



loudmouth
education & training through theatre

**Theatre in Education Tour on
Puberty & Transitions in
Dudley Primary Schools
Academic Year 2013/2014**



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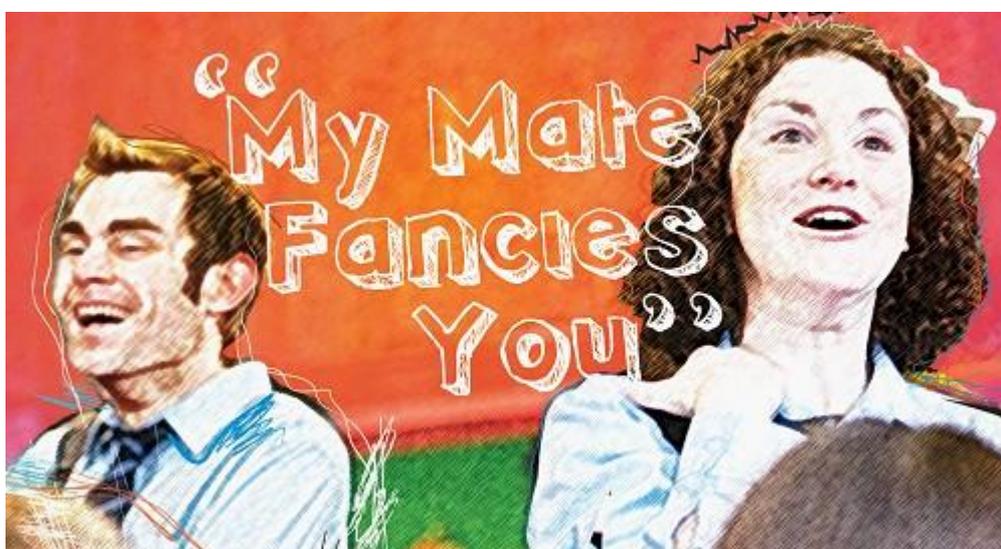
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Introduction

This summary report covers a theatre in education (T.I.E.) tour in a number of Dudley primary schools. The tour was delivered by Loudmouth Education & Training, with the aim to educate children about puberty and the transition from primary to secondary school. It used Loudmouth's longstanding theatre in education programme 'My Mate Fancies You' which is a drama performance and interactive workshop on puberty, transitions and growing up.

Teaching staff were given access to a term's worth of Loudmouth's online lesson plans that accompany the programme. Teaching staff can use the lesson plans to help them prepare the pupils for the theatre in education sessions and also to run follow up work to consolidate the pupils' learning.

The tour was part-funded by Dudley Public Health and we would like to thank Kath Clarke, Sex and Relationships Education Co-ordinator, Dudley Healthy Schools Public Health Programme for her support.



Established in 1994, Loudmouth Education & Training is a theatre company that supports schools and other organisations with their Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programmes. Loudmouth's aim is to help children and young people to have healthy, happy and safe relationships. The company uses drama, interaction and discussion to explore issues that affect children and young people. Loudmouth's education and training programmes are proven to help learners to challenge attitudes, gain new skills and increase knowledge.

"Perfect way to educate young people on sensitive 'taboo' areas."

Year 6 Teacher, Wren's Nest Primary School

Executive Summary

- From April 2014 to July 2014, Loudmouth Education & Training ran 'My Mate Fancies You', an interactive theatre in education tour of 30 primary schools in Dudley.
- Loudmouth delivered a total of 41 sessions for Year 5 and 6 pupils, aged 9 – 11. Fourteen of these sessions were delivered in priority schools.
- The programme that was delivered is called 'My Mate Fancies You'. This well researched and interactive programme explores the often daunting physical and emotional changes associated with puberty and prepares the children for the smooth transition from primary to secondary school. As with all of Loudmouth's work, 'My Mate Fancies You' supports learners to understand the importance of creating healthy, happy and safe relationships.
- A total of 1204 pupils participated in the 'My Mate Fancies You' programme.
- Loudmouth signposted all of the pupils to ChildLine as a support service by delivering ChildLine's key messages during the session and distributing a signposting card to every pupil at the end of each session. Before the session ChildLine was not in the top answers given by pupils on who they could go to for support. After the sessions it was the second highest response with 45%.
- Teaching staff were given access to a term's worth of Loudmouth's online lesson plans that accompany the programme. Teaching staff can use the lesson plans to help them prepare the pupils for the theatre in education sessions and also to run follow up work to consolidate the pupils' learning.
- 97% of pupils thought that 'My Mate Fancies You' was helpful.
- 98% of pupils and 100% of staff stated that they would recommend the programme for next year's pupils.
- 95% of pupils stated after seeing 'My Mate Fancies You' that they 'know quite a bit' or are 'very knowledgeable' about the physical changes that take place during puberty.
- 96% of pupils stated after seeing 'My Mate Fancies You' that they 'know quite a bit' or are 'very knowledgeable' about the emotional changes that take place during puberty.
- After seeing 'My Mate Fancies You' 96% of the pupils thought it was important or very important to learn about puberty.
- 87% of staff stated that 'My Mate Fancies You' had increased their own confidence in delivering work around the issues.
- 100% of staff rated the programme as above average or excellent with 94% stating it was excellent.

"A fantastic way of teaching children about puberty and growing up."
Teaching Assistant, Rufford Primary

Conclusions

The evaluation results from the tour have proven that the programme has been very successful and clearly had an impact on the pupils and staff.

All of the learning objectives were met, with the children learning about puberty and transitions in a safe and engaging way through interactive drama and discussion.

The evaluation results clearly show the success of the tour, showing that 'My Mate Fancies You' greatly increases the knowledge and confidence of the pupils on the issues of puberty and transitions and the increase in staffs' confidence in delivering further work on the issues. It was interesting to see that only 30% of staff had seen the online lesson plans Loudmouth provides to accompany this programme. We promote the lesson plans during the booking process and when we are visiting each school however there is a large number of staff who aren't hearing about or seeing these. The use of the lesson plans would add even more value to the programme. This is something we could look at for future years, how to get more schools using the lesson plans.

The evaluation results show that interactive theatre is the pupils' preferred method of learning about the subject of puberty and that they would recommend it to next year's pupils. Similarly all staff rated the programme highly with 100% recommending it to other schools. This clearly highlights that there is strong need for the work to continue.

The report also demonstrates that this approach is a powerful way to communicate key messages about where children and young people can get support. The increase in knowledge around ChildLine was staggering from 0 to 45%. At Loudmouth we feel we could improve on this and if the funding was available next year to repeat this tour, we will give ourselves a target of over 50% of the participating children knowing about ChildLine by the end of the session.

A total of 1204 children have participated in the theatre in education sessions. This is an increase of 52 children from last year's tour. The tour went to 3 more schools than last year. This year we introduced a range of more flexible formats so that schools who may have been limited by time and/or money could have the programme in. It is very encouraging to see we gained schools and pupil numbers as a result.

It is encouraging to see that all schools paid a fixed contribution towards the costs. Many schools at the time of writing in July 14 have already booked dates in for next year hoping for repeat funding. At present no future funding has been confirmed.

