

“My Mate
Fancies
You”

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Learning what matters

A qualitative evaluation of Loudmouth's approach to PSHE for primary age children

Summary

Since 1994, Loudmouth Theatre in Education (TIE) Company has been developing a delivery model, incorporating the use of TIE into Personal, Health, Social and Economic education (PSHE). "It Opened My Eyes- Using Theatre in Education to Deliver Sex and Relationship Education"¹, recommended that TIE should consider the impact of the entire delivery model (not just the impact of the performance piece) when assessing the quality of the work. Thus, this evaluation study examines the impact of the delivery model developed by Loudmouth and assesses how those involved in the process interpret how this works in practice.

Focus groups were held with 30 pupils and 3 teachers in 3 schools in Dudley, following their participation in the 'My Mate Fancies You' programme. The programme explores the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty, and prepares pupils for the transition between primary to secondary school. This evaluation sets out to identify what characteristics, students and teachers found to be most valuable in the Loudmouth approach to delivering PSHE in primary schools. The focus groups examined which aspects of the programme were perceived to be most useful in creating an effective learning experience and ultimately influencing future behaviours.

Previous research into Loudmouth's work in achieving learning outcomes in secondary schools had overwhelmingly identified that pupils, staff and parents felt that Loudmouth programmes did make a positive difference to their learning, but limited evaluation had occurred in primary schools. Therefore, this evaluation sought to examine what aspects of the Loudmouth delivery model helped achieve these positive outcomes. The findings revealed three key themes, which are integral to the Loudmouth delivery model:

- Pupils and teachers benefitted from integration of humour in the performance and workshop activities and identified how this supports individuals to discuss sensitive issues in a group context.
- The content of the play was considered to be relevant and of interest to the pupils and the 'theatrical experience' played an important role in their learning.

¹ Sawney, Fiona, Susie Sykes, Mandy Keene, Liz Swinden and Geraldine McCormick. (2004). It Opened My Eyes. Using Theatre in Education to Deliver Sex and Relationship Education: A Good Practice Guide. London: Health Development Agency.

- The relationship that develops between the school and the pupils with the performers/ Loudmouth played an important role in developing trust and engagement from pupils, health professionals and the educators.



1.1 Background

Loudmouth Education and Training has a successful history of using drama within curricula concerned with sex and relationships. During the development of their work, the company has secured a good track record and evidence base² which indicates that their approach to using TIE (Theatre in Education) in PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) education positively impacts the learning and the lifestyle choices made by pupils.

This case study evaluation focuses upon an analysis of the role of the delivery model in achieving these successes. It analyses the delivery model which Loudmouth has developed and which incorporates TIE and seeks to investigate the impact of this delivery model in helping to achieve positive learning outcomes. “It Opened My Eyes- Using Theatre in Education to Deliver Sex and Relationship Education”³ recommended that TIE which featured as part of sex and relationships education, should consider the impact of the delivery model (and not just the impact of the performance piece) when assessing the quality of the work. This case study will use a case study methodology and appreciative inquiry to consider the relevance and impact the Loudmouth delivery model has on how it delivers learning in Dudley.

The evaluation forms part of a series of studies focusing on the impact of arts and health work in Dudley which have been commissioned by NHS Dudley and Creative Health CIC as part of the praXis arts and health programme of work.

1.2 Loudmouth

Based in Birmingham, Loudmouth uses a TIE (Theatre in Education) approach to raise awareness and educate young people using a range of programmes associated with PSHE,

2 My Mate Fancies You Evaluation 2009; Normative Approach Survey 2009; Highgate Helping Hands Tour: Evaluation Report (2010); Holte Helping Hands Tour : Evaluation report 2010; Theatre in Health Education Tour of South Birmingham Secondary Schools 2009/10

3 Sawney, Fiona, Susie Sykes, Mandy Keene, Liz Swinden and Geraldine McCormick. (2004). It Opened My Eyes. Using Theatre in Education to Deliver Sex and Relationship Education: A Good Practice Guide. London: Health Development Agency.

as well as provide training for staff, health professionals and parents/ carers. The company uses a range of processes to educate, stimulate debate and challenge attitudes amongst communities of young people. The company has a long relationship with NHS Dudley, and has secured a number of commissions to deliver their programmes in schools in Dudley.

