

**Bradford Trident Local Evaluation  
Pupil Tracking Project  
Report 4  
May 2005**

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**A report prepared for:  
Bradford Trident**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Aims and Objectives

This Pupil Tracking project has been set up to assess the impact of the Trident programme on a group of young people who are resident in the Trident area over the coming years.

The rationale for the approach being taken is that the real impact of the Trident programme on young people's educational achievement and well-being can only be measured over time; input while they are at school will, it is hoped, have positive outcomes both in the short and medium terms in relation to improved educational performance. Furthermore the young people living in the Trident area are, of course, affected by a wide range of different experiences in their families and communities as well as at school. Thus if we are going to be able to disentangle the effects of the various Trident interventions designed to raise educational achievements, then a longitudinal approach that tracks changes in pupils' lives over time – at school, at home and in the community – will assist us in evaluating which of the various kinds of interventions in which combinations are effective.

The objectives for the Pupil Tracking project are therefore as follows:

1. To establish a representative panel of children who are willing to participate in discussions at regular intervals over the coming years.
2. To assess the well-being of this group of children as they pass through the secondary school system in terms of:
  - educational achievement
  - behaviour in school
  - motivation and aspirations
  - behaviour out of school
  - family
  - health
  - community involvement and citizenship

3. To identify the impact of Trident activities on this group of children both directly (ie where they have been direct beneficiaries of activities) and indirectly (ie where they have benefited from wider, community-focused activities).
4. To try to establish which of these activities have had most impact in terms of the well-being of this group.

Groups of young people have now been established in each of four schools. They have agreed to participate in discussions twice a year on their progress in school, issues affecting their lives and those of their families and communities. The objectives of the sessions in this phase of the project were:

- to update our information on the students' perceptions of their motivation in relation to school, behaviour and attainment.
- to explore the pressures that young people face at school, among friends, at home and in the community
- to find out how much they know about the Trident Youth Forum and their views about how the Forum should operate and what should be its priorities.

## 1.2 Methodology

Four different high schools taking Trident young people as students are participating in this project. They are:

- Dixons CTC
- Grange Technology College
- Feversham College
- Tong High School.

The numbers of young people taking part in the discussions in each school are shown in Table 1. All the discussions took place in February and early March.

**Table 1: Composition of groups**

School	Boys	Girls	Total
Dixons	4	8	12
Feversham	-	12	12
Grange	7	6	13
Tong	2	1	3
Total	13	27	40

In each school the discussion was organised around a structured set of activities. These are described in the Annex.

All the young people who took part were rewarded with the choice of a £10 voucher for either Boots or HMV. These were sent to them after the discussion meeting together with a certificate acknowledging their participation and a newsletter summarising the findings contained in this report and included as an Annex.

### **1.3 Structure of the report**

The report is organised as follows:

Section 2 reports the latest findings on the young people's perceptions of their own motivation to school, their behaviour and attainment at school.

Section 3 reports findings on the pressures that young people experience - from friends, school, their families and the community

Section 4 examines attitudes to young people's involvement and participation and, more specifically, Bradford Trident's Youth Forum.

Section 5 draws together the key issues arising from this round of group discussions.



## **2 MOTIVATION, BEHAVIOUR, AND ATTAINMENT**

In order to provide a baseline against which to assess students' changing levels of attainment, motivation and behaviour, in the last group sessions (October 2004) everyone in the four groups was given a picture of a thermometer and asked to indicate where on a scale of 1 (worst) to 10 (best) they thought they were. These thermometers were revisited again in the latest round of discussion meetings.

### **2.1 Motivation**

Table 1 shows that three quarters of the students that took part in the consultation rated how they feel about coming to school as between 1 and 5 (where 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest), with 10 boys and 22 girls falling into this bracket. The majority of these students rated themselves at level 5. The predominant reason the young people gave for their low scores was that school was 'boring'.

For many young people the primary determinant of their level of motivation was the lessons they had timetabled; a day would be looked forward to if it included lessons they enjoyed but not if lessons were considered boring.

How young people felt about coming to school also depended on the teachers taking their classes. They acknowledged that some teachers try to make lessons fun and had a good rapport with the students, whilst others were not so popular – because of the teaching methods they used, how stressed the students perceived them to be or how strict they were.

How complicated the lesson was also impacted on whether the young people wanted to go to school. Several students acknowledged that lessons could be 'difficult' or 'harder to understand'. These were often the ones they described as boring. The students all favoured the lessons they perceived themselves as being good at and therefore enjoyed, rather than the ones where they had to try harder. If lessons were 'interesting', 'fun', 'really good' or 'great' the students looked forward to school.

A small number of students also referred to levels of motivation affecting how much they wanted to come to school. A few, primarily boys, said they 'couldn't be bothered' - two related this to being tired or wanting to sleep late in the morning; one said this was because they were being bullied at school.

Overall the scores for motivation were rather lower than those for the same exercise in October 2004.

**Table 1: How I feel about coming to school**

Score (1 = worst, 10 = best)	No of girls	No of boys	Total No of Students	Comments
1	1	2	3	"I can't be bothered because you want to sleep late and you have to wake up in the morning." "Because its very boring and the teachers are very strict and I only like PE." "Too boring and can't be bothered because I get bullied."
3	2	1	3	"I don't like school, but sometimes it's ok." "Some of the lessons are difficult and boring. English and History are great but all the rest are too boring." "I don't really like coming to school but sometimes I do because my friends are here and I feel like I have to see how they're doing. I like P.E. and Art."
4	6	3	9	"I am ok, I like sports and most of the lessons but I'd rather not do some of the lessons" "I only like some lessons such as when we do fun things but sometimes we do boring things." "I like some lessons like ICT but some lessons can be quite boring sometimes. I find science and art boring." "Some lessons are fun and not boring. E.g. History and Geography." "I don't like being in lessons because it's boring and all we have to do is write/draw." "I feel like this because I like English and I hate Maths because it's boring." "Because most of the lessons I hate and some of the lessons are great." "I like coming to school most days because I chill out." "Because some lessons are boring"
5	13	4	17	"I feel like this because I like lessons like Art and PE, but not lessons like Spanish or Maths" "I enjoy going to some of my favourite lessons and some lessons I don't because I might not like the teacher as much" "Some lessons are fun and interesting like drama, where others are harder to understand" "Because some lessons are really boring more than others" "Because some lessons can be boring because I find the work easy and the teachers will just keep on talking and explaining" "Some lessons are really boring and they give you too much work and"

				<p>homework. Boring = history, Arabic, English, maths. Cool = science, P.E. and Art.”</p> <p>“Sometimes I don’t like coming to school because I am really tired or I am bored, like in Maths and Science.”</p> <p>“Some of the lessons are quite boring, for example I like art and D.T. but I don’t like English and PE.”</p> <p>“I like most of the lessons but some lessons are really boring, it depends if it’s a good day or a bad day.”</p> <p>“Some teachers have fun in lessons and make lessons fun whilst others shout and don’t have any fun at all”</p> <p>“I basically don’t mind some lessons, my least favourite lesson is science – I like science itself, its just the lessons aren’t fun and the teacher is forever stressed”</p> <p>“Because it depends on what lesson it is and which teacher.”</p> <p>“Because some lessons I’m not good at and some lessons I am good at.”</p> <p>“I feel like this because some of the lessons are interesting and some boring and no fun.”</p> <p>“Because some teachers are strict.”</p> <p>“I feel like this because some teachers are a bit boring and some teachers are quite funny.”</p> <p>“Some lessons are boring and tiring but some are great, for example Spanish is my favourite lesson”</p>
6	3	1	4	<p>“Because some of the lessons I don’t like, but mostly I do like the lessons. History I find boring, but others are ok.”</p> <p>“Sometimes when on a day I have my favourite lessons I enjoy coming to school. I like P.E. History, Geography, R.E and Sciences.”</p> <p>“Some lessons are fun and some lessons are boring – I like going to fun lessons.”</p> <p>“Because I like some lessons and hate others”</p>
7	1		1	<p>“I feel like this because I like nearly all the lessons apart from R.E, Science and I.C.T because I don’t understand some of the things”</p>
8	1			<p>“Because some of the lessons are really good and I can’t wait to get there.”</p>
9		1		<p>“I feel very good about this because school can help me get a better future</p>
10		1		<p>“I’m active.”</p>

## 2.2 Attainment

Students in all four groups were asked to say how well they thought they were doing at school. Their responses are summarised in table 2. Although the highest proportion of students rated themselves as 5 in this question (30%) (where 1 is lowest and 10 is highest), overall the majority rated themselves between 6 and 10 in relation to how well they were doing at school.