"Informative yet fun, tackles a tricky topic with enthusiasm. It has helped them (the pupils) to realise that change will occur and happens to everyone. Another excellent session, would thoroughly recommend Loudmouth to any school or educational organisation."

Year 5 Teacher, Roberts Primary

"I thought the play was really helpful, because now I understand how you grow and the emotional changes in life."

Year 6 Pupil

Summary of Activity

The tour commenced in April 2014 and concluded in July 2014. A total of 41 sessions were delivered for children aged 9 - 11 years, in 30 Dudley primary schools. Each school paid a fixed financial contribution towards the cost of each of their sessions.

A total of 1204 children were reached. The full summary of sessions and gender breakdown is below:

School	No. of sessions	No. of pupils	No. of females	No. of males
Olive Hill Primary	1	42	20	22
Hawbush Primary	1	23	12	11
Belle Vue Primary	1	56	20	36
Hurst Hill Primary	2	49	28	21
Rufford Primary	1	25	12	13
Amblecote Primary	1	20	8	12
Netherbrook Primary	2	50	28	22
Bromley Pensnett Primary	1	20	7	13
Bramford Primary	2	56	27	29
Pedmore CE Primary	1	32	18	14
Blanford Mere Primary	1	26	18	8
Wollescote Primary	2	48	24	24
The Ridge Primary	1	26	8	18
St Edmund & St John Primary	1	35	16	19
Halesowen CE Primary	1	19	14	5
Northfield Road Primary	1	50	30	20
Ham Dingle Primary	2	50	31	19
Newfield Park Primary	2	56	33	23
Foxyards Primary	1	32	19	13
Straits Primary	2	40	19	21
Wren's Nest Primary	2	45	21	24
Sledmere Primary	2	49	22	27
St Marks CE Primary	1	24	11	13
Milking Bank Primary	2	59	37	22
Withymoor Primary	2	54	32	22
Brier School	1	20	7	13
Roberts Primary	1	90	45	45
Colley Lane Primary	1	74	37	37
Hob Green Primary	1	34	17	17
Total	41	1204	621	583

The majority of sessions were run with a class at a time working with up to 35 young people in a session. We ran 5 year group sessions this year where the performance element of the session was run with a whole year group followed by a series of class sized workshops.

Qualitative Feedback From Pupil Evaluations

The feedback from pupils was overwhelmingly positive. Here are a few examples of the things the young people said about the sessions:

"The session has made me feel confident within myself, I feel like I can talk to people, I'm not on my own."

"This was very fun and interactive! :-)"

"I've learnt to be more confident about puberty."

The 'My Mate Fancies You' session is helpful because...

"...it helps you understand what happens to males and females during puberty."

"...it involved all body changes for boys and girls."

"...I now understand words that I didn't know and the changes."

"...I now know more things about relationships and puberty."

"Learning about puberty is important in my education."

"Safe. Confident. Freedom. I now know I can talk to someone."

"I thought 'My Mate Fancies You' was amazing because it made me laugh a lot and I would recommend it to next year's pupils."

Qualitative Feedback From Staff Evaluations

Here are a few examples of what staff thought of the sessions from their evaluation forms:

"A really interesting and enjoyable way to talk to the children about puberty. A relaxed atmosphere which made the children feel confident to ask questions." Teaching Assistant, Hob Green Primary

"An excellent presentation that enthralled and entertained but also informed about relevant issues - Superb. Information that the children get is exactly what they need in a brilliant presentation... couldn't deliver the information in such a dynamic way in my role." Assistant Head Teacher, Withymoor Primary

"It definitely has enhanced their understanding of the issues of puberty and they are more confident talking about them. I have taught in Year 6 now for six years and seen this effective production many times and it always gives me confidence to deliver this work." Class Teacher, Milking Bank

"Covered all aspects of growing up in an interesting and updated way, with time for personalised questions and answers." Supply Teacher, Wollescote Primary

"There was an excellent balance between developing their knowledge and making it fun and interesting. It extended their knowledge and gave them a safe environment to share ideas, misconceptions and raise questions." Year 6 Teacher, Straits Primary

"It is an interactive and wonderful drama- a great combination so that kids can talk about what they've seen." Year 6 Teacher, Straits Primary

"Opportunities for both boys and girls to discuss ideas in a non-threatening way. Children are now aware of different feelings and emotions as well as the physical changes which can occur. They're now aware of services, people at home and people within school who they contact." Teacher, Bromley Pensnett

"Issues were tackled in a way that really connected with the kids. It was fantastic that you guys used the words that the kids would be far too embarrassed to talk to staff about." Teacher, Brierley Hill Primary School

"It has provided a 'way in' to discussing these issues. It has encouraged the pupils to know that all the changes are normal and nothing to be afraid/embarrassed about." Teacher, Sledmere Primary School

"A very worthwhile experience for all- thank you! Excellent that correct vocabulary used. Discussion opportunities were a 'safe' environment via the actors -impressed with how maturely the children reacted." Teacher, Ham Dingle Primary School

"I would recommend this T.I.E. programme to other schools – it's good for the children that it's not their teachers! It allowed us to reinforce sex education and allowed children to learn more in a relaxed environment." Year 6 Co-ordinator, Colley Lane

"Informative, consisting of correct vocabulary putting children at ease. Drama puts the concepts over more concisely. It helps cover a difficult subject for teachers to deliver; gave the children a chance to discuss with their peers and someone new without the constraints of 'teacher – pupils' relationships." Phase 2 Leader, Netherbrook Primary

"Kids learn so much in a pressure free environment. Great young role models for the kids to relate to. Superb team- really approachable, charismatic. It's the best part of my year!" Year 6 Teacher, Rufford Primary

"Great for both genders to explore what is happening in each other's bodies (e.g. boys to learn about periods). The children were reassured throughout that changes are normal." Key Stage 2 Leader, Pedmore CE Primary

"Whole session packed with knowledge / vocabulary, pace, humour – pupils were engaged. Appropriate to this age group. Loudmouth staff had an excellent rapport with the students." Teacher, St. Mark's C.E. Primary

"It greatly increased the group's awareness that these changes are normal and natural – letting the boys know what happens to girls and vice versa." Year 6 Teacher, Hawbush Primary

"Handled very sensitively but with humour which meant the children were relaxed and enjoyed the session and the discussions after allowed children to contribute and ask questions without feeling embarrassed. This is an issue I haven't explored previously with children but on seeing the way it has been approached today and the resources available online, I now feel more confident and equipped to teach issues on the subject" Class Teacher, Olive Hill Primary

"It addresses the issues sensitively, openly and in a way that is of interest to the children in a relaxed, non-threatening manner. As a PSHE co-ordinator it's always good to see new strategies to develop teaching of issues." PSHE Co-ordinator, Newfield Park

"I wish there had been something like this when I was younger! It recapped information covered by the school nurse, but included more detail and was presented in a more accessible format." Teacher, Northfield Road Primary

