



# Insight+

## INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

---

**THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE INFORMING EFFECTIVE  
APPROACHES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS & THEIR LEARNERS**

**'IN THEIR WORDS'**

---

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**



# IN THEIR WORDS

---

This document provides supporting evidence for the full report and contains further quotes from the young people interviewed regarding their educational experiences.

This data was gathered from April to July 2021 in Derby and involved interviews with key stage 4 learners based at Derby Pride Academy and The Kingsmead School.



## MY MAINSTREAM SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

---

*"It would just get worse, if you walked off because you couldn't handle it, you could end up with 4 staff on you as others would just follow and get involved".*

*"I had no relationships with staff so had no help. I was NOT listened to. I don't like people now. I used to do football and dance but don't go now – I didn't feel positive about the future, now I do".*

*"Got kicked out, I knew it was happening in Year 8 – some staff were good yeh – at the end of the day it was my action that got me kicked out, I had no choice other than to leave – to be honest I had anger management issues and I had no like, help with that".*

*"I wasn't really shocked [to be excluded], you don't really get what you need to get [in school], especially when you got problems and you just struggle".*

*"I have an EHCP, I kind of understand it now that I am older, I didn't understand what it was when I was at school".*

*"My behaviour went from quiet to then in year 8 I was breaking things and then I seen I had it coming at some point anyway. The stuff I was doing was wrong and I was causing problems".*

*"They [school] saw me as a naughty kid and didn't talk to me as a person and then any lessons I would just get detentions".*

*"I was told I wouldn't be there long, so didn't get support I needed. My mum decided to take me out and the school didn't stop her".*

*"Some teachers were nice and did talk to me like a person, but it was all about school and not about my mental health or that. They didn't take my needs into account".*

*"I wasn't learning anything, I was in lessons for 15 mins and then kicked out and have a detention and then not end up in my next lesson".*

*"The school helped me as much as they could, I had a plan to support me. But the changes weren't talked about".*

*"I wasn't that surprised [to be excluded] as I was threatened with it for like two months...but I didn't really care – at that point I didn't anyway".*

*"I was alright with some teachers – there were ones I got on with – if they gave me respect, I shown it them".*

*"They did give me the most support and I had to go at some point as it was fuckin me up".*

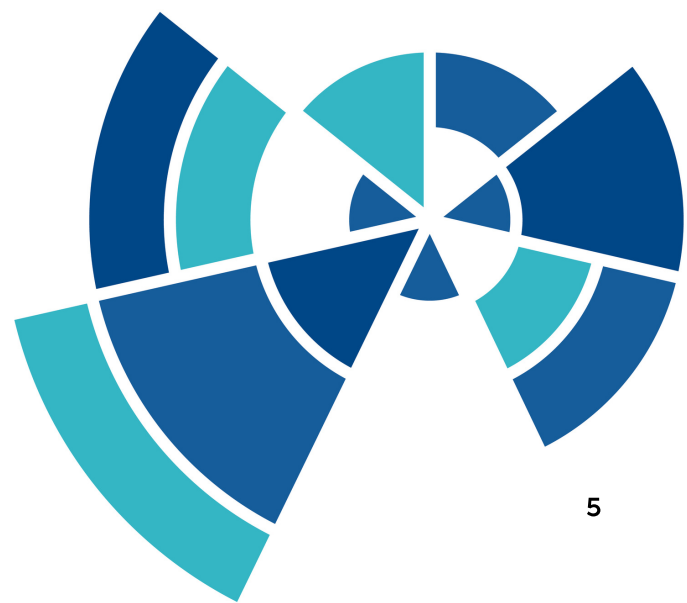
*"I was put in a room one to one for a whole year and I got used to it, so wasn't great at mixing with people then".*

*"I was just figuring it out and I admit what I did was wrong, it was bad, but I don't get why I had to move to a whole other school; I seen others do worse things than what I have and they got excluded, but I thought they [school] would have done it later after trying more".*

*"I knew it was happening, and I fully understood why I was changing schools because of what I did. No one explained it to me. To be honest they did help a little bit, I was a very disruptive and had many warnings. They gave me a lot of chances. I understand now that they couldn't have had me back anymore".*

*"In my mainstream school I wish I had been given another chance, I was getting bullied and ended up fighting, it was easy to blame me as I wasn't speaking up for myself, I lashed out instead. I was looked as a deviant".*

*"It was a shock to be moving [school] but I understood a bit about why. I didn't like the school, so I didn't show them respect".*



## SUPPORT AT A (MAINSTREAM) SCHOOL

---

*"We all had a house with a top teacher we could go and talk to him and he would listen, I was given that".*

