

# Developing the confidence of vulnerable Year 7 students through nurture groups



Sam Lloyd-Adams, St Clement Danes School, Hertfordshire, UK



*During lessons, Sam had observed students stating that they were 'no good' at their subject. They seemed to give up too easily if challenged with new ideas and concepts. She decided to find out more about young people's mindsets and how their resilience and self-esteem might improve with the right guidance and support.*

I had previously led a nurture group in a primary school and realised that this approach was being adopted in secondary schools. Firstly, I contacted some schools to observe their nurture groups in action. Colleagues at these schools offered feedback on my proposal to introduce a nurture group in my own setting.

Next, I developed my action plan. I created tools and activities to use with students to generate discussion about self-esteem, confidence, and growth mindset. I used these in a consultation with my mentor, a member of the senior leadership team, who supported my idea. My mentor wanted the nurture group to be established as part of the school's Covid-19 recovery programme. After reviewing school data, 10 students were selected to participate. The nurture group ran for 6 weeks with 2 sessions per week during morning registration.

The students completed a self-assessment at the start and end of the process. They reported a positive impact on their resilience and determination. We completed the process with a celebration lunch. Certificates were awarded to all students for their willingness to be involved, participate fully, and grow in confidence. The nurture group will continue in the new academic year with a new group of students.

## PUPIL IMPACT

- improved capacity for determination and motivation and resilience
- improved confidence to participate and engage
- greater willingness to speak up
- appreciation that they will be listened to.

## PERSONAL IMPACT

- sense of achievement in making a difference
- increased capacity for leadership
- raised my profile within the school community.

## PROFESSIONAL IMPACT

- developed collaborative professional relationships across the school.

## SYSTEM IMPACT

- enhanced provision for vulnerable students within the school.

1

### KEY LEADERSHIP LESSON:

Anyone in a school can make a difference, whatever their role.

2

### KEY LEADERSHIP LESSON:

Collaboration pushes your project forward. Engaging colleagues to champion your idea brings recognition to your project.

3

### KEY LEADERSHIP LESSON:

Being open and flexible about what is possible and practical is a big part of ensuring your project's success.

*'The group is helping to build his confidence. I'm glad he feels comfortable enough to tell her ... he never speaks to teachers about his problems, and I end up speaking up for him' - parent*