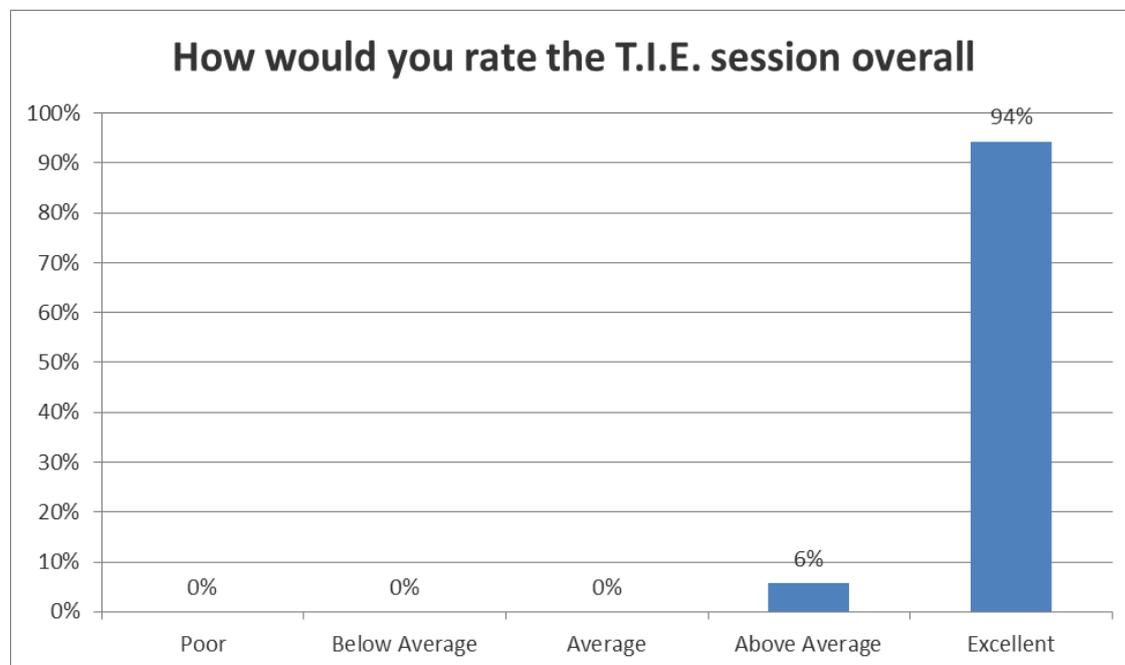
"A great way of communicating growing up to the children- they had little awareness before the session. Will be using Loudmouth resources sex education lessons next week. Thanks very much!" Key Stage 2 Leader, Halesowen CE Primary

Quantitative Information from Staff and Pupil Evaluation Forms

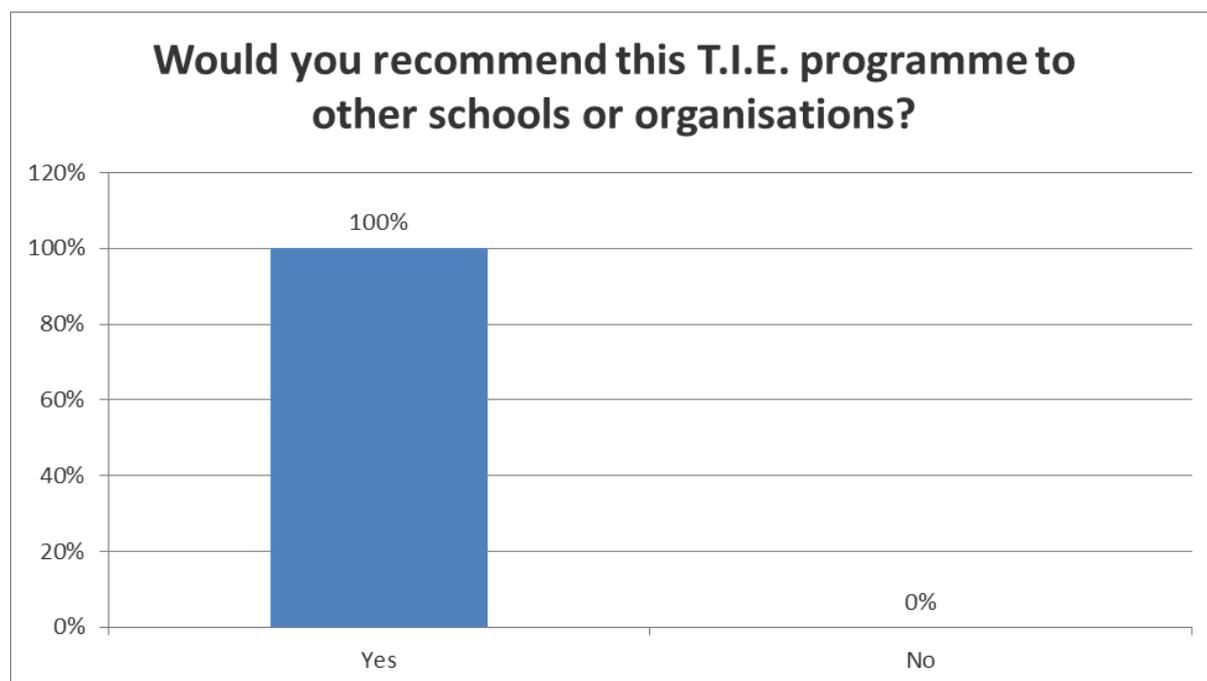
We asked schools to complete online pre session evaluations and Loudmouth staff conducted post session evaluations of one class at each school. For ease of reading we have rounded up the figures. As a result not all will add up to 100%.

Staff members present at the sessions were also asked to complete an evaluation form.