*"I wasn't surprised at all at having to leave, it was kind of expected. I didn't fully know why, but it easy to understand why this would be better for me. I had a good relationship with everyone at my school – they gave me all the help I could ask for to be honest".*

*"I was supposed to have support and someone to talk to, but I never did".*

*"I have lots of anger, they could have helped me more, I probably would have left anyway, they didn't even know about my dyslexia and never tried to find out".*

*"In year 9 they figured out that my needs weren't as severe and then moved my class for year 10. Most problems with schools is that they don't get paid well for helping, and people deserve it. Staff can only be nice for so long, some people have it infinitely, and you need that if you are working in this type of place".*

*"I felt that every teacher hated me at school. I could have had a lot more support offered and I would have liked that".*

*"I thought I'd get more help there, but I didn't. I didn't like being there and it would have been good to have someone to help me with my work and how I acted".*

*"Like, before I got a diagnosis, they treated me like I had it and they helped me. They told my mum to go to the doctors and get medication. I had a someone I could go to when I was getting angry and stuff, but then she left and then the other teacher left, and when I was angry, I couldn't go to that teacher cause she was gone and then I had no one. I wanted more help, but didn't get it. I was doing naughty stuff and this got worse once she left. I think if she had been there, I wouldn't be here. Say you've had like a few exclusions, well I went into another bit of the school, I got all good behaviour there and then got back into the mainstream bit and that's when I realised that staff member had left and my behaviour went down".*

*"We had a group that if you didn't behave you went there, you do less work there, I was involved in planning this, but I was told, it wasn't discussed".*

*"I was given chances, but not sure if I had support".*

*"I feel like I wasn't listened to at all".*

*"Instead of normal lessons, like I was in a little group in a room, where we did our own thing".*

*"I get regular checks. Some of my teachers will give me a little email to see how I am doing".*

*"They [the mainstream school] gave me help by sending me here to try and get me, turnaround course, so I understand why I'm here and obviously they put this here to help me with my learning".*

*"I've been given some chances, been given chances where it's needed but where I thought I'd be given another chance to try and turn it around, I didn't get it".*



## FINDING OUT I WAS CHANGING SCHOOLS

---

*"I was surprised to find out I was coming here – I didn't understand at all – I had good relationships with all my staff – they helped me a lot – but I felt I had very little chance to stay - no one talked to me about it and had no chance to ask".*

*"I was given a lot of chances to be honest – I am not sure if I had any support though – I didn't know of any – they just told me I would be going to Kingsmead, but first castle".*

*"I had a governors meeting and they said they wanted to hear my side, and then see if I would stay or leave, and then I never saw anyone again, just got a bit of paper telling me I was out and where I would be going – I think I was listened to at the meeting, but at same time there was no forgiveness towards me – it was a big mistake that happened, yeh a big one, and I learned from my mistakes and that and I told them that – but I am glad I am here to be honest".*

*"I wasn't told why I was moving schools, but I knew myself why. They did give me help, and to them it was probably what they could, but it didn't feel like much. At school, no one talked to me about what was happening, but this school told me the differences".*

*"At the time it wasn't really explained to me why I was changing, it was after when I was here, I didn't really understand what I was doing wrong. I had very little help and they didn't give me chances".*

*"It wasn't a shock, but I didn't really understand why I was moving. I had no help there, and no support offered – I didn't talk to anyone about it".*

*"They [school] said I was excluded, I went home and waited and then my mum told me I was going to Kingsmead. So, I wasn't told anything personally about what was happening. No one spoke to me about anything and after being told to go home I had no further contact with the school after that".*

*"I got told by a lot of people that if I carried on I would be going to Kingsmead. I understood because of my fighting that I got kicked out but I didn't understand that it would mean getting kicked out".*

*"I was quite shocked as I wasn't told I was moving school – they called me on the day I was due to go back and told me I was going to come here. It was right after summer holidays after lockdown and as I got ready, I was called to say I didn't have to go back. I have an EHCP and I don't think I am allowed them where I was. I couldn't tell you what my EHCP is for though to be honest. So I don't actually know if that was the reason though".*

*"I didn't know I was going here until I got in a taxi; I wasn't given the information about this place and I had no idea who to ask or call. But then I had a visit and a guy took care of me and he was pretty cool, and this place looked good to me".*

*"I was a bit surprised to be moving schools, I understood bits, but something happened, and it wasn't me".*

*"I had a meeting with my headteacher, three governors, me and my mum and dad. They gave me little bit [of time] to say what had happened, but they weren't bothered either way, I was gonna be kicked out. I even wrote a letter of apology and they didn't even read it, just put it on the table. You have like pages in front of you about your behaviour".*