Loudmouth's delivery model includes developing long term relationships with schools, developing lesson plans, support and follow on work for staff, and interactive drama sessions for young people and presentations to parents. Typically the company, which includes Directors, an administrative and management team and actors/ facilitators, develop bespoke programmes of work based upon different topics and which include interactive performances, workshops and follow up material and the work produced tours between schools. Their Theatre in Education work is normally delivered to class size groups as part of PSHE programmes. Previous topics have included bullying, domestic abuse, dealing with puberty, and relationships. In all cases the company uses training programmes to help learners to challenge attitudes, gain new skills and increase knowledge.⁴

1.3 NHS Dudley

According to the NHS Health profile of Dudley⁵ levels of teenage pregnancy within Dudley are higher than the national average. In 2010, Dudley had the second lowest rate of teenage conception in the West Midlands⁶.

It has been recognised in the Dudley Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14⁷ that the levels and complexity of need among children, young people and their families is high in some places within Dudley, particularly those with high rates of child poverty, places a great strain on local health resources, particularly in the current economic climate. To respond to these challenges, NHS Dudley has a long reputation of developing and supporting a range of approaches to educate and support people to make more positive lifestyle choices and improve public health. By adopting innovative solutions in tackling these issues, NHS Dudley

4 Highgate Helping Hands Tour: Evaluation Report (2010)

5 Crown Copyright (2012) NHS Health Profile (2012)

6 Office for National Statistics, 2012

7 Dudley Children and Young People's Partnership (2011) Dudley Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14

hopes to improve the quality of life and wellbeing for people living in the region.

NHS Dudley have developed a long-term partnership with Loudmouth, and have championed the integration of Loudmouth’s programmes into local PSHE work. Typically, these teacher-facilitated programmes are classroom based and on occasions include contributions from health professionals and specialists based within the Sex and Relationships Team at NHS Dudley. The team has supported the integration of a range of creative interventions to support the curricula concerned with this area of work, including the development of a creative resources pack for schools as well as commissioning Loudmouth programmes. In regards to their work with Loudmouth, they have commissioned the creation of productions, supported the integration of their work into local schools and have supported the company to form relationships with local education providers.

It is through this long-term relationship with Loudmouth, that NHS Dudley have recognised the significance of Loudmouth’s delivery model in delivering successful outcomes. Increasingly, factors for success within health services are generally focused on whether an intervention can achieve a specific health outcome. However, whilst this can often mean that the research is restricted to an outcome analysis, and will fail to analyse the impact of the delivery model in achieving these outcomes. Therefore the purpose of this evaluation is to look in more depth at the processes used to achieve these outcomes and identify elements of practice, specifically related to Loudmouth’s approach to TIE, that participants perceive to be most influential in helping them achieve the health outcomes and to use these findings to develop Loudmouth’s work.



This case study will use a case study methodology and appreciative enquiry to consider the relevance and impact the Loudmouth delivery model has on how it delivers sex and relationship education in Dudley.

A case study methodology still follows a rigorous methodological process (Yin, 2009)⁸ but loans itself towards investigations, which focus upon how or why things have an impact. It also allows you to provide (sometimes for the first time) a description of the change, which is occurring. As this study is not about incidents that need to be recorded over a period of time, there is an opportunity to look at contemporary work and query why the work Loudmouth is involved in has an impact. Yin identifies the scope of a case study as an inquiry into something where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. Thus, this case study will seek to use the “It opened my eyes” recommendations as a context for understanding the impact of Loudmouth’s work on participants, staff and actors. By focusing upon a small sample of schools, it will focus upon how the delivery model helps achieve the learning outcomes.

The researcher, Janet Hetherington from Staffordshire University, led all of the evaluation workshops and they took place between May- July 2012.

The ‘It Opened My Eyes’ report⁹ is supportive of the involvement of young people in the evaluation process, and suggests that they are likely to know the best way to access the views of other young people as well as provide a valuable insight into the analysis of theatre in education work. Thus, an inclusion criterion for participation for the study was agreed between Loudmouth and the evaluator. It included:

- Participants will have engaged in the ‘My Mates Fancies You’ programme (incorporating a performance and a workshop)
- Participants will be engaged in a PSHE learning programme in an educational setting.
- Participants are in the final year of primary school (pupils) or have a responsibility for PSHE curriculum delivery (educators).

⁸ Yin, Robert. K. (2002). Case study research: Design and methods.(3rd Ed.) Beverly Hills: Sage.