Whatever they rated their attainment, the majority seemed to be happy with the grades they were achieving. A few acknowledged that they could do better and cited reasons for not doing so well in class as: getting distracted in lessons, needing to revise more

and needing to work harder. One young person also suffered from ill health - because they had to miss a lot of school they always had a lot of work to catch up on, so their grades were 'alright' but not as good as they would have liked.

Many of the students acknowledged that they received good or high grades in the lessons that they were good at or liked, but they were not always so high achieving in the lessons they found hard or boring.

Those who rated their attainment as between 4 and 5 tended to describe their grades as 'ok', 'alright' or 'in the middle'. It was primarily at these levels that people thought they could improve if they worked harder.

The students who rated their attainment as 5 described their grades as 'a bit more than ok', 'what they were aiming for', or 'top/great grades'. These students described themselves as 'working their hardest' although some acknowledged there was still room for improvement. They still wanted to and were doing well – even in the lessons they found boring.

A number of the students also acknowledged how important it was to do well at school. They were aware that working hard and getting good grades improved their chances of doing well in the future. This harks back to the views expressed in the first stage of this project by children in Year 6.

Overall the students' self-assessment of their own attainment, when compared with the scores for the same exercise undertaken in October 2004, shows a tendency to rate their achievement a little lower.

**Table 2: How well I'm doing at school**

Score (1 = worst, 10 = best)	No of girls	No of boys	Total No of Students	Comments
4	3	1	4	"I am doing very well at school but I get ok grades, I don't get high grades at all." "I think that my grades are ok but I could do better in many lessons." "The lessons I am good at I get good level for my work."

				"I feel like this because in some lessons I get distracted with my friends and in some I don't"
5	6	6	12	"I have some good grades for my maths and Spanish work, but not that good grades for history or DT" "Because I am better in some subjects more than others" "I'm smart" "Because sometimes I'm poorly so I'm away and I miss work. If I'm away then afterwards it's hard to catch up so I get alright grades" "Because if I was not doing well the teacher would have said something, but they are ok" "In some subjects I am good and in some subjects I am really good so I get high grades." "Sometimes I revise, but sometimes I don't. I get level 4 or 5, but mainly level 4." "I am doing just fine." "My grades are not too low but then again not too high – in the middle." "My levels are alright." "Because I try hard"
6	5	1	6	"My grades are getting on well and I am getting the grades I want. I have not received any low grades so far" "I'm trying my best, but I can improve and work harder" "I think my grades are ok because what I aimed for I have achieved now." "Because my grades are a little more than ok." "My grades are ok because my teachers make exciting ways to learn different things and memorise them." "My grades are ok because I try hard, but need to do my best for a good education"
7	4	2	6	"In most lessons and work my grades are good. There are only 1 or 2 lessons that I don't really like that much where my grades are average" "My grades are ok because I am getting a top level 5 in every lesson and I am learning something almost every lesson" "I am working well because I have moved up slowly and hopefully get good grades" "I revise and pay attention in the lesson even though it's boring." "I am doing well at school, I try my hardest at my tests and I get high levels in English, Geography and Maths." "Because I am good at most stuff."
8	2	1	3	"I get good marks in the lessons I enjoy" "I think I am doing great at school." "I know I am getting great grades"
9	4		4	"I get top grades for everything except history. But I'm getting better because you don't get written text, you have to research and do pointless stuff." "Some lessons I'm doing really well in, others not that well." "I do learn a lot at school and use that knowledge to get good marks and good grades." "I get good levels in nearly every subject but I'm not so good in English."
10	3	2	5	"They are doing well my grades, because I'm revising a lot and taking down all the key information and then remembering it all"

				<p>"I have been getting level 6 and 7 for everything."                  "I feel very good about this because this tells me that I am trying very hard."                  "I get good grades for most of my lessons. I think my grades are good."                  "I'm clever."</p>
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### 2.3 Behaviour

The majority of the students rated their behaviour between levels 6 and 10 on the scale (where 1 is the worst and 10 is the best) – this included boys as well as girls. Those who scored themselves between levels 2 and 7 described the times they had been in trouble as being due to chatting too much and turning around or being silly in class. The young people said that their behaviour varied and that they only got into trouble sometimes, not all of the time. Getting into ‘trouble’ seemed to depend on who the students were friends with. Students also mentioned getting in trouble for breaking school rules – such as chewing gum.

The students who rated their behaviour between levels 8 and 10 all perceived their behaviour as excellent. They did not like getting in trouble, although they admitted to having been in trouble on the odd occasion. They all seemed to recognise this as something they did not plan to repeat.

Compared with the results for the same exercise undertaken at the last groups meetings again the students’ self-perceived behaviour has declined. In October 2003 a majority of the students rated their behaviour as 8 or above. In this round of discussions a majority rated their behaviour as seven or lower.

**Table 3: My behaviour**

Score (1 = worst, 10 = best)	No of girls	No of boys	Total No of Students	Comments
2		2	2	"I mess about some of the time and I feel I could improve that"
4	6		6	"I can just sometimes get into trouble with some strict teachers and with some teachers I don't." "I like doing what I want and usually when I do this I get in trouble." "Sometimes I get too carried away." "My behaviour is ok, but sometimes I don't look for trouble it just comes to me."

				<p>"I am mostly good in school but I always get caught in school with chewing gum."</p> <p>"I mess about in lessons with my friends sometimes if I'm in a good mood, but if I'm not I don't mess about."</p>
5	3	3	6	<p>"I'm not always good because I am mostly getting told off for talking but I am mostly good"</p> <p>"I sometimes get in trouble for chatting or turning around, but most of the time I'm good"</p> <p>"My behaviour's good most of the time, but sometimes I am naughty."</p> <p>"Most of the time I do well."</p> <p>"Because I am good but I do get in trouble"</p>
6	3	2	5	<p>"I can get carried away in lessons but I am usually well behaved"</p> <p>"I think my behaviour is mostly good but sometimes it is not."</p> <p>"Because I am mostly good and I only get in trouble sometimes."</p> <p>"Sometimes I mess around, but most of the time I am good."</p> <p>"I think this because I may be badly behaved and get detentions in a few of my lessons, but the rest I behave good."</p>
7	4	2	6	<p>"I don't like to get into trouble because if my parents find out then I will get my gameboy confiscated or my brothers will batter me"</p> <p>"Sometimes I am a bit chatty. When I sit next to my friends I get easily distracted but most of the time I'm good in lessons"</p> <p>"Because I haven't been in detention since year 7 and I get a few positive slips for good behaviour"</p> <p>"I'm always on my best behaviour but sometimes I can be silly."</p> <p>"I am alright at behaving in class but sometimes I get teased."</p> <p>"My behaviour is good because my teachers are alright so I don't have to mess around."</p>
8	3	1	4	<p>"I am mostly good because I sometimes mess about when I am silly"</p> <p>"Because I am well-behaved in most subjects"</p> <p>"I don't really like getting in trouble."</p> <p>"I know that I am always on my best behaviour because I have only once got in trouble. The rest of the time I am on best behaviour."</p>
9	2		2	<p>"I always try to do my best at school and my behaviour in general is very good – only on 1 or 2 occasions I sometimes misbehave"</p> <p>"My behaviour is quite good but sometimes when I get mad I lose my control and I flip at people."</p>
10	7	2	9	<p>"I'm always good because I've never got any detentions and never got any red B, H, E's"</p> <p>"I think I'm always good. It's possibly the way I've been brought up"</p> <p>"I have been good since primary school."</p> <p>"I haven't ever been in trouble so far and I think my behaviour is quite good."</p>