*"Got permo'ed for being stupid, and council said here was the best place for me. I was at home for a few days first".*

*"I was kinda surprised to be moving, I hadn't been totally good throughout my whole school life so understood as it was explained to me in a meeting".*

*"I wasn't surprised and was expecting it, I can't cope in a mainstream school, too many people".*

*"I understood a bit why I was moving, and they did give me some help with my work, but certain teachers didn't want to help in my eyes. If all staff had been helpful, I could have stayed longer".*

*"I was just told that I was coming here, but it was expected".*

*"I spent the entire year 7 at home. An entire year. I didn't get nothing, until almost the start of the next year and went to visit another school, but felt like a prison and there was fights, I was too anxious and didn't like meeting new people a lot".*

*"I would have like to have been explained to a lot more".*

*"After I got finally excluded, school did not say a word to me at all. They spoke to my dad a couple of times and that was it".*

*"I didn't really know what was going on at the time, but didn't want to lose mates".*



## HOW I FELT/FEEL ABOUT THE CHANGES

---

*"School told me I was getting a fixed term and then they kicked me out – there was no chance to stay – I didn't get any chance to talk about it. I had good mates there and here I get on with everyone, but don't have anyone I would call best mate, but still see my other mates".*

*"I would have liked to have stayed where I was".*

*"I would like to go back. I don't have friends at this school, but do at my last place".*

*"Some people say stuff about me going here, but they can say what they want, there is no point living on what people say, they are just words at the end of the day and they don't know my situation".*

*"I knew I was changing schools, but didn't know where I was going. I had heard of other kids going here. I was dragged around like a ragdoll, it's a bit weird because you don't know who goes here and if you have a bad past with someone it can be dangerous, Derby is a small place".*

*"Most [young people] end up coming here as this is the only school around that provides the place for people like me who aren't cooperating, it has to be here, there is no choice".*

*"I had meetings and a Governors meeting and at the time I didn't care".*

*"I was expecting to move, I was naughty and didn't do any work. I had some meetings with school about moving. I didn't ever get on with staff at the school and not much help to stay. XXXXX looked like a nice place and I would have liked to go there but it was full".*

*"I did a visit here with my mum and dad, I had a look round and then was told a start date. I knew people from here and it was easy when I started because I knew 'em from primary. I would have rather stayed there and would like to go back if I had the chance".*

*"There wasn't really much of a say in the matter, it was really left down to my mainstream school, but you now they've sent me here, it's easily the best thing to do".*

*"Not the right thing. Sending me to a place where I was put with much more naughtier kids".*

## MY TRANSITION TO ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

---

*"It was easy to settle - new people are good here. I started that school in year 7 and it did feel part of me, but once I came here it was the same and I settled".*

*"I didn't get one look [at Kingsmead] just turned up and it was daunting but it was so easy to settle here, I loved it man".*

*"Staff here are actually real good. Nobody ever said anything about it to me and their opinions don't matter anyways".*

*"I visited once before attending the PRU, it was hard moving to a new school, but once I started getting to know people it was alright".*

*"I was just told that this was the only place for me to go and had no real opportunity to visit before".*

*"I get nervous in new situations, but it wasn't too bad here".*

*"I visited once to look round, and it wasn't easy to settle in. It took me a long time to get it".*

*"I came twice here to look around and meet the teachers".*

*"It was hard to settle in because I was a shy person, I carry a lot of anxiety around with me and meeting a group of people is always a struggle, I just have to wear into that".*

*"After a few weeks, it was easy to settle in, but was only girl in year 8 and it made it harder".*

*"I got a whole walk around here and came twice. It was hard at first - I was sad at losing all my mates".*

*"The first time I went here was the day I started, a lot of the staff were very helpful with settling in here. They made it easy".*

*"I had a week gap and then started on a personalised programme and had to do it at a building by my house. Then I moved here, and it was better".*

*"I had one visit and when I came here I knew quite a few people and that helped me. I would have liked to have stay at the other school. If I was still in year 7, I 100% would like to go back".*

*"I came here about three times to look round".*

*"When I first came, I didn't like it, I didn't like coming, I didn't like the staff, then I started on a one-to-one programme and it has helped my confidence. I would never have spoken to you before. I can talk to other staff now".*

*"I kinda visited, a person took me to one room to have a meeting and asked what transport I would like. I am shy, I'm not gonna lie, so it was hard".*

*"I didn't come to visit, I was ok coming here. It was good to settle. Staff here are really good, better than last school".*

*"I visited once or twice and was happy to come here. It wasn't very easy to start with as I had gone from doing nothing".*