⁹ Ibid, p.9

The process for selection was co-facilitated by Loudmouth and the evaluator. Schools which had booked Loudmouth workshops, and for which this criteria was applicable, were invited by the Loudmouth General Manager to take part in the study. Four schools agreed to participate, however one evaluation workshop did not take place due to a cancellation caused by illness. All participants provided written informed consent to Loudmouth before participating in the workshops.

2.1 Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

AI is concerned with what works well and effectively, and therefore participant selection in the study is focused upon a sample group consisting of primary school students and teachers who have participated in the 'My Mate Fancies You' Programme.

Using appreciative enquiry and case study principles the researcher developed a participatory workshop to identify what factors children and teachers considered to be most influential about the Loudmouth approach in their learning. This approach encouraged participants to generate themes grounded in their experiences of the performance and the workshop. The workshop was structured into four key areas of reflection:

- Identification of factors which enabled the workshop to succeed in achieving its aims
- Reflection upon the core factors that helped ensure the message was conveyed successfully
- A review of their relationship with the performers and Loudmouth
- Suggestions for development

A participatory approach to data collection was instigated, and participants were supported to undertake a range of creative and discursive tasks focusing upon the areas for reflection.

2.2 Analysis

During the course of the workshops the children, staff and the evaluator took notes and images. These were reviewed for clarification purposes by the evaluator at regular intervals during the workshop. Participants were reassured that their participation was voluntary and

their responses would be anonymised.

Standard thematic analysis was used to analyse the materials produced during the workshops. To contextualise the collected data, informal conversations took place with participants after and during the evaluation training. This provided a basis for analytical triangulation. The questioning focused upon two areas of analysis which are detailed below, and which had been identified by Loudmouth as being significant to the Loudmouth model of delivery.

How has having a long-term engagement with Loudmouth shaped their programme in schools?

Areas for enquiry:

- Does it have a wider impact on other PSHE education?
- Is the Loudmouth approach considered to be good PSHE?
- What difference does investing in a long-term product have?
- How does Loudmouth's approach to organisational delivery (i.e. emphasis on reliability and effective organisation- both in logistical planning of work, the quality and delivery of the theatre and in terms of the impact on education)?
- How does Loudmouth's investment to the region affect the local context for SRE work?

Using a small group approach- how does it benefit the impact of the work?

Areas for enquiry:

- What impact does Loudmouth's staff education, training and long term employment of actors have on the delivery of the work?
- How does the Loudmouth approach to PSHE (focus on knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) influence the relationships developed with the young people and staff?
- How does pre and post project work influence the delivery of the project?

3.1

Twenty-nine pupils and three members of staff from three primary schools in Dudley participated in the evaluation. The schools all successfully met the criteria for their participation in the evaluation study, and the evaluation sessions took place with a self/ teacher -selected group of participants immediately after participating in the 'My Mate Fancies You' programme. The workshops took place in June and July 2012. The schools had all directly commissioned the performance and workshop with Loudmouth. All of the workshops took place within the school building and were with Year 6 pupils. The average length of the evaluation workshop was 40 minutes long, and the performance and workshop formed part of the school's PSHE programme for Year 6 pupils.

Overall 17 girls and 12 boys participated in the workshops and their mean participants age was 9.6 (girls) and 10.6 (boys). All of the primary teachers that participated were female and had a responsibility for the PSHE curriculum within their respective schools.

Additional interviews and focus groups were conducted with the Loudmouth team, including actors, management, administrators as well as a commissioner from the Sex and Relationships Team at NHS Dudley.

Immediately after the Loudmouth session, the participants selected for the evaluation session were invited to submit a score to reflect their perception of how effective the session was in terms of their own learning. The mean score (out of 10) was 9.1 (girls) and 9.4 (boys).

Three main themes emerged regarding how participants felt Loudmouth's delivery model contributed towards their learning. Generally, these themes are related and they suggest that participants perceive the performance and workshop to be first and foremost a theatrical experience. The themes are:

- Pupils and teachers benefitted from integration of humour in the performance and workshop activities and identified how this supports individuals to discuss sensitive issues in a group context.
- The content of the play was considered to be relevant and of interest to the pupils and the

‘theatrical experience’ played an important role in their learning.

- The relationship that develops between the school and the pupils with the performers/ Loudmouth played an important role in developing trust and engagement from pupils, health professionals and the educators.