				<p>"I feel very good about this because I am always behaving and the teachers and students like me." "I have never got in trouble much although sometimes I forget my homework." "I don't get into trouble hardly because I always get on with my work and talk later sometimes" "I'm the best." "My behaviour is never bad because I don't mess around in school."</p>
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## 2.4 Summary of key issues

- There is some evidence of a falling off of motivation among the young people. Levels of motivation relate to perceptions of how boring their lessons are; how engaging they find their teachers; and the difficulty of the work - which is in turn linked to how interesting they find the lessons.
- Most of the students feel that they are doing quite well at school and are happy with the grades they are achieving. Again this is linked to their enjoyment of lessons - they feel that they do better in those lessons that they enjoy most.
- Most of the students think that their behaviour at school is generally okay. In the majority of cases where they have got into trouble at school it has been for minor bad behaviour such as talking in class.
- Those students who rate their behaviour the highest were those who did not like getting into trouble; where this had occurred they felt that they did not want to repeat the experience.
- Students this time rated their behaviour less highly than at the least sessions. However, given that generally they also seem quite satisfied with their own behaviour this suggests that their own behaviour "threshold" has shifted a bit so that they themselves are more comfortable with worse behaviour.



### **3 PRESSURES AND COPING STRATEGIES**

One of the foci for discussion at this round of group meetings was the kinds of pressures that young people are experiencing and the kinds of support they felt were available to them to cope with those pressures.

The discussion focussed on:

- Pressures from friends
- pressures from family
- Pressures from school
- Pressures in the community.

All the young people in each consultation group thought that the most pressures came from school (family was second). Students from Tong said that they did not feel any pressure and were very laid back people. (They were also incredibly tired and lethargic in the session!) Some of the young people recognised that there could be good pressures in your life and that pressure was not always negative. They believed that teachers and schools were good as they were helping you develop as a person – to get good grades, behave well, be rewarded for your hard work and ultimately to help you get a good job/career. They also believed pressure helped you face your fears, pushing you to achieve more.

Students at both Feversham and Dixons acknowledged that there were far more pressures at secondary school than primary school.



Group exercise; identifying pressures on young people

### 3.1 Pressures from friends

Children in each of the four schools identified pressures put on young people by their friends. The majority were related to 'friends making you do things that you don't want to do'. The main example given was friends pressuring you to smoke cigarettes and/or take/smoke drugs. Also mentioned frequently was being made to go somewhere that you, or your parents, didn't want you to go. Other examples included friends making you lend them money to go shopping, which they then don't pay back, and being pressured to do dares.

Within the school environment, the young people identified pressure from friends to misbehave in lessons, which could get you into trouble with teachers when it was your friend in the wrong. Other pressures were friends making you do their homework for them or encouraging you to 'slam' (skip) lessons.

Students from Tong spoke about the pressures put on young people to do bad things in the community. These included drinking alcohol, throwing stones at windows, writing your name in graffiti, stealing and 'smashing up' cars and setting things on fire. In contrast, the pressures that Feversham students mentioned primarily concerned friends falling out and the pressure this puts on young people who are then expected to take sides. They mentioned how friends form new 'gangs' in these situations, making you feel 'stuck in the middle'. Students from Feversham also mentioned how they rarely see their friends after school as they all live in different parts of Bradford - they have different friendship groups, often family members, at home and this entails pressures of its own.

The students also talked about the emotional pressures that friends can place you under. Some felt that friends can use you - confiding in you and enjoying your friendship when it suits them, but then 'going off' with another person when they no longer need you. They also talked about what happens if you do not give into the pressure of your friends and how, as a result, they might become cross and angry with you and accuse you of being selfish. The students said that friends would talk behind your back, call you names or accuse you of 'stirring up rumours' about them, and refuse to be your friend any longer. They might argue with you, and in some cases even pick a fight. They could make you feel the odd one out.

### **3.2 Pressures from family**

The young people identified pressures from family members within the home and also in relation to school. Pressures at home revolved around the young people's relationships with their family – how well they got on with their parents and siblings. The young people identified parental expectation as a pressure. Examples were parents not trusting young people enough and not giving them enough responsibility: 'if you want to go somewhere they won't let you, or they won't let you compromise on the time when you need to be home'. Other pressures included parents not letting young people buy something they wanted and blaming young people for their sibling's mistakes. Some of the students mentioned pressures from parents to help around the house or prepare for visits from relatives, preventing them doing homework. In contrast, other parents put a lot of pressure on young people to do homework and refused to let them do other activities until their homework had been done. The young people identified the

pressures felt if parents fought a lot or were going through a break up. They also mentioned having to attend family occasions, such as weddings, having to look and dress 'posh' and behave well. Students from Dixons talked about the pressures on young people expected to have arranged marriages.

Siblings were also identified as sources of pressure. They were described as being annoying and distracting, preventing young people from doing their homework. There was also an expectation on many of the young people to care for younger siblings, while older siblings were referred to as bullies or bossed them around.

Pressures also came from family members in relation to school. Students at Feversham and Grange identified parental expectations to achieve top grades, especially if older siblings had done very well before them. They also said that parents expected them to tutor their younger siblings as well as having to do their own homework. The students felt pressured after a 'bad' parents evening/school report knowing their parents would be unhappy with their achievements. Some admitted lying in the hope that their parents did not find out. However, many of the students recognised that schools would often notify parents if they were not achieving as well as they should or had been in trouble, and talked about the pressure of going home at the end of the day knowing they were going to be in trouble.

### **3.3 Pressures from school**

The biggest pressure in school, mentioned by all the students involved in the consultation, was homework – the amount received (especially if extra was given) and how hard it was. Students at Dixons were particularly vocal about this, perceiving themselves as receiving far more homework than any other school in Bradford. All the students thought they received too much homework and commented on how much time it took to complete. All thought that teachers were a pressure, either making them work too hard, shouting too much or because they simply did not like them. Getting good grades was also perceived as one of the biggest pressures in school. This related to class work, which students believed teachers wanted 'to be perfect', the standard of homework and grades in exams or tests.

Other pressures acknowledged by the students included the threat of detentions and punishments for not doing/handing in homework or for talking too much/messing about in lessons. Pressure was felt by students in the lessons they did not understand - they were aware they would not achieve so highly as a result. Further pressures were having to behave all the time and bullying. There was an acknowledgement from Dixons and Feversham students of the pressure to win in sports and drama competitions, either between schools or inter-house.