*"I had some opportunity to visit. It was an induction in the six weeks holiday".*

*"It was just easy settle down here. I got along with the teachers, most of them".*

*"I didn't visit here. I came for a meeting but I didn't meet all staff".*

*"I had to come here, but they gave me the chance to come, walk around, meet the teachers first, and it was at a good time, you know when no-one was in so I could get a feel for it in my own way".*

*"I had one visit here, and you know what, I kinda liked it here. It's like when you see something for the first time, and you're like, oh my god, this is it (in a positive way)".*

## MY EXPERIENCE AT ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

---

*"I just am not compatible with certain members of staff, others I am".*

*"Staff here, they all see the best in me and always have hope in what I can do and it's good motivation for me".*

*"The staff are easier to get along with here".*

*"I find it pretty sad here – some kids need more help than others – they have good hearts, but do dumb shit - this then means staff have to focus on some and not others and we get help, but someone else needs more. It really annoys me at times and there isn't enough staff to give the help for everyone".*

*"Random staff come here as agency staff and you don't know them. I get it, you actually get paid more by being agency staff than those based here. But that doesn't help us know people".*

*"The teachers here are really really good, they actually care and they are the ones that keep the school going. But they don't have great communication here between staff, as you get told different things".*

*"I wish I had been warned about how the kids could be, they are pretty disruptive here I can't lie and that can be hard to deal with".*

*"I got better help here, classroom is full of 30 people in mainstream and here you might have 4 people in a room with a teacher who can help you all".*

*"I am good here with the staff, I like it. I get on with them all. I fit in here and didn't feel like that there".*

*"They have lost a lot of staff this year, and staff are thinking about leaving, they are trying to make changes and want to push uniform again. I am glad I am leaving now on a high. We have had rules changing constantly".*

*"When you're quiet, they take advantage of you. I got picked on with some name calling. I had a couple of fights here and there and then, no one says anything to me. But I'm fine with everyone now".*

*"Here I get treated the same, so I don't constantly have to fight with the teachers".*

*"It's better here for behaviour that everyone has here. At mainstream, it's not so easy. Teachers can't really control you there. They give you more chances here".*

*"I get on better with teachers here than at my old school, I used to wind them up and piss them off all the time. They tolerate me here more".*

*"This school has given me more opportunities than I ever had, and its way better for other students and me".*

*"Everyone comes here for different reasons; I will do better here".*

*"I used to do football at the last school, but here you don't have that, it's just twilight and I wouldn't like that, I have never seen any activities offered here".*

*"I did after schools' stuff at mainstream, but there isn't anything like that here".*

*"Being interviewed for this has boosted my confidence even more".*

*"People need to learn that if they come here they will be treated good".*

*"This school has a problem, supposed to have a student council, but we haven't, and we could have a say and influence this, they could listen to us. It would help some get in less trouble and would feel listened to".*

*"I like the idea of this school, but there are simple solutions needed to help it; there will always be the one kid that disrupts the class and nothing is being done really, they are let walk out and wander, but this means things won't change and they will keep doing this time and time again. They need to have one chilled person who can address their behaviour who they would listen to, it's not always about having more staff, but the right staff. They could also use another student to help. You can stop a lot of things from happening time and time again if you properly help those that need it".*

## HOW I FEEL ABOUT MY MAINSTREAM SCHOOL NOW

---

*"I was offered to go back, but I just said I'm not doing it, simply because it was the same problem – nothing had changed there and staff wouldn't understood - I didn't want to get physical with staff - I can't promise not to do that if triggered".*

*"Completely calm about it all – I understood why I was changing school – I had some help in it – I would have liked to stay – if I could, I'd go back – I have bare friends".*

*"I very much wanted to stay at my previous school, and I would LOVE to return. I had best friends at school, but I don't have friends here".*

*"I would have liked to stay at school as my mates were there. I do now have a best mate here though".*

*"I was only happy at school when I was with my mates, here I do do work, but I happy talking to people".*

*"I have nothing against the school, but I wouldn't want to go back. Here has helped me a lot more".*

*"I didn't like the school, the general feeling was that the teachers couldn't be arsed to help the students, they were just interested in getting out of there at the end of the day. Here they seem a lot more in it for the students, not just the education".*

*"I was told about support, but at the time I didn't really understand it, but here have supported me with my career choice, I have got an apprenticeship".*

*"I would have liked to have stopped at both my other schools, I don't hate this place, but given the option I would like to go back".*

*"They could have fixed termed me instead. It's not as good here as the last school, I would like to have gone back. Having more people around is better".*

