As can be seen below, pupils reflected that they enjoyed taking part in SSLP activities, and having their voice heard. No pupils responded that they had made new friends through the SSLP Student Council. A possible explanation for this, could be that the Council was largely held online. As noted previously, staff were able to see the most benefit for pupils meeting students at other schools at the in-person events.

So far, what have you enjoyed most about being part of the SSLP Student Council?



Key Findings

- ◆ Pupils largely reflected positively on participating in the Student Council, sharing that they were encouraged to and had the opportunity to share their ideas, helped decide things like activities or rules and feel like they have a voice in the SSLP.

4

What is the impact of the SSLP on staff and teachers, according to staff quantitative feedback?

Relevant outcomes from the Theory of Change

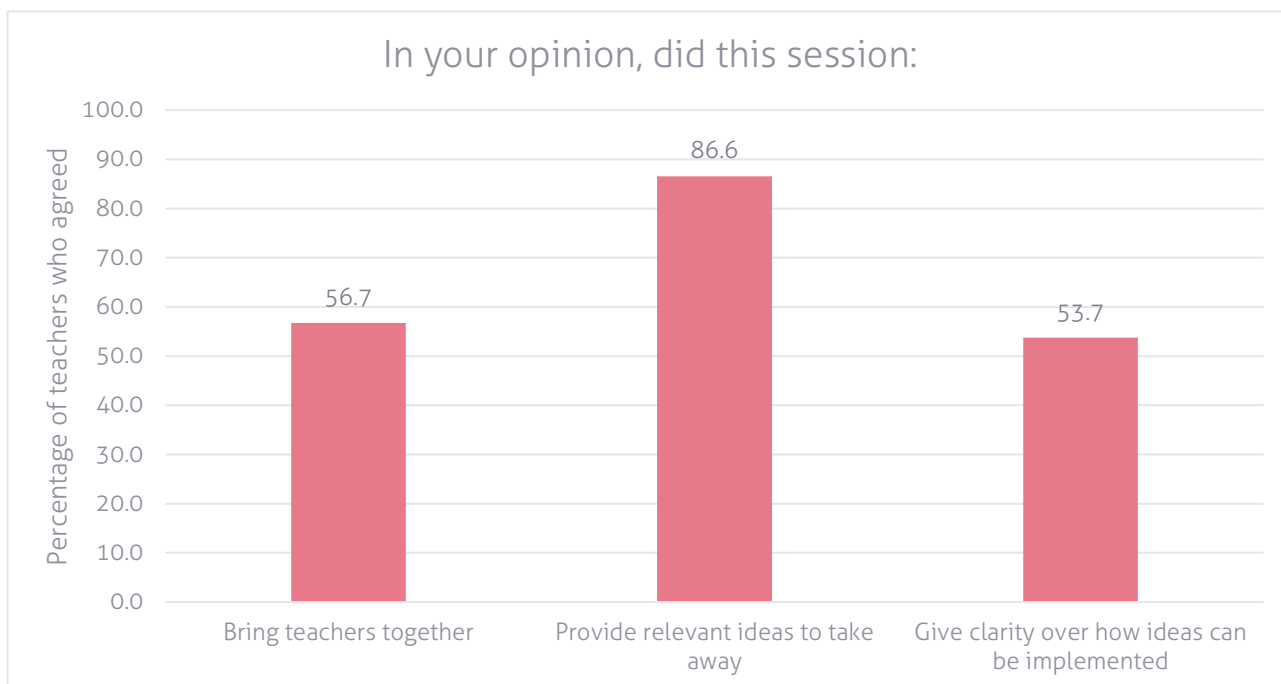
- Teacher training goes ahead successfully, and teachers attend
- Teachers feel more confident in their teaching and have more resources in their toolkit to call upon to support their pupils

Feedback was collected from staff members who took part in the 'Aspiring Pastoral Leaders' programme, a CPD programme that was run throughout the 22/23 academic year. For this section, 67 responses were collected from staff at 10 schools.



As can be seen in the graph above, the majority of teachers (88%) felt that they were better equipped as a teacher in their current role after taking part in the Aspiring Pastoral Leaders sessions. 83.6% of teachers also felt more confident that they could apply for their next pastoral role when it becomes available. 91% of staff also said that they found the session useful in regard to pastoral leadership.

A high percentage of teachers (86.6%) agreed that the aspiring pastoral leaders session gave them relevant ideas to take away. A majority also believed that it brought teachers together and gave clarity over how ideas can be implemented.