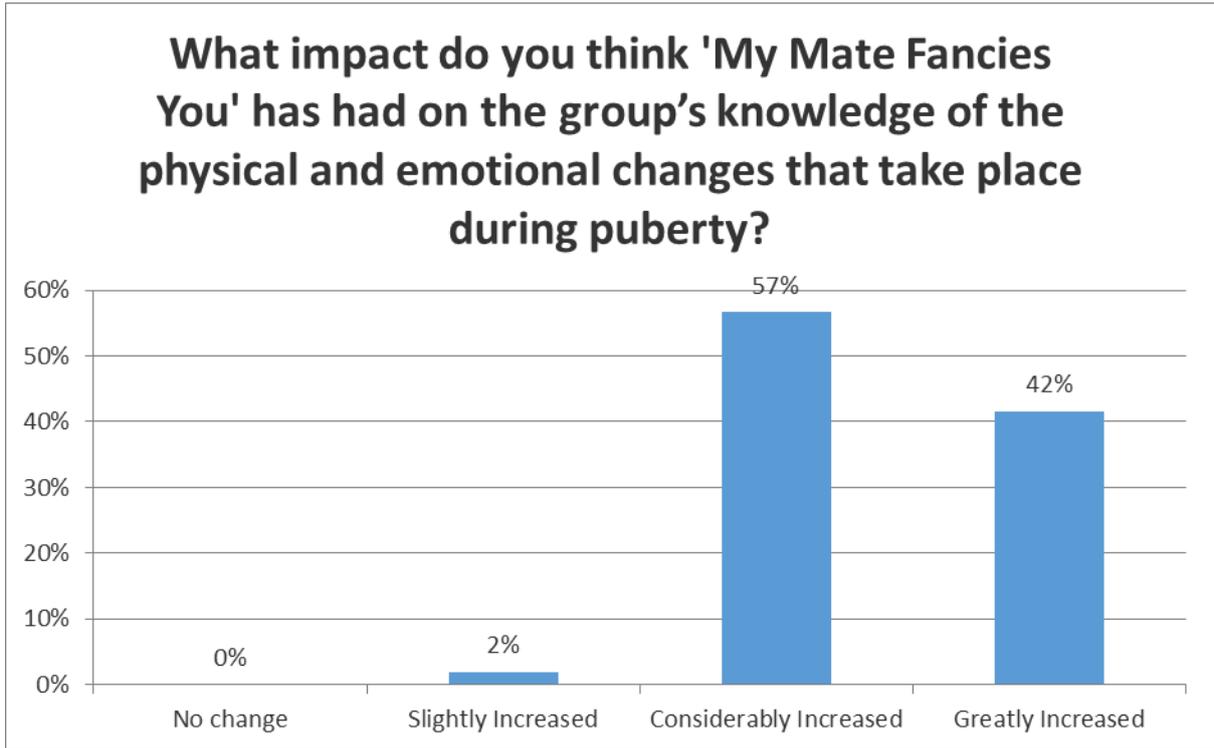
Staff Evaluation Results



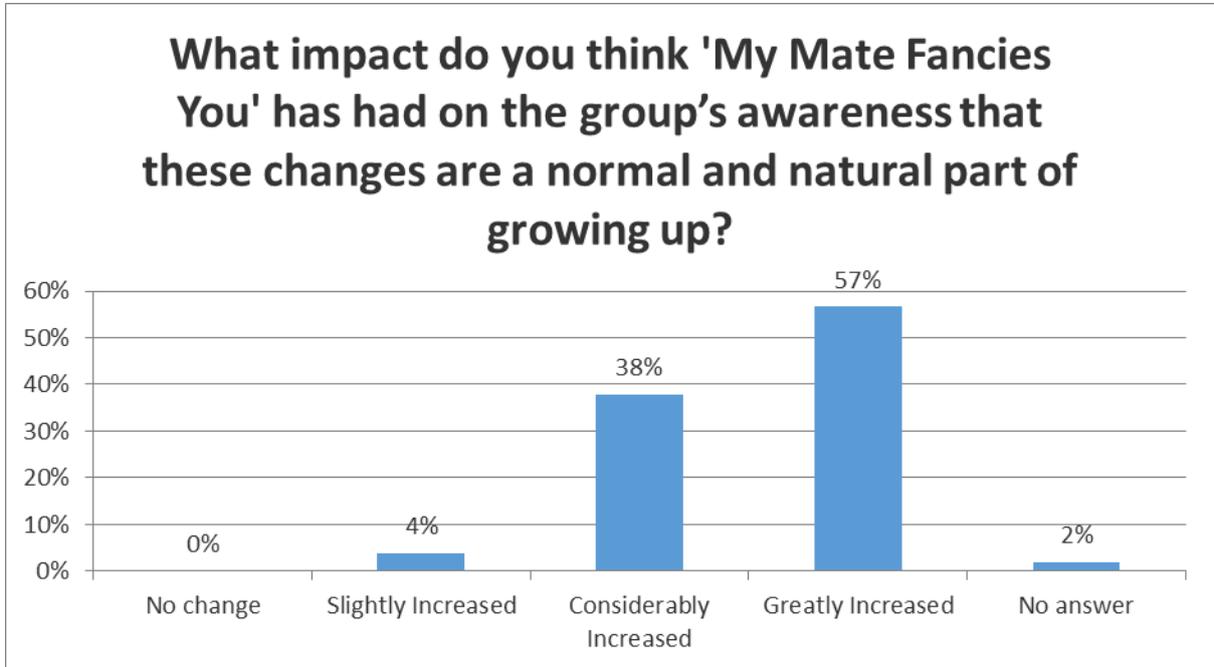
Members of staff were asked how they rate the 'My Mate Fancies You' session. 100% rated it above average or excellent with 94% stating it was excellent.



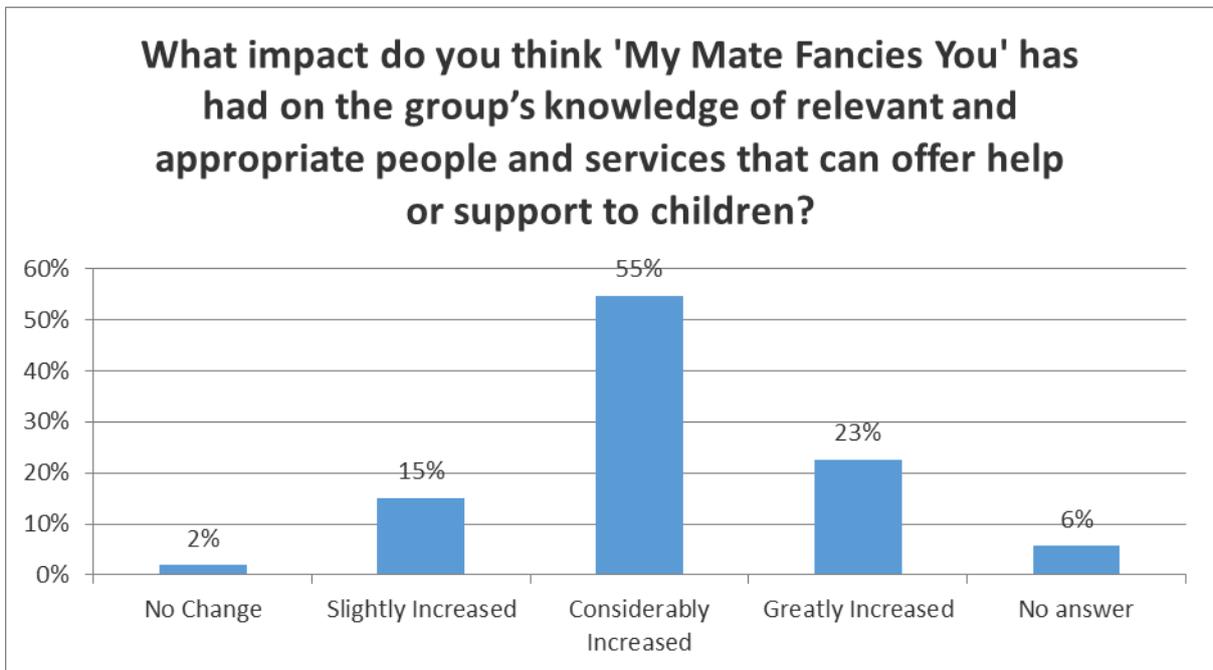
100% of staff would recommend 'My Mate Fancies You' to other schools and organisations.



