



Letchworth Garden City
Educational Partnership



THE HIGHFIELD SCHOOL



FEARNHILL
SCHOOL

The Letchworth Garden City Educational Partnership

A Co-operative
Trust incorporating
Fearnhill and The
Highfield Schools

The Educational Partnership has become even stronger this year during which students from Fearnhill School and The Highfield School have worked together to continue to create a joint ethos based on the co-operative values of self-help; responsibility; democracy; equality & equity; and solidarity.

As well as on-going collaborative work, there have been a number of new initiatives which have focused on the development of events and resources that provide students with a stronger understanding and engagement with their local heritage and community, as well as providing opportunities for students to develop a piece of work that could have significant impact on the wellbeing of colleagues across both schools.

Teachers and other colleagues have continued to take the opportunity to meet across the partnership over a number of

occasions during the year to share best practice and work collaboratively.

This newsletter will outline some of these initiatives and provide a sense of the impact that this work has generated. To sum it up, as one our students said;

“It has been a privilege to work together on something that is fun, rewarding and something that matters.”

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Mental Health and Wellbeing

The development of a phone App

Across three joint meetings (so far) the Student Councils from both schools have met with the purpose of jointly developing a phone App that can be accessed by students who would like further information, advice and guidance on coping with issues related to mental health and wellbeing.

The meetings demonstrated how fully committed and genuine the students were in reaching this aim and it was clear that students felt this to be a very worthwhile and meaningful initiative. They felt the need for an App of this nature was important:



“It is a growing concern that students struggle to talk about it, so it is good that the schools are addressing it.”

“People are always on their phones, so an App would make it easier to present the information to the people that need it the most.”

OUTLINE OF MEETINGS SO FAR

February 2017 - Identifying actual stresses, causes of stresses and strategies to deal with stresses.

March 2017 - Design of App

June 2017 - Gathering and refining design and content. Preparing to present to School Leaders.



“People might not want to talk about their mental health and may not be able to explain to someone how they are feeling, so reading about it first might help them to start the

Quotes from the Student Councils

Collaborative Development of Phone App

“I have really enjoyed working with other students, it has been fun and rewarding to work together and create something awesome.”

“I want the app to be something that is helpful and accessible to everyone who is struggling.”



The content of the App has been carefully considered by the joint school councils through small and whole group discussions across students from years 7 to 12.

The students jointly developed the main categories of:

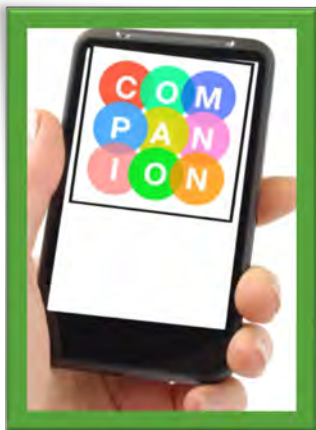
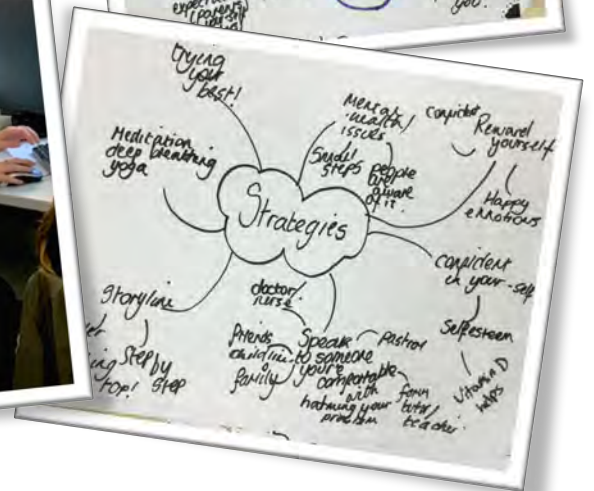
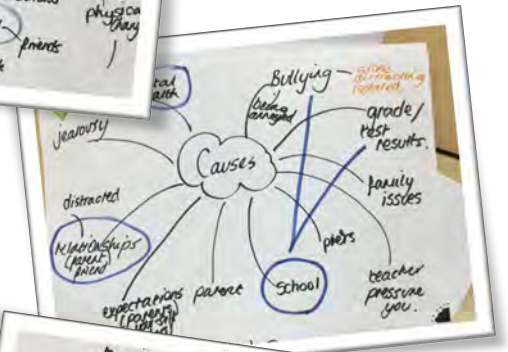
- My Relationships
- My Mind
- My School Issues
- My Health and Identity
- Helping Myself



Some examples of sub-categories covered within these have been issues such as bullying, exam pressure, body image, anxiety and self-esteem.