*"I didn't want to move school, I had all my friends there, but coming here I have done more stuff".*

*"Mum and dad wanted me here, it's the best place for me. I am more positive here".*

*"In my old school, everyone was different to me. Like in a class of about 30 people, I'd be the one that was getting sent out. I was just young, I was naughty. Not anymore, I just knuckle down".*

*"Before I came here, I would rather have stayed at my mainstream school, because I didn't know what this school was. Everyone's welcoming and I kinda knew a few people as well. I'd like to go back to my mainstream school as it would look better for my GCSEs".*

*"I feel like the environment's a lot better here than at my other school, there's a lot more opportunities as well".*

*"I'll go back (to my mainstream school) when I'm ready".*

*"Yeah I would very much have liked to stay at my previous school when I was there because it was a very good school. I would like to go back to my old school if I had the opportunity."*

*"I had a lot more activities to get involved in at the last school, but none here".*



## MY FRIENDS AND WHERE I BELONG

---

*"I had mates at my school, still do, but don't have any really good ones here".*

*"I used to go to activities at baby people, time to do my music, but I don't go now".*

*"I had friends when I was in there, but now I look back and now not one person, and I had done everything with them. I have acquaintances in this school, not friends".*

*"I have friends here, not best friends though".*

*"I have one friend from the last school that I still see, but most mates are from here now".*

*"One of my mates goes here and the other mate is on personalised programme. I don't see anyone from my previous schools".*

*"Some of the guys in my class are mates, it's kind of weird here, as lots of people do stuff that I am not about, but they are ok".*

*"I knew everyone there, not all liked me, but still meet up with some and I have my boys/brotherhood in this school".*

*"I knew everyone at my other school and I have mates at both".*

*"My friends made fun of me about coming here but I am still positive about my future".*

*"I didn't feel like I belonged there and now I do".*

*"I used to worry about what people thought about me coming here, but now I don't worry".*

*"This is still education, I don't worry about what people might say".*

*"I don't really feel like I belong anywhere".*

## MY FUTURE

---

*"I didn't know what I wanted to do and when I come to Kingsmead it opened a lot of doors for me and that, I now hope for the best".*

*"I feel fairly positive now about my future as this place has given me some good opportunities".*

*"I feel really positive about my future now".*

*"Here has help me set up a plan/course that will help me get into a real life – I going Derby college doing Motor Vehicle and I see a future in that – I want to do an apprenticeship and to own my own company".*

*"I didn't have a clue what I wanted to do when I was at school. Now I know exactly what I am doing; the interview was nerve wracking – they asked all types of questions about me. I had researched and prepared and I start September".*

*"Tell you the truth, I am pretty happy what my future can be and I have plans in place, but I don't know what the hell I am doing after May until September, staff say different things and its confusing, I don't know if I can come back here or what is happening. I want to apply for things, but don't know if I can".*

*"I reckon now I will be able to get a job now – I like my cars and want to be an engineer. I love my cars".*

*"I don't want to go to a big college, I am used to this school and small groups and I want a college that is smaller, I get on better like that".*

*"I would have liked to get more GCSEs, and can't do that here. Some staff are cool here though".*

*"This year I have put in so much work and now my results are better than friends back in mainstream. I am happy with myself, I am going to boast about that. From all my peers, some are fading away in school and they made fun of me".*

*"I didn't believe I had any future, but now I am very positive".*

*"My future wasn't really part of my every day thinking. I was careless".*

*"I'll always be worried about my future whether it's truly expressing who I want to be in front of the world, or if it's just within these walls. (I won't be here for much longer) that's what I'm kind of scared about is, like when I'm not here, how am I gonna be who I want to be around other people".*



# ADVICE I WOULD GIVE

---

*"At the time, when you are a kid, you have a picture of what life will be like and then you grow up and realise it's nothing like that –the future is daunting. It's scary and I have said before that schools need to focus on teaching children about the world, life and work, because otherwise you get out there and you are fucked".*

*"My advice to anyone else is get your head down and work".*

*"I wasn't at the right place, but before I went there I didn't understand about other special needs, I used to whisper behind backs and call them names and that, and when I went there I started to understand them and it changed me – I stopped being scared of what I didn't understand. That was the good part. All people here go around calling the other kids in the nurture group names and that, and they don't get it. They do dumb shit and target them. I then step in and stop it, because I understand better – young people need to mix with lots of different people to help us understand".*





Direct Education Business Partnership  
Commerce House  
Millennium Way  
Chesterfield  
S41 8ND

Tel: 01246 212 535  
Email: [enquiries@debp.org](mailto:enquiries@debp.org)  
Web: [www.debp.org](http://www.debp.org)