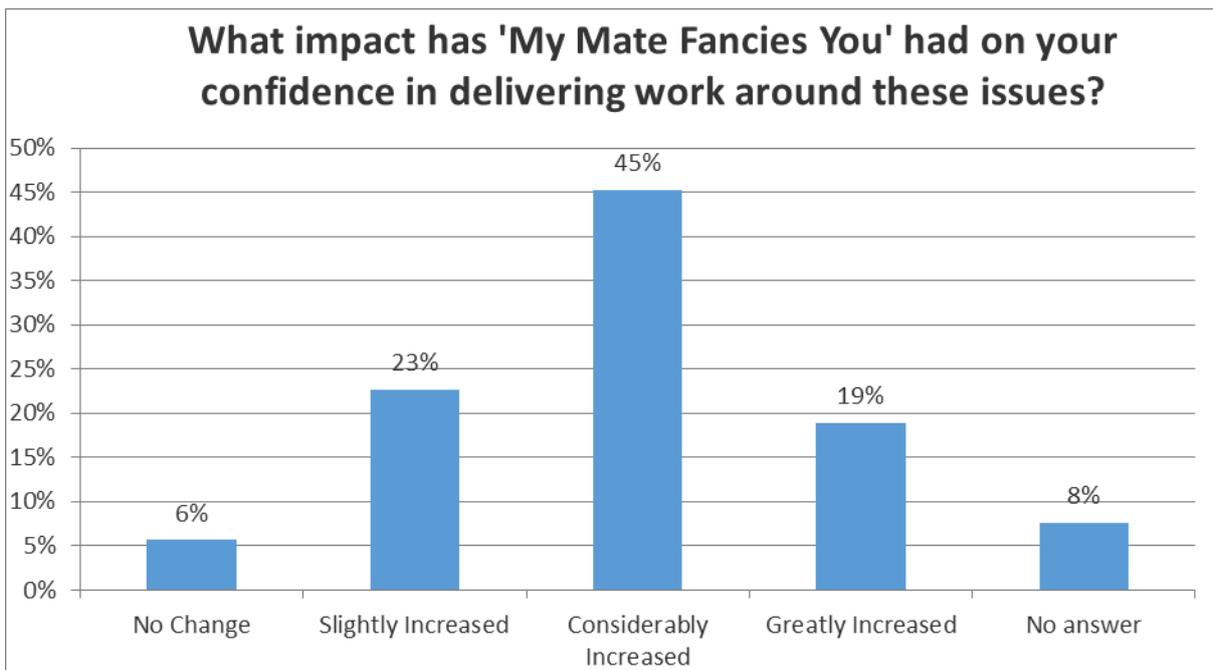
98% of staff stated that 'My Mate Fancies You' had greatly or considerably increased the group's knowledge of the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty.



96% of staff stated that 'My Mate Fancies You' had greatly or considerably increased the group's awareness that these changes are a normal and natural part of growing up.

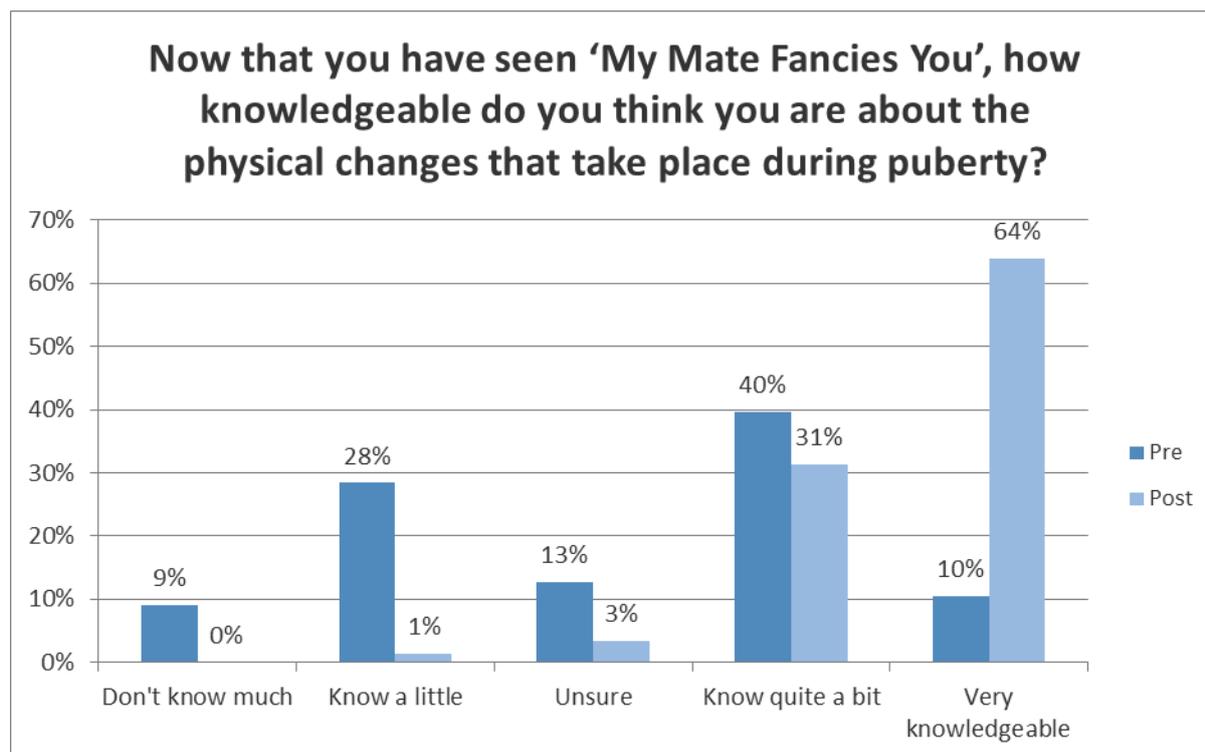


78% of staff stated that 'My Mate Fancies You' had greatly or considerably increased the group's knowledge of relevant services that can offer help or support to children.