When asked to give qualitative feedback on what they had learnt from the session, some teachers shared that they believed that they already knew a lot of the information that was shared, and that the session was perhaps more useful for those with less experience. However, others noted that it was interesting and helpful to hear about careers in pastoral support, as well as to learn more about how to support pupils. For example:

- ◆ *"It was interesting to hear about her career path and to confirm what I thought about pastoral leadership."*
- ◆ *"We learnt that teachers who have high expectation of their students develop a culture of high expectations around behaviour, doing homework self-regulation etc. That in a school of high expectations students are able to teach the lesson, they are well presented, behaviour is good all round and you find students have self-control."*
- ◆ *"It was very useful for understanding the different roles. Outlining what the expectations are and the challenges that come with those roles. Hearing Amy's advice as well as tips on how to deal with these was very useful and gave me thoughts regarding how I can make time for myself to lock in time for me to complete certain tasks every day."*
- ◆ *"I learnt about how if challenge and support are not balanced properly, resilience among students is lost. I learnt about how students need to trust their teachers and see them as consistent and reliable role models in order to get the best from them. I also learnt that positive behaviour being addressed in public and negative behaviour being addressed in private is the best way to get everyone to do the right thing."*

Link Teachers

SSLP Link Teachers were also asked to give feedback during their link teacher meetings. An initial survey was run in the first link teacher meeting in October 2022. In this meeting, link teachers were asked what they would hope to achieve as an SSLP link teacher. Teachers reflected that they would like to work with other link teachers and build strong relationships with other schools. The below feedback comes from the meeting ran in January 2023, and 10 members of staff responded. For the below table, staff were asked about the impact that they thought the SSLP has

had on teachers in their school. The percentage showed the number of link teachers that selected the respective statement as an option.

Statement	Percentage of link teachers that agree
They are more involved with school activities	50%
They have taken part in staff CPD	80%
They have communicated with other teachers from different schools	80%
They have taken part in activities that they wouldn't have had the opportunity to do without being part of the SSLP community	90%
They have taken on a leadership role in some of the sessions/activities	80%

90% of link teachers also selected 'Yes' when asked if they felt part of the SSLP community. 10% noted 'Somewhat.' In the survey ran in October 2022, teachers built on this more and noted:

- ◆ *"I feel that I am part of the SSLP community – but it is frustrating when others do not engage."*
- ◆ *"Very much so – I feel that the SSLP acts as a vital hub that replaces the collapse of LEA support and those schools who are not part of a MAT. If anything, I feel that the remit and scope of the SSLP should be expanded."*

Key Findings

- ◆ Staff reflected positively on the Aspiring Pastoral Leaders sessions, with almost 90% of participants noting that they felt better equipped in their current role after taking part.
- ◆ Some participants in this programme reflected that they already knew a lot of the information shared. The SSLP may wish to consider which staff they target to take part, as it might be more suitable for those with less experience.
- ◆ Other participants in the programme shared that it was interesting and helpful to hear about careers in pastoral support, as well as to learn more about how to support pupils.
- ◆ 90% of link teachers reflected that teachers in their schools had taken part in activities that they wouldn't have had the opportunity to without being part of the SSLP community.
- ◆ The sense of the SSLP community was high amongst SSLP link teachers, with one noting that it had filled a much-needed gap where support might have been received by the LEA or a MAT in other schools.

5

What is the impact of the SSLP on staff and schools, according to staff and senior leader qualitative feedback?

Relevant outcomes from the Theory of Change

- ◆ Pupils have a knowledge and awareness of the partnership
- ◆ Access to resources and speakers
- ◆ Collaboration of teachers across multiple schools
- ◆ Feeling part of a wider teaching community and able to call upon peers
- ◆ Teachers and schools are connected and feel part of the network that can gain them connection, skills, and support through sharing and cohesion
- ◆ Enjoyment of their experiences with the SSLP. Schools and teachers value and benefit from the partnership.

Impact on staff

Staff and senior leaders reflected on the positive impact that the SSLP had had for staff within their schools. A key theme related to this was the positive impact of the collaboration between different schools. Particularly for smaller schools, the benefit of having other staff in similar roles to talk to was seen as really helpful. One staff member mentioned that as they only have one person in their department, they were finding it difficult to find somebody who could support with standardising their marking. The SSLP matched them up with somebody else who was also a single person department, and they now work together to standardise marking, share work, and come up with ideas together. A senior leader also shared that the subject hubs run by the SSLP are a *'fantastic idea.'* Another staff member noted that *'as counsellors, we often work in isolation and so the collaboration offered by the SSLP is great.'*

Another staff member shared that *'I think what the SSLP does really well is its network. And it's the collaboration of either knowledge sharing or helping one another out or learning from each other.'* They shared that through the SSLP they learned that another school in the network had a shortage of books, and so they were able to help them out with that, and they will also be donating some additional furniture they have to other schools in the network. They shared that it was often these informal opportunities that were most helpful, and that having the contacts through the SSLP, and knowing who would benefit from different resources was great. One staff member shared that *'I am involved in several networks beyond SSLP, and there is something unique about the SSLP which works really well.'*

Staff also spoke about the CPD that they had participated in through the SSLP, and the impact that this had had. One shared about their experience of taking part in the Aspiring Leadership training and noted that they had learnt a lot from this training. A senior leader also shared that one of their team members had participated in the pastoral leadership programme, and noted that they had found it really beneficial, particularly meeting people from different schools and different backgrounds. Another senior leader also referenced this course, sharing that several members of staff in their school had taken part, and found it *'absolutely fantastic,'* particularly the formatting of

the sessions being online, but with a networking event which they found really beneficial to meet others in person.