3.2 Theme one:

Pupils and teachers benefitted from integration of humour in the performance and workshop activities and identified how this supports individuals to discuss sensitive issues in a group context.

The theme of humour relates to what participants and teachers felt distinguished Loudmouth’s approach to TIE to other drama based learning experiences. Previous evaluations of Loudmouth’s work also identified this to be a crucial component of the Loudmouth experience (42% of young people in South Birmingham schools 2009/10 identified the work as fun/ funny). Teachers have also previously identified humour to be an important factor in helping young people to discuss issues¹⁰.



However, what this study observed was that participants appreciated the manner in which **humour was incorporated throughout the Loudmouth experience**. Pupils could identify instances in their lives where drama had been used to inform them about an issue associated with PSHE such as on television or in theatre. However, in these cases they reported that ‘theatre itself was not enough’, and humour was the tool which made the difference.

In terms of the delivery model, the pupils’ responses indicated that they not only made connections between humour and the content of the play, but they also linked it to the behaviour of the audience. They reported that they felt encouraged to laugh and ultimately this made it more comfortable to talk about sensitive issues both with the adults involved in the session and as a tool with their peers following the session.

10 My Mate Fancies You evaluation (2009)

3.2.1 Their response

Overwhelmingly, participants referred to the Loudmouth session as a positive experience and in the majority of cases they referred to the humour. “The entertainment...the funniness” and “It made me laugh so much” were typical comments made by the pupils. Discussions with the pupils revealed that children sometimes felt it difficult to know what was the appropriate behaviour or response to learning about PSHE issues, and many felt that laughing was a natural response to some of the issues being discussed- and outside of the classroom this would be their natural response. However children were conscious of the norms and the expectations of their behaviour in a classroom, and as a result some said they would not necessarily feel they were allowed to laugh. By being allowed to laugh, children said it felt less formal and more normal to the conditions in which they might discuss some of the issues with their friends.

Children clearly enjoyed being able to laugh throughout the session, “it made me laugh so much’ said one pupil. They also referred to the fact that everyone was laughing- it was a shared experience. Teachers stressed the importance of ensuring that the pupils felt they were not alone in their experiences, and laughter served as a useful indicator for the pupils to demonstrate to each other that they were having a shared experience. Interestingly, the benefits of this extended beyond the session, and there were no cases during the evaluation workshops where the pupils used humour inappropriately or as a tool to segregate themselves into self-selected groups.

In all of the evaluation sessions the children made appropriate but humorous references to aspects of the performance which they enjoyed, such as the actors ‘swagger’ and the way in which the characters interacted with each other.

The Loudmouth team designs their work to ensure it is well paced and that there are a variety of elements in the programme. Using this approach they perceive the level of engagement to grow, and the feedback from participants supports this. Participants commented that the entire experience included the use of humour throughout, and teachers recognised this to be beneficial as one teacher reported “ it gets the giggling done and gets children over talking



about the embarrassing factors”. In particular, there were some comments made by children and teachers to the fact that there were lots of opportunities to laugh, and teachers recognised this to be an important factor. Teachers referred to the fact that children were often at different stages of development and their response to the humour might depend upon their level of understanding of the topic. In some PSHE training materials they commented that there were only a couple of chances to laugh, and if a young person was unable to relate to these then the opportunity was wasted, and in some cases this could leave the child less engaged. However, in the case of Loudmouth’s approach, the integration of humour throughout the session ensured that all children were able to find a relevant moment to laugh about the issues.

3.2.2 Humour helps to contextualise the topic

“This production made me understand about growing up Jodie and Matt put the show in a jokey way” responded one participant. The participant feedback indicated that the integration of humour helped them learn about the issues more easily, ‘learning in a fun way’ commented one participant. This was a common theme and participants clearly felt that humour helped support the learning process. The most frequent response was that it made learning about puberty ‘fun’, however participants all demonstrated that they also appreciated that serious issues were being discussed. However, they clearly felt that humour was incorporated sensitively so as not to offend anyone, and this helped get their attention and enable them to engage in the entire learning experience.

3.3 Theme two:

The content of the play was considered to be relevant and of interest to the pupils and the ‘theatrical experience’ played an important role in their learning.