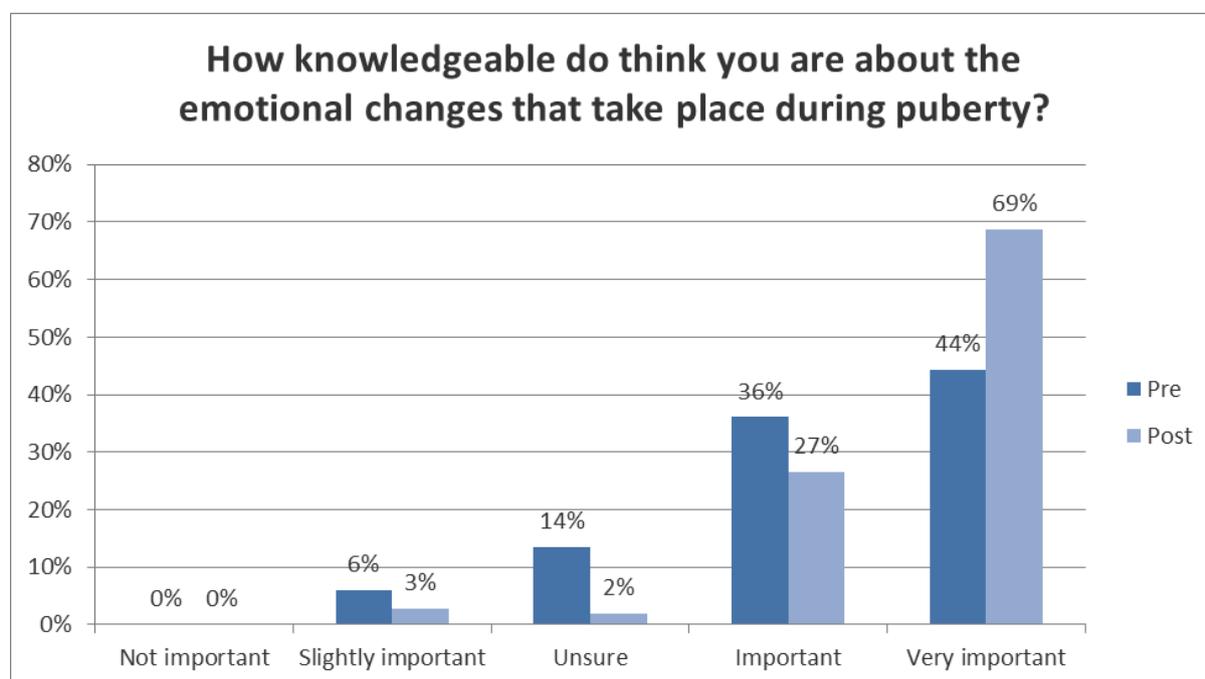


94% of staff said that 'My Mate Fancies You' had had some increase in their confidence in delivering work around the issues. 64% of staff stated that 'My Mate Fancies You' had greatly or considerably increased their confidence. However only 30% of staff recorded that they had seen the online lesson plans that accompany Loudmouth's visits to the school.

Pupil Evaluation Results



You can clearly see the shift between pre and post session evaluations with 95% of pupils stating that they 'know quite a bit' or are 'very knowledgeable' about the physical changes that take place during puberty after seeing 'My Mate Fancies You'. Only 50% thought this before seeing 'My Mate Fancies You'.



Again you can clearly see the shift between pre and post session evaluations with 96% of pupils stating post session that they 'know quite a bit' or are 'very knowledgeable' about the emotional changes that take place during puberty. 80% thought this before seeing 'My Mate Fancies You'.

The young people were asked to list 3 types of changes that take place during puberty.

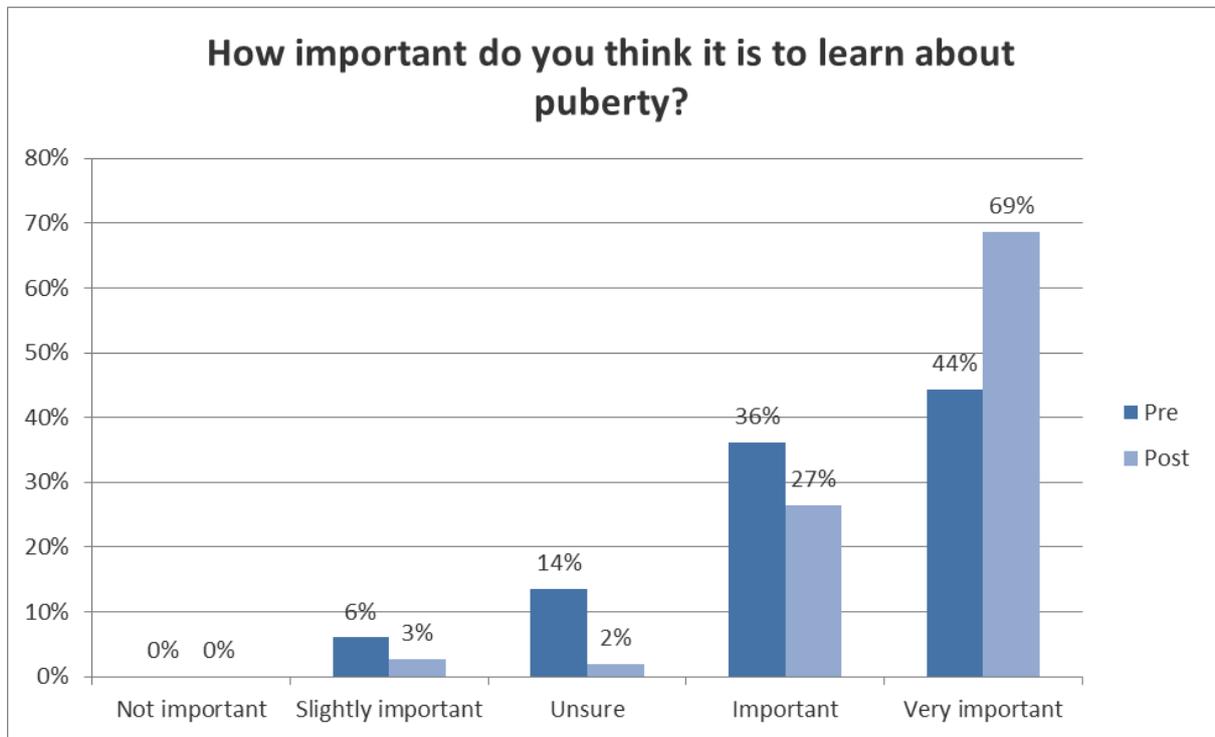
The top answers before the 'My Mate Fancies You' sessions were:

Changes	%
Body hair	31%
Voice breaks	22%
Get taller	20%
Pubic hair	18%
Periods	18%
Spots	15%
Mood swings	13%
Facial Hair	10%
Breast develop	7%
Bigger hips	7%

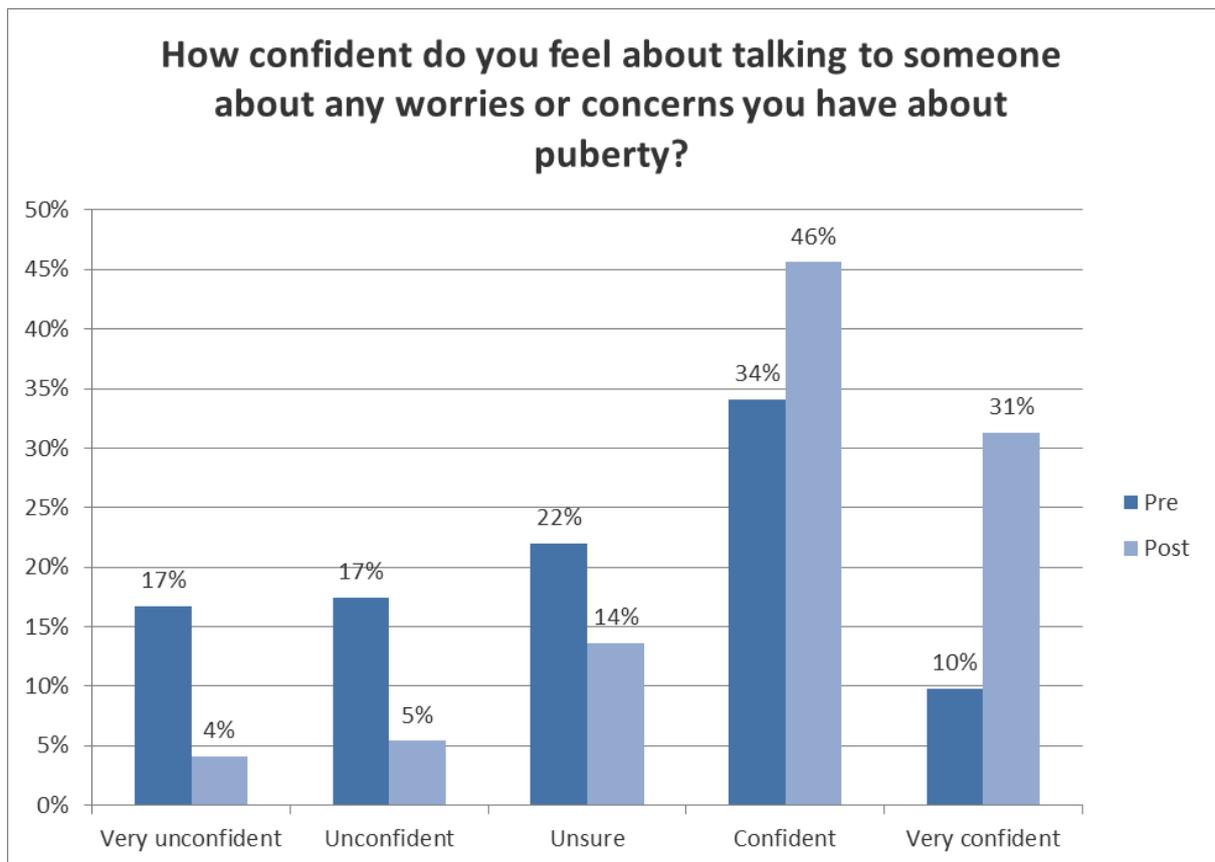
The top answers after the 'My Mate Fancies You' sessions were:

Changes	%
Pubic hair	46%
Body hair	43%
Spots	34%
Periods	31%
Voice breaks	18%
Breasts develop	14%
Mood swings	13%
Sweat	10%
Facial Hair	8%
Wet dreams	7%

There was an increase in the number of people who could identify key changes. Some new body changes were given that they didn't identify before seeing 'My Mate Fancies You' e.g. wet dreams and sweat.



After seeing 'My Mate Fancies You' 96% of the pupils thought it was important or very important to learn about puberty. This is an increase from 80% before the session.



After seeing 'My Mate Fancies You' 77% of pupils feel confident or very confident about talking to someone about any worries or concerns they have about puberty. Before the session only 44% stated this.

The pupils were asked to name 3 people or places where they could go for advice and information on puberty.

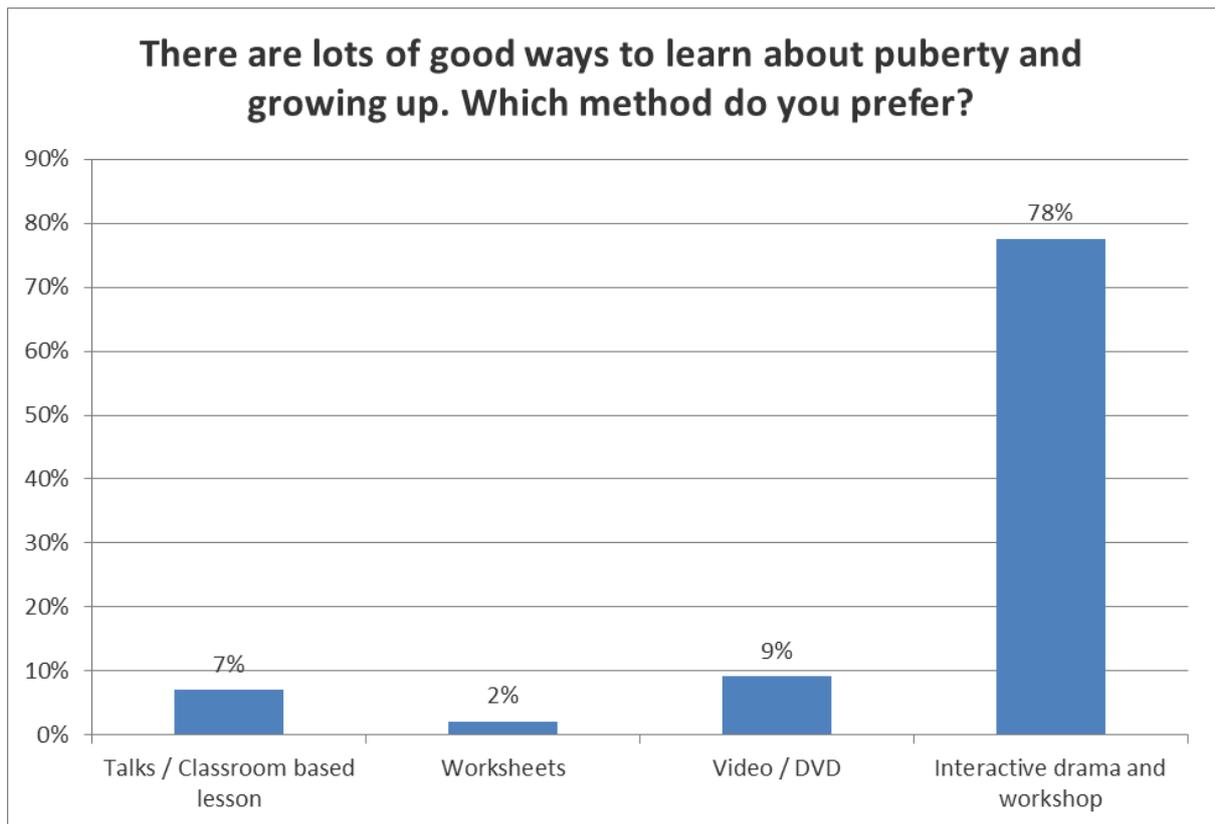
The top answers before the pupils saw 'My Mate Fancies You' were:

Who/Where To Go For Support	%
Parents	67%
Doctor / GP	45%
Teachers	43%
Family	15%
School Nurse	13%
Hospital	13%
Grandparents	12%
Friends	8%
Brothers/Sisters	7%
Internet	7%