Feversham students identified some pressures specific to their school. They did not like their uniform, nor the yellow school buses they travelled on each day. They felt these were embarrassing and singled them out as being different/going to a different school. They also said they had not had any school trips in the last year, due to moving to a new school building.

Many of the pressures mentioned by young people from Dixons and Grange overlapped with pressures from friends, such as peer pressure and smoking. Students at both schools also identified competition amongst students to do well, such as getting more merits and positive slips in school than peers. They discussed the pressure they felt going to 'good' schools in Bradford – not only by the schools themselves but by peers who attended other schools in the area. Dixons students described the 'geek/swot' image they believed Dixons had. One person from Grange also mentioned high expectations of students likely to go on to University.

One of the biggest pressures mentioned by students from Tong was regarding teachers and the fact that they did not pick on the people in class who had their hands up to answer a question but the people who did not put their hands up, which they did not think was fair. There was no mention from students at Tong about wanting to do well in homework or exams. In contrast, they believed doing well and being 'a swot' was a bad thing and two of the young people admitted to pressurising those they perceived as swots themselves.

### **3.4 Pressures in the community**

The young people identified a range of different pressures that they experience within their communities. These are discussed in turn.

### **3.4.1 Crime**

The students all talked about crime on the streets and how this affected where they could play out, or if they could play at all. They talked about gun crime and racism in the community, and the fights that occurred because of this. They said groups of youths or men hang around in gangs, often on street corners, which is intimidating. They also talked about the 'druggies' who hang around on street corners and in alleyways where they hide their drugs. Students at Dixons were particularly aware of strangers and how they could be paedophiles. All the students were aware of 'bad' areas and where it was 'ok to go'. Other examples were murders occurring in their community, joy riders, young people throwing eggs and causing trouble, drunken people and fighting neighbours (who also threw out lots of rubbish and played loud music all night) which they said made their areas feel unsafe for them.

### **3.4.2 Out of school activities**

The students in all the schools talked about having nothing to do in their communities. They said there were not enough youth clubs or places to go. Where there were youth clubs they said they had often become too religious, so they did not feel comfortable attending. The boys commented that there were often signs in the streets which prohibited them from playing ball games. If they knocked a ball into a garden the people living there would sometimes pop it instead of giving it back. If they tried to play on fields/play areas other youths hanging around would try and join in the game when they did not want them to. The young people said there were not enough green areas and too many car parks. They said that because there is nowhere to go, people often look for (and cause) trouble. The students commented that school holidays within Bradford fall at different times of the year depending on which they went to, so their friends were usually in school when they were off and vice versa. They commented that they had no-one to hang around/do activities with and were bored.

### **3.4.3 The environment**

Students from all the schools commented that their communities were dirty. They said there was lots of litter, chewing gum, spit and broken glass on the floor and no bins to use. There were lots of shops that had closed down due to going out of business and houses that had been partially knocked down, or left to become derelict, and therefore the areas were strewn with rubble. This was not only dangerous (especially for younger

siblings playing in these areas), but made the area look 'scruffy'. They were embarrassed that people visiting Bradford would see these areas and think everyone lived like this. The students also commented that there were too many cars on the road, which were not only dangerous but causing pollution, and no lights on the streets, which increased people's fear of being mugged if they had to go out in the dark.

#### **3.4.4 Relationships within the community**

The students talked about two specific groups of people they felt caused pressure – the elderly and asylum seekers. Students at Dixons acknowledged that there were not always positive relationships between young people and the elderly in the community. They felt there was a lack of respect which made the elderly think all young people are bad. They believed that because no respect was shown to young people, they did not show respect back. They felt the elderly were too quick to criticise them, even when they were trying to help, so they could not be seen near old people in case it was assumed they were doing something negative.

Students from Feversham identified pressures in their community as a result of asylum seekers being housed there. They said people in the community felt threatened by them ('they make us scared') as they would beg from door to door for money. They also commented on an increased incidence of shoplifting in the area.

### **3.5 Feelings and behaviour of young people under pressure**

All the students were able to identify a number of symptoms young people might feel/display if they were under pressure:

- Angry
- Stressed
- Have mood swings
- Horrible
- Panicked
- Depressed
- Unconfident
- Upset
- Can't be bothered (lethargic)
- Tired
- Nervous
- Sad
- Emotional

All the students identified a number of behaviours young people under pressure might display:

- Argumentative - Get into arguments with friends and parents
- Shouting
- Quiet and shy
- Nervous

- Want to be on their own and hide in their bedroom
- Be moody
- Get into fights/hit someone
- Cry all the time
- Just watch TV
- Get headaches all the time
- Act weird
- Not think straight
- Kick chairs and slam doors
- Break glasses
- Spit on people's shoes
- Be nasty to people
- They might rebel
- Talk back to teachers
- Not listen to anyone
- Show symptoms of eating disorders

In addition the young people identified the following possible impacts of pressure on their health:

- Smoking would mess their lungs up
- They might not sleep because you are worrying, so would be tired all the time and have no energy. This would have repercussions on school work, exams and grades.
- They might try to commit suicide
- They might eat too much and put on lots of weight, or not enough and become anorexic
- They might feel sick all the time
- Have headaches
- Have panic attacks
- They might not be able to breathe
- It can affect you mentally
- They might take too many sleeping tablets

### 3.6 Dealing with pressure

The young people identified the following coping mechanisms that young people might use to deal with the pressures they were experiencing:

- Eat comfort food, like chocolate
- Go on a diet
- Try to calm down and get things under control
- Take tablets to make you calm
- See a counsellor
- Go to a learning mentor
- Count sheep/count to 10
- Listen to relaxing/your favourite music
- Get used to it
- Drink relaxing drinks, like Horlicks
- Talk to someone – mum/brother/teacher
- Have a bath
- Have a head massage
- Punch your pillow
- At Dixons they have I.N. (Individual Needs) – a school counselling service that you can apply for
- Have a good laugh with family/friends
- Take drugs/drink alcohol
- Start smoking
- Buy a stress ball
- Have a vacation
- Go for a walk to get fresh air
- Take things slowly - 'one step at a time'



- Speak to police officer if you are being threatened
- Try to commit suicide (this was mentioned by students at 2 of the schools – Tong and Dixons)

The following table illustrates the types of support that the young people in the consultation groups thought were already available to young people feeling under pressure, and the number of young people who were aware of that support.

**Table 4: Types of support available to young people**

<b>Types of support available</b>	<b>Number of young people</b>
Family (including parents, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts)	37
Teachers/form tutor	18
Your friends	16
Learning Mentor	13
Individual Needs (at Dixons)	11
Youth clubs	10
Counsellor	5
Clubs (sports, after school, community)	5
Support organisations/services/centres	5
Websites	4
Neighbours	3
Pharmacy/Doctors	3
Mosque	3
Peer mediator (to solve problems with friends)	3
Adults	2
Homework club	2
Old people	2
School	2
Helplines	1
Police	1
Holidays	1
Television	1

The following table illustrates the types of support that young people thought should be available to young people feeling under pressure, and the number of young people who identified that support:

**Table 5: Types of support young people would like to have access to**

Type of support	Number of young people
More clubs (youth, sport, school)	21
Understanding friends/teachers/adults/people you know	8
Better/safe places to hang out	7
Stress counselling	6
Peer support groups	4
Trident	3
A quiet place to go and relax	3
Arcades	3
A 'trouble' group to go to and room to calm down in	2
More trips	2
Parents who listen	2
Fun places/activities	2
Peer advisors/counsellors	2
Support services just for young people	2
Special group talks	2
Student flats	1
Nursing homes for children	1
Graffiti Wall	1
Learning Mentors	1
More sports lesson	1
Problem box	1
Less homework	1

A number of the students commented that no war, Bin Laden, attacks, hit men, gangsters, bullying and racism would reduce the pressures in their lives.