This theme refers to the fact that all of the pupils perceived the content of the play to be relevant and how everyone felt the topic of puberty and transition had been successfully interpreted as a piece of theatre. 42% of the participants of Loudmouth’s evaluation of their work in South Birmingham Secondary schools in 2009/10 also reflected that the acting, drama



and performance were something they enjoyed. However, the following section will highlight how participants in this evaluation, identified that their appreciation of the use of drama for these purposes extended beyond the performance itself. The feedback suggests that pupils and teachers felt that the conventions associated with watching theatre, such as sitting in an audience also play an important role in the success of the work.

3.3.1 Relevance to their own lives

The feedback indicates that the content of the performance is relevant to the lives of the audience. Almost every pupil commented that the performance was relevant to the context of their own lives, and reported that they had learned new facts and strategies for dealing with different aspects of puberty. Staff also supported this view, and asserted that generally they felt the content and delivery was appropriate to the learning needs of the pupils, and that it was educational for primary age children. Pupils found it easy to reflect upon what they had learned, and the majority of participants reflected “I learnt things I never knew”. The most common area of learning was that pupils felt that it would help them understand what would happen to their bodies.

Feedback from pupils suggests that presenting the content using a theatrical presentation, provided an opportunity for the children to pace their learning. Staff reported that it focused the pupils, and the very nature of the performance provides a unique experience, which enabled some pupils to maintain focus on a specific topic for longer periods of time than they would have if more conventional teaching methods were used. One pupil explained how this is different from other approaches to PSHE, “It gives you more understanding than when your parents tells you. You get more information when you act it out”.

A possible explanation for why pupils felt they obtained more information from seeing the issues being presented using theatre was that many participants reported that they saw themselves in a new way after seeing the actors portray the behaviour of children. A common theme amongst the responses from the pupils was that theatre allowed them to see practical and emotional issues. As one pupil reported, “it helps us understand and helps us to imagine what will happen to us”. The Loudmouth team develop work which they want pupils to believe in and is relevant to life, and the intention of the interactive workshop which follows the performance is to use techniques such as forum theatre and hot seating to create a

safe but varied environment for them to critically consider the issues in the performance. The feedback from participants suggests that these techniques achieved their aims, and participants reported that the process literally allowed them to see themselves in a new way.

3.3.2 Theatre facilitates conversation



Pupils most commonly reported that the drama allowed them to comment on the behaviours of the characters in the play, and that initially during the session, they felt more comfortable talking about this than their own experiences. One teacher reflected, “it provides believable characters so children aren’t on their own”. Additional feedback from staff also indicated that the theatrical experience allowed the young people share an emotional response to what they learned and saw, and this helped support the children to become more mature, develop in confidence, and express their feelings. Another teacher also reflected, “there was active involvement in learning and doing something in response, and ultimately it assures you that there is nothing to worry about”. This relates to the findings of previous evaluations, “many children cannot understand everything when it’s only in a conversation, with drama they can relate it to real life”¹¹.

3.3.3 A Break from the Norm

Most pupils noted that the use of drama as a tool for education was a very new experience, and the ‘novelty’ factor played an important role in engaging the pupils in the session. Teachers said that whilst they had used drama as a tool for education, they felt they did not have the professional ability or the detachment from the audience, which the Loudmouth actors/facilitators provided. Most of the pupils said that it was not what they expected, and some said they did not feel prepared or briefed in advance by their school about how Loudmouth would be using theatre. It would be interesting to explore whether their response to the session differed if they were pre- informed more about what they would experience. However, in

11 Ibid (Holte Evaluation), p.14

this evaluation, the findings had a strong emphasis on the fact that participants felt it was “different to the norm”, and “unusual”. Loudmouth’s normative approach survey also identified that 96.3% of participants rated the session as better or much better than their usual PSHE lessons. One teacher said the use of theatre made it memorable and another said it was important to use alternative approaches to PSHE education and family learning. NHS staff felt that it was not difficult to convince schools and other health professionals to use drama for these purposes, however despite their support the pupils were clearly surprised by the use of theatre for these purposes. “ We were all entertained and not bored. It helped us all understand how everything worked”, said one pupil.