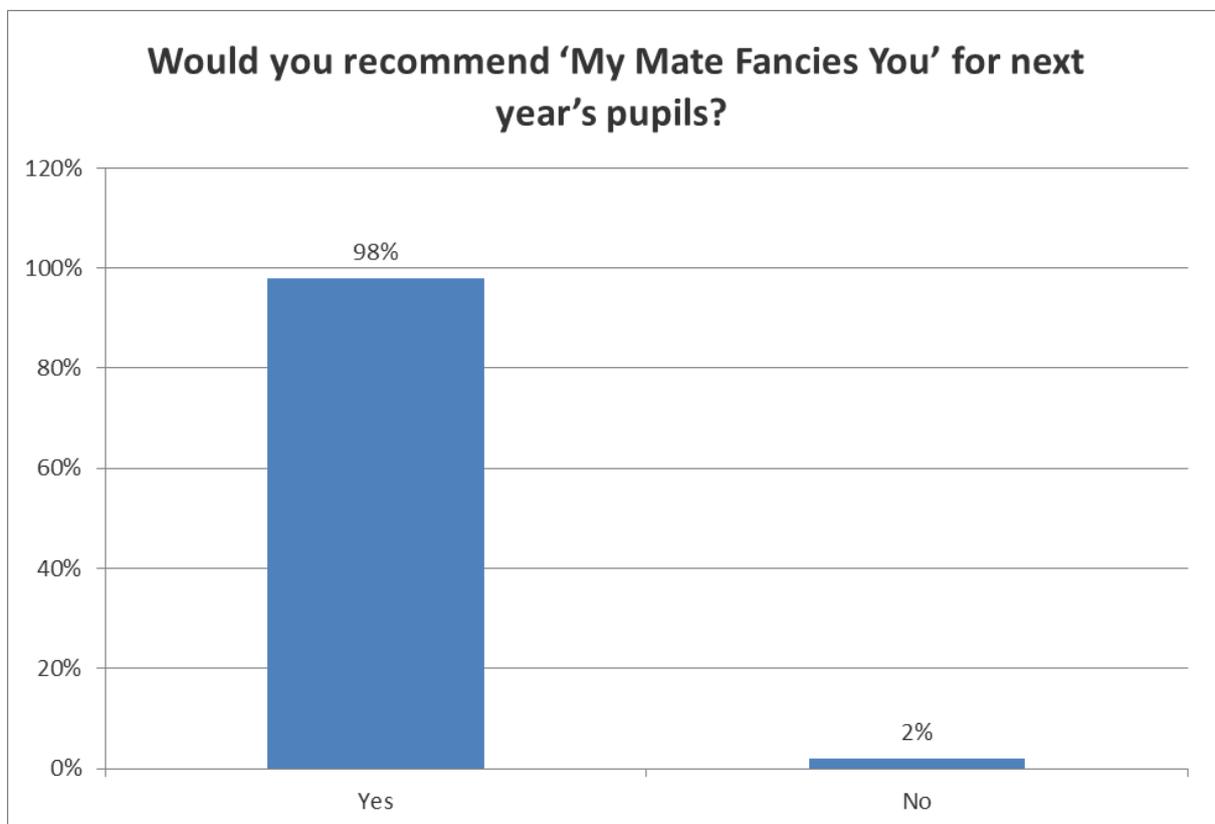
After the session the top answers were:

Who/Where To Go For Support	Number
Parents / Guardians	75%
ChildLine	45%
Teachers	39%
Doctors	38%
Family	23%
School Nurse	18%
Friends	14%
Loudmouth website	13%
Internet	5%
Grandparents	3%

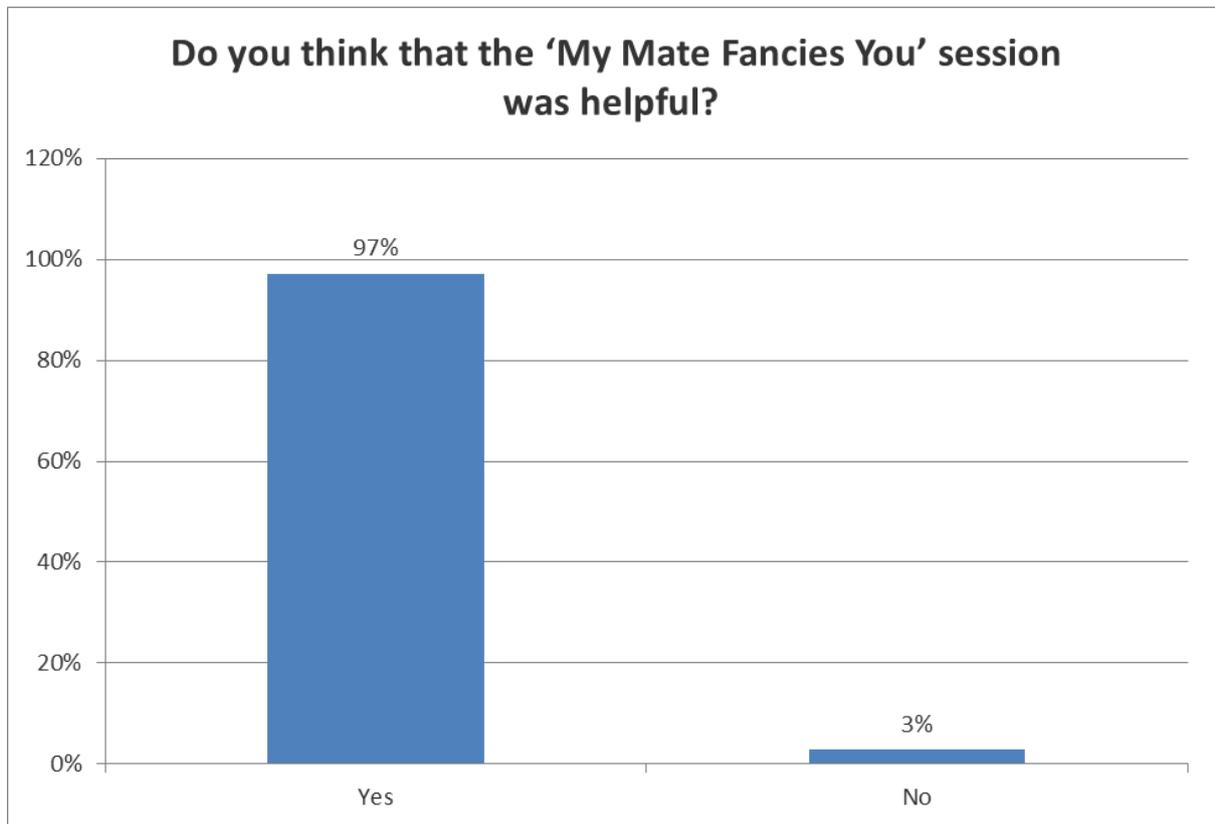
ChildLine, who were the main service signposted to the pupils, was not given as an answer before the Loudmouth sessions took place. This was the second top answer after the 'My Mate Fancies You' sessions with 45% of pupils identifying the service as where they could go to for support. This clearly shows that the signposting learning objective of the programme was met. Whilst parents stayed the top answer nobody included guardians in this answer until after the 'My Mate Fancies You' session.



A clear majority (78%) of children preferred the approach used in 'My Mate Fancies You' to learn about puberty and growing up, using interactive drama and workshops.



98% of pupils stated that they would recommend the programme for next year's pupils.



97% of pupils thought that 'My Mate Fancies You' was helpful to them.

Appendix

My Mate Fancies You Learning Objectives

Attitudes and Values

- Children have an increased awareness of what makes a good and bad relationship.
- Children have an increased awareness that there will be changes as they go through puberty and that this is okay and normal.
- Children have an increased awareness of their own and other people's feelings and emotions.
- Children have increased empathy for the changes and views for both genders.

Skills

- Children have an increased ability to communicate effectively with their parents around independence.
- Children have an increased confidence in seeking help and support about puberty and growing up.
- Children have an increased ability to cope with the physical changes (particularly periods).

Knowledge

- Children have increased knowledge of the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty.
- Children have increased knowledge of relevant and appropriate services that can offer help or support to children, e.g. ChildLine.