On the whole, the students seemed to be very aware of the types of support available to help them cope with pressure, with the majority turning to family members, teachers or friends for someone to talk to if they need help or advice.

Although a number of further support measures were suggested to help young people cope with pressure, the students found this part of the activity harder and tended to repeat the services already available. What was most apparent was that the young people wanted more youth clubs, activity groups and places to go. They felt these places would help them relax and take their minds off the pressures of school and family, while being venues that could provide people to listen and give advice when needed.

### **3.7 Summary of key issues**

- Pressure is a feature of the lives of most young people with the most acute pressure felt in relation to school.
- There are some differences between schools as to the types of pressure that are most likely to be experienced by young people, however pressure around homework was the most common - both the amount and the level of the work expected. In addition many students experienced pressure as a result of their teachers' expectations of them in relation to both attainment and behaviour.
- There was considerable evidence of pressure experienced by young people from their peers in relation to smoking and drug taking, going to places that they didn't want to go or were not allowed by their parents and, in school, to misbehave.
- At home pressure arose from parents especially in relation to issue of trust and levels of responsibility assigned to young people and their role within the family. In addition some young people spoke of the pressure of having to care for younger siblings or of being bullied by older siblings.
- In the community pressure arose from aspects of the environment that made it threatening or unattractive to young people. Crime and the lack of out of school activities were especially mentioned in this context.
- In addition some young people felt that there were problems arising from the way older people viewed and treated them.
- A particularly worrying issue was attitudes to asylum seekers in the community .

- The young people understood very well the links between pressure and moods and behaviour and, indeed, the implications for health.
- The young people were able to identify a range of mechanisms for coping with pressure and possible sources of support.
- However they also expressed the view that they needed clubs or places to go that provided a safe, attractive and supportive environment for them

## **4 YOUTH FORUM**

In this round of discussions one of the themes addressed was involvement and participation in decision making and, in particular, the Bradford Trident Youth Forum. All the young people involved in the consultation said that young people were rarely listened to and allowed to influence important decisions. Several of the schools had youth councils. They knew how to get involved and the types of decisions involved. However, there was not much motivation to join the school councils as many young people perceived them to be boring. Students of one school in particular did not believe their school council always made the best decisions and viewed previous decisions as 'pointless'.

### **4.1 Understanding of the Youth Forum**

All the young people involved in the consultation were either 12 or 13 years old. The minimum age requirement for the Youth Forum is 13, therefore none of the students had been involved in the Youth Forum to date.

During initial discussions, only one person had definitely heard of the Youth Forum and had some idea of its purpose, because an older sibling was involved as an ambassador. An explanation of the Forum had been given by the researcher, about half thought they had heard about it and knew of its existence – either through it being mentioned in the BD5 magazine or through hearing about it in school. However, none of the students were aware of its aims and objectives, or how they could get involved.

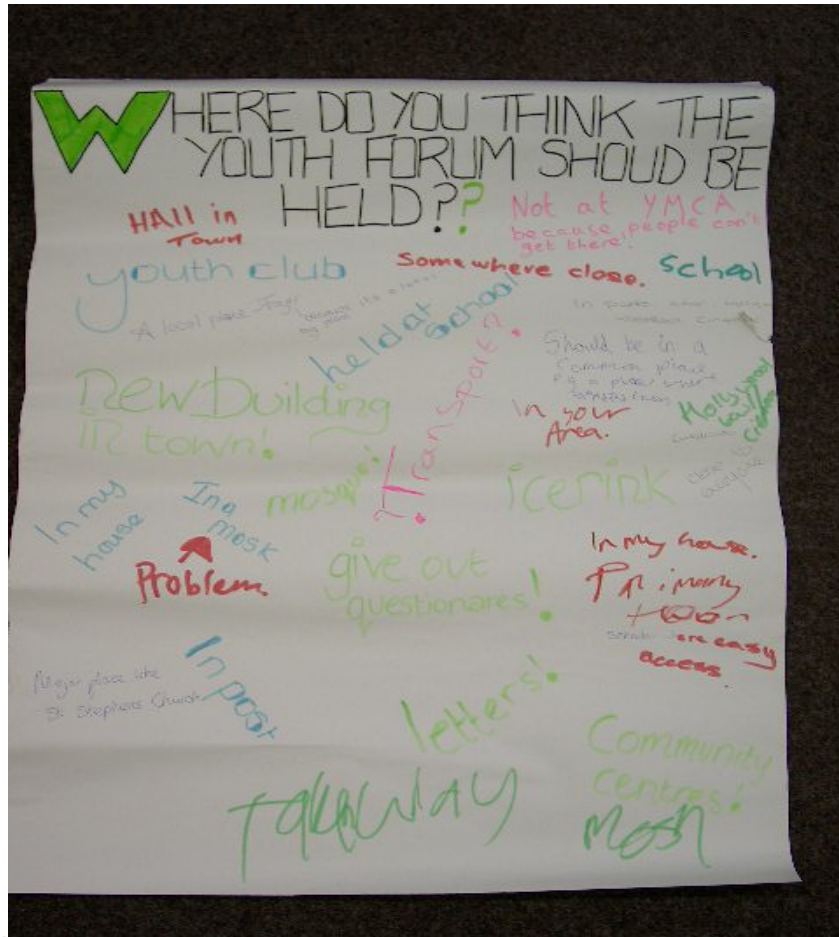
The majority of the young people said they would be interested in taking part should they get the opportunity. However, it was not clear whether everyone really grasped what was involved and, as can be seen from the following answers, tended to liken it more to a youth club and somewhere to have fun, than something with more serious objectives. Their answers also emphasised a perceived shortage of opportunities for young people to engage in youth club settings that provide activities and the chance to try new experiences within Bradford.

## 4.2 Venue for Youth Forum meetings

The young people were asked where they felt would be a suitable venue for Youth Forum meetings. Their suggestions included

- Community centres
- Sports centres
- The Town Hall
- In a park
- A youth club
- Bradford Foyer
- One of the local schools
- St Stephens Church
- A Mosque
- Hollywood bowl/cinema/ice-rink
- The YMCA (The Forum's current venue)

The young people felt that the Forum should take place at a venue everyone knew (many did not know where the YMCA was). The city centre was suggested by a number of students as everyone knew how to get there and where certain buildings/venues were. The students also wanted the venue to be somewhere local and close to where they all lived.



Ideas for where the Youth Forum should be held

Transport and access was an issue mentioned in all the schools. The young people wanted the venue to be somewhere they could get to easily – hence the argument for the city centre. There was a great deal of discussion about this in the sessions as many felt that transport to attend the Forum should be provided or subsidised. They implied it was the irregularity and cost of public transport, and for some the distance they would have to travel, that often prevented them from attending other activities and groups which already take place throughout Bradford.

Some of the young people were keen that the venues had other purposes. Bowling alleys, cinemas, ice-skating and Pizza Hut were all mentioned as potential venues so Forum meetings could be held and then followed by a fun activity in which the young people could still have a laugh and ‘let off some steam’.

Many of the young people also thought the venue should have enough space that several different activities could be run after the Forum meeting had taken place. For example, a sports hall to play sports in but also a quiet room or corner for the young people to do homework, or sit and talk. Several people suggested a new purpose built building would be the ideal venue.