Logistical Challenges

Staff and senior leaders talked about some of the logistical challenges, that occasionally made it difficult to take part in SSLP activities. One staff member shared that with different schools having different holidays and different exam weeks, it was challenging to coordinate a time that worked for everyone. Particularly for state schools, it was seen as challenging to get time for staff and students to take part, particularly being able to spare teachers to supervise pupils during the activities. They emphasised that this was not the SSLPs fault but was one of the challenges with taking part in activities. They suggested that sharing activity dates and times as far in advance as possible, would make it easier for them to arrange for pupils and staff to engage.

A senior leader also shared that they saw longer term activities (such as the sustainability project), as the most beneficial for pupils, but that these were also the hardest to arrange logistically. They shared that it is easier to get children to a lecture online, but that these usually weren't as impactful as the longer-term projects.

Further encouraging take up

When discussing how the SSLP may be able to further encourage take up of their activities, staff shared that a certification for particular activities might encourage some pupils to take part, particularly for the longer-term activities. Another shared that they might want to target particular activities at pupils in Year 7 or 8, so that they would take part in SSLP activities when they first start at the school, and then take this through their time at school. They also shared that sometimes the challenge with working with pupils in the older year groups, was that pupils were often preoccupied with exams, so targeting younger pupils would allow for more pupils to get involved, and further collaboration across the schools too.

Staff members shared that it might be helpful to have a student friendly SSLP newsletter that they could then forward on to pupils to encourage their participation in particular activities. In the pupil focus groups, they shared that they were often approached directly by their teachers who thought they would be interested in a particular activity, so a newsletter might allow for the activities to be shared more widely, without adding too much of an additional burden for staff. Senior leaders also suggested the possibility of having SSLP student ambassadors within each school. They believe that this would give the pupils more responsibility and would also give them more impetus to get things set up and encourage their peers to participate.

Senior leaders also spoke about the possibility of setting up some sort of 'obligation' for schools to have some sort of interaction with the SSLP. One senior leader shared that they believe one of the key differences between state schools and independent schools in the SSLP, is that state schools don't have within their remit anything about having to collaborate with other schools or take part in any partnership work. Because of that, they think there is no accountability for staff to take part in or contribute to an event, and a lot of the time it will come down to the staff's own interest or goodwill. They note that once people see the value in the SSLP, they will then take part and encourage others to take part, but it requires that first bit of interest to get staff involved. On this theme, another senior leader shared about the possibility of setting up clearer expectations

for SSLP schools, perhaps with a service level agreement where schools have to sign up to what they will do each year, to make sure that participation across the SSLP schools is equitable.

The SSLP Brand

Another topic that was covered was how important it was for pupils to be aware of whether an event was an SSLP event, or not. General consensus was that the value of the SSLP was the opportunities that it offered to pupils, rather than the SSLP brand itself. For example, one staff member shared *'I'm not sure the SSLP branding is important, but the diversity of opportunities I think is what draws people in.'* Another shared that *'I don't think the students are aware of the SSLP, but I wonder if they need to be? Is it not more important that they know about the other schools and the network, and that work that's being used as a vehicle through it. It doesn't matter if they know that it's run by the SSLP, but I think what's important is that we are all connected and helping each other.'* Thus, staff and senior leaders generally agreed that the SSLP brand was less important, and that it was the opportunities and collaboration offered by the SSLP that they found most valuable.

Key Findings

- ◆ Staff reflected that the collaboration between schools offered by the SSLP was helpful, particularly for smaller schools who could look for support from other SSLP schools for things like supporting with marking and sharing resources.
- ◆ Staff and senior leaders also reflected on the positive experience of participating in CPD sessions run by the SSLP and valued that they were able to meet other teachers in person through these trainings.
- ◆ Teachers and leaders shared about some logistical challenges with participating in SSLP events, such as finding a good time that works for everyone and finding staff to supervise. They suggested that the SSLP share activity dates and times as far in advance as possible, to make it easier for staff and pupils to engage.
- ◆ Some ideas about how to encourage further participation in the SSLP was suggested, such as creating a student friendly newsletter, having SSLP student ambassadors in each school, and setting clear expectations for what each school will contribute to the SSLP each year.
- ◆ Staff and senior leaders were of the viewpoint that the SSLP brand, and whether students knew whether an activity was run by the SSLP was less important than the opportunities and collaboration that is offered by the partnership.

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