Successful integration of the Loudmouth programme was often related to how the pupils and staff perceived it fitted into the school day and their PSHE curriculum. Pupils often reported that they benefitted from informal and formal opportunities to discuss what they saw after the session. Teachers said that they appreciated that Loudmouth had considered how their work could fit into the school day and they were prepared to discuss different strategies to incorporate the performance and workshop. They felt Loudmouth was sympathetic to the school timetable and needs of students, but recognised Loudmouth always ensured the session still felt like a special theatrical experience. None of the teachers referred to the materials provided by Loudmouth to help support subsequent lesson plans, nor did any pupils refer to the cards and signposting information, which was provided. There was high praise for the way in which Loudmouth were able to respond immediately to the needs of the audience, for example how the actors improvised to expand choices and develop options for how to deal with difficult situations. All schools also said the opportunity for same sex discussions was important, however none of the young people commented upon this, although they did say they appreciated talking in small groups.



3.4 Theme three:

The relationship that develops between the school and the pupils with the performers/ Loudmouth played an important role in developing trust and engagement from pupils, health professionals and the educators.



The theme of relationships refers to inter personal qualities of Loudmouth staff that facilitated and delivered the booking, the performance and the workshop. It relates to the professional and informal relationships, which the entire Loudmouth team establishes during their interaction with the school. Pupils often commented that they felt comfortable talking with the performers and staff remarked that the support from Loudmouth administrative and management staff, helped facilitate the success of the performance. Pupils referred to these relationships as much as they talked about the content of the performance and workshop.

3.4.1 Effective administration

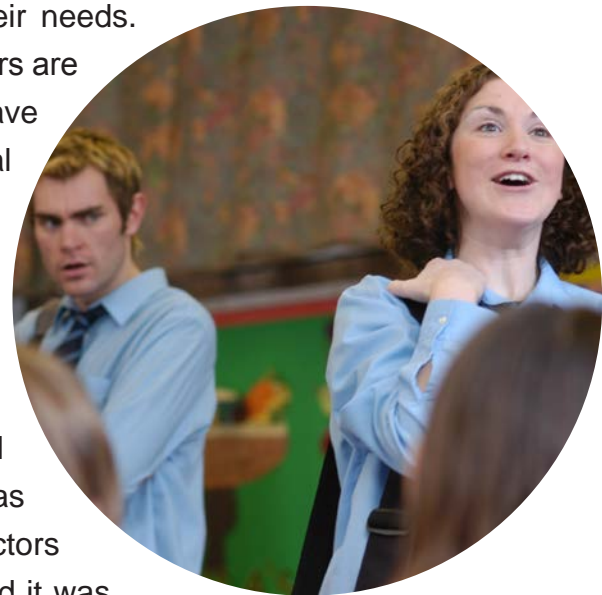
Staff referred to the ease within which they could communicate with the Loudmouth team when making the booking and described the relationship as professional and informative. Staff reported that the Loudmouth team provided information and reassurance about their services. In most cases, the teachers needed this information to convince funders and the school to support the workshop, and they reported that Loudmouth provided an appropriate range of evidence and showcase material to help them make their case. In most cases, teachers reported that Loudmouth had volunteered what information was available for these purposes. The Loudmouth team acknowledge that they have established clear and consistent communication and information process, including information for the actors, a clear booking process and contract, a database system to generate information for sessions, regular telephone call and confirmation with schools. They also establish clear learning objectives and provide opportunities to showcase their work to prospective schools. NHS Dudley confirmed that they felt the administrative aspect of the delivery model used by Loudmouth was appropriate and sympathetic to the needs of school, “Loudmouth recognises what issues are relevant which teachers find tricky, and this enabled it to be easily incorporated into the

school day and linked to other activities and learning in the school”. Teachers and NHS Dudley clearly trusted the management and delivery standards established by Loudmouth, and as a result they preferred to refer them to schools and allow Loudmouth to tender for work with their support. This level of trust and support benefits Loudmouth, however it presents some challenges in terms of their capacity and ability to finance their marketing and administrative/ management work associated with securing commissions for their work.

3.4.2 Actors/ Facilitators

Many pupils reflected that the age and informality of the performers during the session was an important part of the experience. Pupils described the performers as friendly and fun, and were keen to point out that the performers were different to their teachers and family. Despite the informal approach, pupils clearly felt they trusted the performers to provide the right information and support and they noted that the performers were able to provide the information in a manner, which is appropriate for their needs.

Sawney¹² identified that in effective TIE work, “the actors are credible, use language the young people relate to, have a similar accent and include some reference to local places and current issues; actors who reflect a range of ethnicity, sexuality, gender and appearance may also increase credibility”. The feedback suggests that this is what pupils experienced during Loudmouth’s work, and teachers also reflected that the pupils found the actors to be kind, friendly, approachable, and non judgmental. In particular, teachers thought it was important that the pupils seemed to believe that the actors had recently experienced puberty, as the teachers said it was difficult for themselves to be portrayed in this way.