The young people had interesting discussions about some venues, such as Church or Mosque. They talked about whether a multi-faith Forum should be held in a religious establishment as some people may not feel comfortable attending. Use of a school building was also debated. While some of the young people felt school was an ideal venue as they knew where the building was and felt comfortable getting there (especially if, as they hoped, the Forum might fall within school hours!), others felt they already spent too much time in school. They also wondered how young people from other schools would get there, and how one school would be chosen as a venue over another. Students from Feversham were particularly adamant that their school was too far away, for them let alone other students, and would therefore not be suitable.

Grange Technology College came up with their own solution – each district in Bradford should have its own individual Forum in their own venue. These groups could come together once a month. That way everyone would have a venue local to them.

Students were also concerned that the venue should be safe. They did not want it in a place where there were 'jobs' hanging around outside making them feel threatened, dealing drugs and making trouble. They mentioned the use of CCTV cameras if necessary.

### **4.3 Involvement in the Youth Forum**

All the students said that young people of all religions and faiths should be able to attend to promote tolerance and "get to know more about other people." Students in three of the schools believed the groups should be mixed sex. Only Feversham students wanted separate groups for girls and boys, which should take place on separate evenings.

All believed that there should be no drug dealers or trouble makers allowed into the Forum. Students at two of the schools talked about having an application process to become involved in the forum –only people who really wanted to take part for the right reasons would fill in the form. Those at one school mentioned having an open session at the beginning of each year for new people who wanted to join. During this session the organisers could do an informal assessment through talking to each young person, thus finding out who was really interested in coming and identifying those there just to make trouble or mess about.

The ideal size of the Youth Forum varied in each school consulted. One person thought it should be for 10-20 people, while others thought up to 50 people should be allowed to join. This also depended on whether they thought there should be just one group, or whether each district should have its own.

There was a great deal of discussion in each school about what age-group should be allowed to attend the Forum. Some young people thought it should be for those who fall into years 7 to 12 at Secondary school, while others thought it should be for 12 to 16 year olds, or 13 to 17 year olds. A number of students thought that younger children should be able to attend, so the Forum should include 5 to 9 year olds. They thought this would help the younger children grow in confidence and knowledge and would also encourage their parents to get involved in the issues they wanted to discuss. However, some young people thought that children younger than 11 were too young "as they



wouldn't know what they're doing and they might get bored and annoy you." The young people compromised by suggesting that younger children should attend, but they should have their own group separate to the older ones.

None of the groups thought young people over 18 should attend. While an adult would be necessary to coordinate the group, they did not want it overrun with adults. They specified that adults should be in their early 20's.

All the groups thought the Forum should be better advertised to make young people more aware of its existence.

#### **4.4 Timing of Youth Forum meetings**

It was very hard for the young people to agree a day and time when the Youth Forum should meet as other aspects of their lives already dictate their need to be somewhere else at a certain time. Students in each school suggested holding the Forum after school or at weekends. However, attendance after school depended on what other after school clubs young people were members of, or whether they went to mosque. Many people wanted their weekends free, particularly Saturdays, as this was described as a day for relaxing, shopping, meeting with friends or going out with parents. The young people did not necessarily want to do something organised after being in that situation at school all week. However, others argued that Saturdays would be good as it would enable them to meet with friends and family who attended other schools in the area and who they do not see during the week:

*"Saturday as there is no school that day, so all schools can meet. We have more time and we can see all our friends from the other schools."*

Sunday was also suggested, although some of the young people were aware that this would clash for those young people who attend church. However, the general consensus was that Sundays were boring and the afternoon was considered a good time.

The young people were also keen to attend the Forum during the summer holidays. Some thought it should only operate then, while others still believed it should be all year round but that the number of meetings should increase over the summer to 2/3 times a

week. One young person suggested the Forum should take place twice a week, once to have discussion and debate about important issues and the second time to participate in fun activities and trips. Young people thought the Forum would be good as presently the summer holidays are boring.

#### 4.5 Youth Forum activities

The young people in the consultation groups suggested a number of different activities they would like to do. These do suggest that their understanding of the role of Forum is rather limited:

**Sport:**

- Tennis
- Cricket
- Bowling
- Football
- Hockey
- Netball
- Rounders
- Swimming
- Boxing
- Ice skating/hockey
- Swimming gala's
- Pool

**Trips:**

- Pizza Hut
- Theme Parks
- Safari Parks
- Blackpool
- Dungeons in York
- Activity Centres/Residentials
- Cinema
- Museums

**Activities:**

- Spy games/Detective work
- Chess
- Murder mystery evenings
- Orienteering
- Treasure hunts
- Fashion shows
- Cyber café
- Chill out time
- Film reviews

**Training:**

- Babysitting/Childcare
- Cooking
- Acting
- Teacher training
- First aid/CPR
- Mechanics
- Career guidance
- D.T
- Astrology

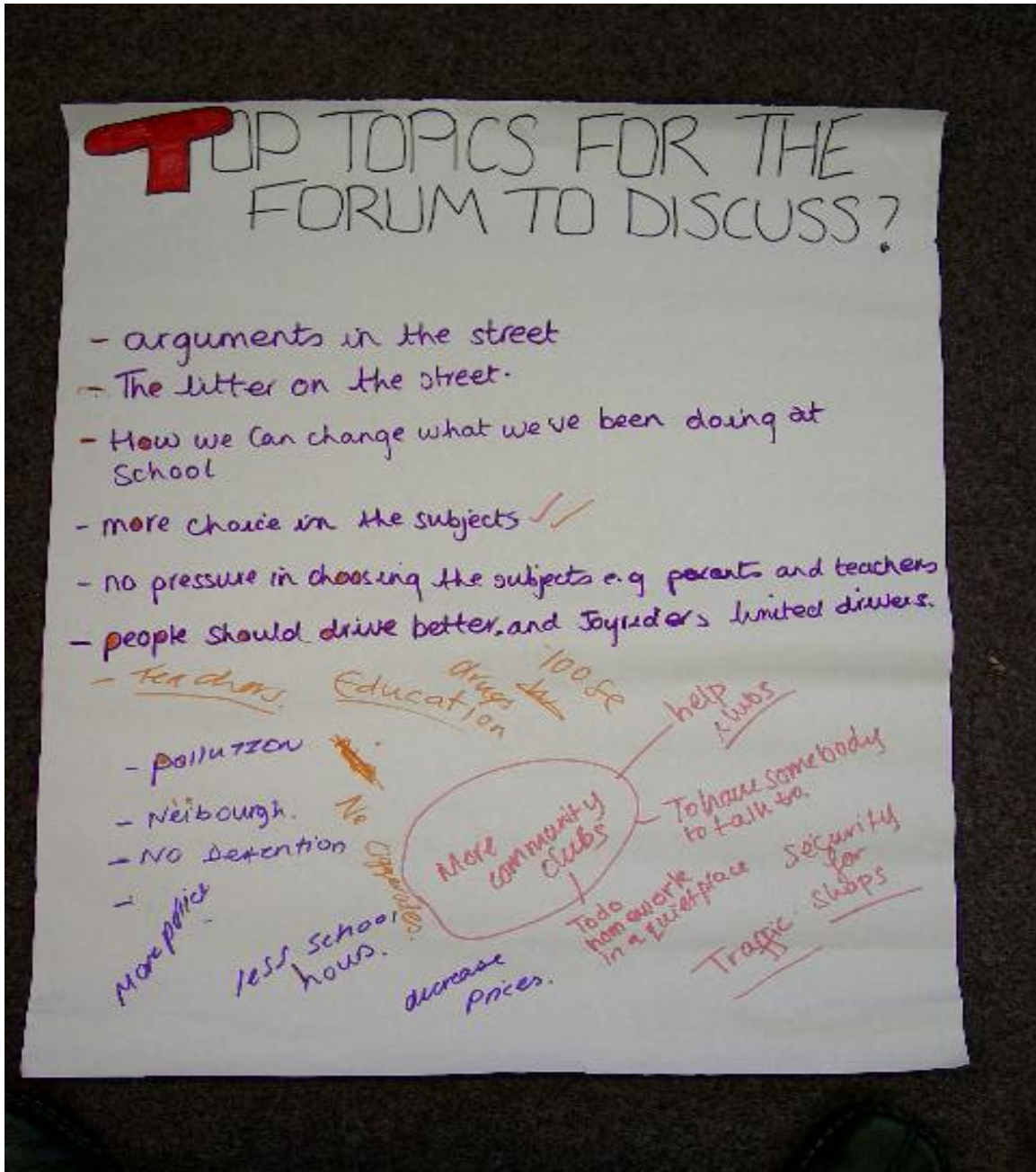
- Army assault courses – team building skills