For each of the sub categories the students have worked together to gather accurate and validated research on the following areas of information:

- Definition
- Signs
- Advice
- Where can I get help?



The name they have given the app is:
Companion (A friend to support you on a journey)

Year 8 Co-operative Day: Planning Your Own Town

In collaboration with The Letchworth Heritage Foundation

10TH/ 11TH JULY 2017

The Highfield School hosted the Year 8 Co-operative Day this year, which was a great success. Fearnhill and Highfield students worked cooperatively to develop a range of ideas, plans and designs for their own vision of Letchworth Garden City. We were pleased to collaborate with Josh Tidy (Curator and Author) who works with The Letchworth Heritage Foundation and was able to provide students with a sense of history and context of our town and its growth over the years.

Students engaged in a range of enriching activities, where they explored and generated their own ideas related to town planning in Letchworth Garden City. The aim was for students to learn more about the town and improve their communication, problem solving, team building and creativity skills and to demonstrate their capacity to work alongside others to fulfil a task. It also promoted the principle of collaboration which is at the heart of the Cooperative Trust.



Josh Tidy
Curator for The
Letchworth Heritage
Foundation and author
of Letchworth Garden
City Through Time



Year 8 students said :

‘It was a great day and I learnt more about the town I live in.’

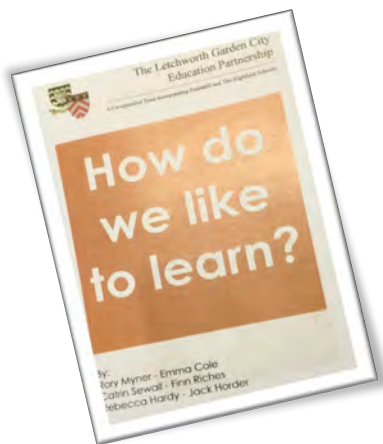
‘I like working with different students, I made some new friends and realise I have more confidence than I thought I had.’

‘I like being able to plan what I would like in Letchworth, it made me feel more part of the local community and I would love to do it for real !’

Update on previous co-operative student leadership work

“How do we like to learn?” and Year 7 Co-operative School Values Assemblies

Last year the Head Girl, Head Boy, Deputy Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy met to align Student Voice in both schools. They had been into lessons across both schools to find out when students learn best and what makes an excellent lesson. Unsurprisingly, students from across the partnership say very similar things about learning and outstanding lessons. The Student Leadership Teams subsequently wrote a publication to celebrate the fabulous lessons and summarise what our students enjoy the most. This collaborative work led by the student leadership teams last year has been shared with teachers and students at both schools and is available at receptions for parents and visitors to read in the form of a pamphlet. Prefects at Fearnhill School this year presented it to teaching staff as a Student Voice and Co-operative Trust initiative. Teachers found the feedback on Teaching & Learning, from a student’s perspective, very valuable and it has led many faculties to seek further Student Voice opportunities to promote school improvement.



Becoming an Educational Partnership has enabled Fearnhill School and The Highfield School to develop a strong ethos of co-operation, which has continued to drive school improvement this year and benefit all of our young people. Our joint ethos is based on the globally recognised Co-Operative values of **self-help; responsibility; democracy; equality & equity; and solidarity.**

It was vital to ensure that these were shared too with our new Year 7 students when they arrived in September 2016. Therefore, the Head Girl, Head Boy, Deputy Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy from both schools introduced themselves as a joint student leadership team at both schools and presented an assembly to the new students on the Educational Partnership and the Co-operative values we share.