3.4.3 Developing informality helped create a more inclusive learning environment

Pupils valued the informal discussion during the workshop and said the performers helped

12 Ibid, p.49

provide direction and structure to small (same sex) discussion groups. Often, pupils referred more to the informal interactions, which occurred during these sessions than the performance itself. Teachers reported that they felt they gave the sessions direction and motivation to discuss specific issues and as they got to know their characters earlier so the children were reassured they would not judge, and they talked in an approachable manner. It was observed that the small group discussions were continued informally at break time and immediately after the session, and all of the evaluation groups continued to have informal conversations about the issues that were in the play.

There were some instances where participants compared their discussions with performers to similar conversations they had with their peers and family, and were keen to stress that they preferred learning with the actors. The 'My Mate Fancies You' evaluation (2009) identified that "the way the leaders build up a relationship with the children very quickly and made it fun and interesting". However, some pupils said it was a shame that the actors would not continue to be involved in their PSHE classes following the workshops, and some participants were unsure whether they would be able to have such frank discussions with teachers and family. Teachers observed that conversations with performers helped pupils clarify issues and verify information. Pupil's feedback indicated that the majority had talked about how they had similar conversations with teachers and family, but preferred it like this.

In discussions about why the pupils felt they would recommend a Loudmouth performance and workshop to others, they said it was because of the effective relationship between the performers and the audience. The responses from the pupils, suggests that drama extends the communication options available to convey and debate sensitive information. For example, they identified that during the workshops there were different techniques and strategies used to encourage discussion, ask questions, and encourage them to use the language they have heard during the performance. Pupils reflected that the structure of the session allowed there to be repeated opportunities to engage in discussions- and this allowed participants to engage at their pace and in a way they felt comfortable. Teachers also felt that actors/ facilitators were best placed to promote and encourage pupils in discussion, as the teachers say it is difficult to facilitate a similar level of discussion in a classroom situation.

4 Thoughts for the future

4.1

The evaluation used appreciative enquiry to gather data to respond to some specific aspects of Loudmouth's work. This evaluation report has attempted to collate the responses of three schools, alongside existing evidence to explore how schools, the NHS and the Loudmouth team perceive how their approach has impacted PSHE education, alongside identifying the qualities they perceive to be effective PSHE. In addition, the findings have explored perceptions associated with Loudmouth's approach to organisational delivery, and the reaction of pupils on how their approach to staff education and PSHE (focus on knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) influences PSHE education.

During the course of the evaluation, all evaluation participants proposed areas of development. This section details some of these ideas; they have been identified and themed in relation to their popularity.

4.2 Meeting economic needs

All of the adult participants were conscious of reduced funding within the public sector. Interestingly one school commented that they felt the experience was "value for money if you compare cost with the amount of progress, especially as it is all done in one performance". However school staff are conscious that they need to find funds to pay for an event, and increasingly there are other considerations, such as finding an appropriate and available performance space and keeping private from the rest of the school, which are increasingly difficult to organise.

There were suggestions that it may be beneficial to develop a menu of products/ services, which Loudmouth could offer. No one felt that the current arrangements were ineffective, however staff indicated that it can be difficult to justify additional expenditure in schools, and whilst developing an evidence base and showcasing the work helps with this, and ultimately there may be a need to develop a broader range of services (and presumably costs).

4.3 One model fit all? - Developing a flexible model of delivery

Schools identified that it was challenging to develop work that was inclusive, and felt that Loudmouth did a good job in terms of trying to respond to a range of learning needs. However, some staff did reflect that some pupils find it difficult to focus or empathise with characters because they are not emotionally ready. Teachers identified that it was difficult to support SEN pupils and for some it could be a long time to concentrate. Likewise there are others, and some of the children also highlighted this, that already knew the facts and would like to have had the Loudmouth event earlier on, “we did it on year 5 but on DVD. It should also have more characters,” said one pupil, another suggested using “more advanced language because this group already known what they was telling us”.

The feedback offered by participants included a range of options. Some of the options were based on the current delivery model, and included checking the children were briefed about what they were going to see, at the start, it was a bit of a shock (we were all laughing) and we needed an introduction” said one child. Other options included developing training to support teachers in using drama in PSHE education and offering productions and workshops, which were different in length.