**Forum activities:**

- Discussion
- Debates
- Quizzes and competitions
- Design a newsletter
- Journal keeping
- Talks/presentations
- Question time events
- Drama/role play about issues
- Talk on the radio about what matters to young people
- Present ideas and about the Forum at different schools

Only students from Tong commented that they were not interested in the Forum, no matter what activities and trips were provided.

#### 4.6 Top Topics for the Youth Forum to discuss



Ideas about what the Youth Forum should discuss

The young people were asked about the kinds of issues that they felt the Forum should discuss.

#### **4.6.1 School**

The young people mentioned several issues about school that they would like to have more of a say about:

- What type of things are going on in school.
- Having better after school clubs.
- Amount of homework.
- Having to pay for education – such as University fees.
- Having more choice in subjects at school.
- Less pressure from teachers to choose certain subjects in options.
- School opening times – at the moment it is too early (this was specifically mentioned by Tong).
- More buses, with more room, so everyone can sit down instead of being squashed.

#### **4.6.2 Community:**

There were several areas of discussion that the young people in all the schools mentioned frequently as being important issues they would like to address in Bradford.

The first four issues are those mentioned most frequently:

- The young people wanted more community and youth clubs, more places to go and 'more stuff' for young people to do. They particularly wanted more places to go after school and at weekends.
- The young people wanted to make the area safer. They were particularly concerned about the amount of drug dealing, and subsequent fighting, wanting more police patrols to reduce incidence. They also wanted joy-riding reduced and greater security for shops to prevent them being robbed. They wanted people being allocated housing to be monitored, as many of the students commented about having nasty, arguing neighbours. Some of the young people from Feversham also mentioned issues that had occurred in their areas with asylum seekers.
- The young people were very concerned about cleaning their environment up. Students at all the schools wanted more litter bins around to try and encourage people not to drop rubbish. They were aware that there is now an 'on the spot' fine for anyone caught dropping litter, but said there was often no choice as you could not find a bin. They also suggested tackling graffiti to make the area look nicer. Many were aware that derelict and decrepit buildings, often those they were living in, were not only run down and therefore not pleasant to inhabit, but did not portray a good impression to anybody visiting Bradford. The students criticised Bradford's policy of

building new houses rather than investing in and 'doing up' the ones that already exist:

*"I live here and I want to know why our house doesn't get fixed up. Our house is really run down. What they're trying to do is make Bradford more like Leeds and make it better, but our house is a bit mucky. So they're making new houses and they're building houses but they're not fixing the ones they already have."*

- All the schools, apart from Tong, wanted to tackle smoking in the Forum. They were keen to address underage smoking and stopping shops from selling cigarettes to underage young people. Some students wanted to see a ban on smoking in Bradford, and others even suggested a ban on selling tobacco completely across the country. (They did, however, think that nicotine patches should continue to be sold).

Other issues the young people wanted to address were:

- Family issues – such as relationships between family members, pressures and coping in different situations.
- Personal issues – such as relationships, coping with emotions/aggression and stress.
- Careers – advice on how to get good jobs and what jobs there are available to young people in the future.

The students from Dixon's commented that it is not often they think about the issues surrounding Bradford and what they would like to change. They commented that they usually identify the problems in their own street and with their own houses and do not really think about Bradford as a whole.

#### **4.7 Why attend the Forum**

The students all identified a number of reasons why they would like to attend the Forum. Many wanted to attend for personal reasons. They wanted somewhere to go where they could have a laugh, have fun and enjoy themselves. They wanted to get out the house and do something productive with their time, at the same time as meeting new people and making new friends. They wanted to take part so their voices could be heard and to feel they were being listened to. Some believed it would make them more mature.

The students also wanted to attend to further their learning. They wanted to learn more about the area they live in while mixing with people from different backgrounds and religions. They wanted to learn from each other and understand other people's opinions

while being able to express their own ideas. They wanted to learn new skills, such as working in groups and trying new activities. They believed it would stop people from getting into trouble.

The students also identified the potential to help their community by attending the Forum. Primarily, they wanted to help other people and make things better for them. They also wanted to make the community a better place by improving the environment and ultimately improving Bradford. They wanted to be able to discuss where they lived and the changes they would like to make. They also talked about developing a model of youth development in Bradford that could be used by other towns to improve the same aspects.

The young people were keen to attend the Youth Forum as a place to go. They wanted to be able to do activities, such as trips and quizzes, while having somewhere they could go to chill out and relax. They said it would help them to keep calm and to help with pressure and stress in their lives. They also acknowledged that it would be time away from parents and family, which could reduce some of the pressures felt at home.

#### **4.8 Summary of key issues**

- In general the young people said that they would welcome opportunities to be listened to and to participate in discussion of issues of relevance to them.
- Most of the young people had little knowledge or understanding of the role or purpose of the Youth Forum.
- Nevertheless they were able to contribute ideas about the location and timing of meetings.
- Although many young people saw the Youth Forum as more of a club that could provide activities in which they could get involved, when asked about the kinds of topics that they thought the Youth Forum ought to be discussing they identified a number of issues relating to school and their local communities.
- Overall this discussion demonstrated that there was concern among the young people about their communities and their future development and a willingness to get involved if the conditions were right and the means of involving them was attractive.

## **5 KEY ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS**

- A total of 40 young people from four schools returned to participate in this round of group discussions.
- The focus for the discussion for this round of group sessions was: school motivation, attainment and behaviour; pressures experienced by young people and ways of coping with them; and attitudes to, understanding and expectations of the Youth Forum.

### **5.1 Motivation, behaviour and attainment**

- There is some evidence of a falling off of motivation among the young people. Levels of motivation relate to perceptions of how boring their lessons are; how engaging they find their teachers; and the difficulty of the work - which is in turn linked to how interesting they find the lessons.
- Most of the students feel that they are doing quite well at school and are happy with the grades they are achieving. Again this is linked to their enjoyment of lessons - they feel that they do better in those lessons that they enjoy most.
- Most of the students think that their behaviour at school is generally okay. In the majority of cases where they have got into trouble at school it has been for minor bad behaviour such as talking in class.
- Those students who rate their behaviour the highest were those who did not like getting into trouble; where this had occurred they felt that they did not want to repeat the experience.
- Students this time rated their behaviour less highly than at the least sessions. However, given that generally they also seem quite satisfied with their own behaviour this suggests that their own behaviour “threshold” has shifted a bit so that they themselves are more comfortable with worse behaviour.

### **5.2 Pressures and coping strategies**

- Pressure is a feature of the lives of most young people with the most acute pressure felt in relation to school.
- There are some differences between schools as to they types of pressure that are most likely to be experienced by young people, however pressure around homework was the most common - both the amount and the level of the work expected. In

addition many students experienced pressure as a result of their teachers' expectations of them in relation to both attainment and behaviour.

- There was considerable evidence of pressure experienced by young people from their peers in relation to smoking and drug taking, going to places that they didn't want to go or were not allowed by their parents and, in school, to misbehave.
- At home pressure arose from parents especially in relation to issue of trust and levels of responsibility assigned to young people and their role within the family. In addition some young people spoke of the pressure of having to care for younger siblings or of being bullied by older siblings.
- In the community pressure arose from aspects of the environment that made it threatening or unattractive to young people. Crime and the lack of out of school activities were especially mentioned in this context.
- In addition some young people felt that there were problems arising from the way older people viewed and treated them.
- A particularly worrying issue was attitudes to asylum seekers in the community .
- The young people understood very well the links between pressure and moods and behaviour and, indeed, the implications for health.
- The young people were able to identify a range of mechanisms for coping with pressure and possible sources of support.
- However they also expressed the view that they needed clubs or places to go that provided a safe, attractive and supportive environment for them.

### **5.3 Youth Forum**

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- Nevertheless they were able to contribute ideas about the location and timing of meetings.
- Although many young people saw the Youth Forum as more of a club that could provide activities in which they could get involved, when asked about the kinds of topics that they thought the Youth Forum ought to be discussing they identified a number of issues relating to school and their local communities.



- Overall this discussion demonstrated that there was concern among the young people about their communities and their future development and a willingness to get involved if the conditions were right and the means of involving them was attractive.
- Of particular interest in this regard were those pressures arising from crime and In general the young people said that they would welcome opportunities to be listened to and to participate in discussion of issues of relevance to them.
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- Overall this discussion demonstrated that there was concern among the young people about their communities and their future development and a willingness to get involved if the conditions were right and the means of involving them was attractive.

#### **5.4 Conclusions**

There is some evidence from this round of discussions that there is a falling off in the behaviour and achievements of at least some of the young people. It would be interesting if these self-perceptions are reflected in their actual behaviour and attainment. In the next round of consultations it would be helpful if data on the students was also collected from school staff.

Motivation towards school is also generally lower than in previous sessions. This is clearly linked to how interesting the young people find lessons and the teaching styles of particular teachers. The message here is the perhaps not surprising one that motivation is higher when students enjoy their lessons and where this is the case they are more likely to do well or at least perceive themselves as doing well.

The discussions have provided some useful insights into the range of pressures that young people are experiencing. While it was recognised that not all pressure is negative

- eg the pressure from teachers and parents to do well at school - nevertheless there are other pressures from peers and within the community that are harder to manage and clearly create conflicts for the young people concerned. The young people clearly see the risks to themselves of pressure in terms of their health and well-being and also of giving into peer pressure to engage in various kinds of anti-social or unacceptable behaviours. And, in some cases, they appear to have developed some coping strategies for dealing with pressure and are also aware of a range of support mechanisms. However it is interesting to note that when asked what other kind of support they would like to be available that they mention out of school activities or clubs where they can relax with friends while feeling safe and supported.

The discussion around community pressures threw up the potentially worrying issue of the relationship between young people and asylum seekers living in their communities. This is an issue that needs to be addressed before suspicion turns to hostility.

The discussion of the Youth Forum demonstrated, on the one hand, high levels of misunderstanding and ignorance about the role and purpose of the Youth Forum and, on the other, the wish to be listened to and to participate in decisions affecting them and their communities. However it is also clear that for most of these young people such involvement and participation needs to sit alongside what they regard as fun activities.

## **ANNEX A: BRADFORD TRIDENT – FEBRUARY 2005 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY**

This consultation session will be focussing on:

- Young people's experience of pressure and the support they require to cope.
- Young people's involvement in the Trident Youth Forum.

### **Introduction (5 minutes)**

Welcome back to the group

Re-introduce Helen and myself

Feedback from previous session in October – newsletter, gift voucher, report.

Seeking consent to use information collected within Barnardo's/Trident publications.

### **Activity 1 – Ice-breaker (10 minutes)**

Using the scales developed for the last consultation stage the young people will be asked to indicate their perceived levels of attainment, motivation and behaviour, rating each one with a score between 1 and 10 (with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest). Each scale will have a number of phrases along the side to indicate to the young people what each number represents to avoid individual interpretation which makes the information difficult to analyse.

### **Activity 2 – Pressures experienced by young people (30 minutes)**

Aims of activity:

What are the main pressures/causes of stress that young people feel?

How do young people feel when under pressure?

How do young people respond to pressure?

What support do young people have/want? Where does this support come from?

How the pressures differ from primary school?

What the biggest pressures are in young people's lives?

Resources:

4 balloons each with a word written on – family, friends, school, community

Balloon Pump

Picture of young person on flipchart paper

Coloured post-its

1 person to scribe

2 Dictaphones

Method:

The young people will sit in a group circle (or 2 groups if more appropriate to the number of young people). The young people will then be introduced to the concept of pressure and how we want to find out about the pressures that young people in year 8 have in their lives. The balloon pump with one of the above balloons will then be passed round the group. Each young person has to come up with a pressure related to the topic written on the balloon (e.g. for school they may say exams or homework). For each pressure that they come up with they will give the balloon one pump of air. Once the balloon has been inflated a group discussion will be facilitated addressing the following questions:

- How would that young person be feeling
- How would they behave when feeling this pressure
- How would they respond/deal with it

On coloured post-it's the young people will then write:

- What support young people have to help cope with this
- What support young people would like

The balloon will then be tied up and stuck to the picture of the young person above their head. The coloured post-its can be stuck on each side of the picture – one side for the support young people get and the other side for the support they want. This will then be repeated for the other balloons/topics. The size of each balloon will indicate in which area of their lives young people experience the most pressure from (if all the balloons have burst young people will be invited to rank where most pressure is experienced).

Once all the balloons and post-its are stuck to the picture discussion to be had with the young people how pressures now differ from Primary School.

### **Activity 3 – Youth Forum, Involvement and Participation (25 minutes)**

Aims of activity:

To establish how many young people have heard about the Trident Youth Forum, what their opinions are of it, the connections that they have to it, whether they are interested

in a youth forum, what topics they might be interested in and what might make them want to get involved.

**Introduction:**

Ask how many people have heard of the Trident Youth Forum (keep tally)

Ask them what they have heard about it (write up on flipchart)

Explain what the youth forum is (if explanation needed)

Who would be interested in being involved in a youth forum? Who wouldn't? (Record the reasons that young people give in both cases).

**Method:**

Have 6 pieces of flipchart around the room of areas relating to how the young people would like a forum to work. Split the group into 2. Each group starts at a different piece of flip chart, young people to spend 3 minutes at each piece of flip chart.

At each piece of flip chart there is a main question about Youth Forums. The young people will be invited to answer the questions by writing on the flipchart. They will be encouraged to annotate their response with an explanation. Groups to move round all the sections.

1. Where do you think the Youth Forum should be held? (prompt: school, community centre, library, council offices etc)
2. When do you think the Youth Forum should meet? (prompt: after school, at weekends, in school lunchtimes, in school holidays)
3. What activities should be available to do at the Forum? (prompt: art/creative, games, debate, training, trips out)
4. Which groups of young people should be able to attend?
5. Why would you attend a forum? (Prompt: to be listened to, to meet people, to have fun, to learn)
6. Top Topics for the forum to discuss?

**ANNEX B: NEWSLETTER**