Pupils and staff appreciated that it was hard to get the right balance, however a lot of the feedback related to ideas concerning developing opportunities to involve the children more in drama activities, and everyone suggested that using drama as a tool for engagement was beneficial to pupils with a wide range of learning styles. Loudmouth already provides schools with eleven interactive sessions, available online, and which already incorporated many of the ideas referred to by teachers and students. Feedback from schools suggests these are extremely useful in extending the learning and have been available from Loudmouth for the past six years (previously they were in a booklet). Teachers not using these resources need to consider how to ensure these valuable resources are better intergrated into cirriculum planning.

4.4 Wider delivery model for PSHE

Pupils in all of the schools identified that there was potential to incorporate Loudmouth’s work into the wider PSHE curriculum, and all of the feedback indicated that they would like more

contact time with Loudmouth. There were different ways in which they interpreted how they could continue to work together.

Some ideas were based upon extending the current model of delivery associated with 'My Mate Fancies You', such as allowing more time to think about questions to ask the characters, adding more actors and more stories. In particular, there were a lot of requests to make it longer, add a quiz at the end to test their knowledge, and to add more detail about the emotional changes and strategies for dealing with these. For example, pupils suggested "you need to make it clear what happens and cope with periods and pubic hairs and even spots" and "show how they feel about say, periods and also how they cope with it. Also to show that young children don't need to be afraid about it". Many of the pupils commented that they enjoyed the elements of drama- such as set, costume, sitting as an audience, and they wanted more of this.

5 Conclusion

Given the results of previous evaluations into Loudmouth's work, it is not surprising that participants were overwhelmingly positive about Loudmouth's work. However, what this study demonstrates is that the delivery model developed by Loudmouth is an integral part of ensuring the work is successful.

This study has identified some specific aspects of the delivery model, which participants felt played an important role in this process. Although the majority of participants expressed a preference for the use of Theatre in Education as a learning tool, they also reported that previously they had not considered the different ways in which PSHE education could be taught/ facilitated. The evaluation sessions encouraged participants to consider the different ways theatre could be used in this context and as part of this process, pupils were able to specifically distinguish the qualities which they felt the Loudmouth model of delivery provided, which other approaches to using drama might not use in the same way. In addition, teachers and NHS staff had become accustomed to the high standards set by Loudmouth in terms of the administration and the booking of the event, and the evaluation sessions offered them an opportunity to consider how this could have been done differently.

This data is unique to previous Loudmouth's evaluations, as it used methods of AI and case study evaluation to learn more about the development of a successful delivery model for the use of TIE in PSHE curricula. Despite some of the emergent themes mirroring those in similar evaluations, this evaluation study adds to the evidence base concerning the importance of the entire administrative and creative delivery model in achieving successful learning outcomes.

However, there are some factors that limit the scope of the investigation and further investigations could be made into specific aspects of the feedback. Firstly, it concerned only a small sample group, all of whom were primary school age, and there was limited time to available to engage them in evaluation activities. Secondly, it would be useful to develop a longitudinal study, to examine whether pupils and staff continued to identify factors associated with the entire delivery model as core components in the long-term success of the project. Additional ideas may have emerged if there had been more time with participants. However, the findings that have emerged, triangulate with the feedback from Loudmouth and schools staff and this suggests that consistent results were obtained.

To conclude, this evaluation explored whether recipients of Loudmouth's work were able to identify how the delivery model used by Loudmouth reflected the standards in the "It Opened My Eyes" report for TIE work in PSHE education. It then went on to consider the value of the entire model (rather than specific aspects of TIE practice) in achieving successful learning outcomes for the participants. The findings suggest that the delivery model plays an important role in securing the trust and participation of the children, staff and NHS staff. In addition, as the

curriculum for wellbeing is developed in informal and formal education, it may be necessary to consider whether Loudmouth's approach can contribute towards addressing this agenda, particularly as participants have spoken highly about how the Loudmouth experience has positively impacted on people's wellbeing in terms of confidence, learning and communication skills.

These will be useful considerations for future developments of Loudmouth's work. As more scrutiny is being placed on public sector commissioning, this evaluation has highlighted the need for educators and health providers who wish to incorporate Loudmouth's programmes, to consider how the delivery model is integrated into these new arrangements.