SGS
SKEGNESS
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

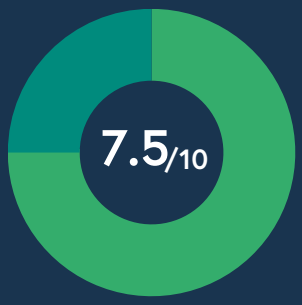
Peer Mentoring Programme

2022/23

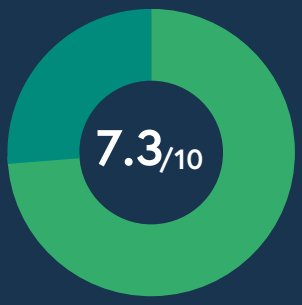
OPPIDAN
EDUCATION

Key Insights

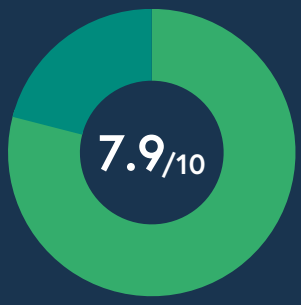
Y12 Mentors



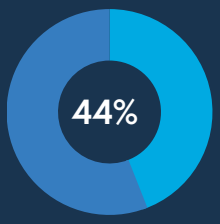
Average Programme Rating



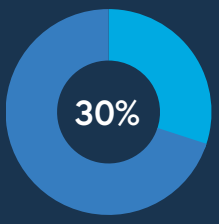
Strong relationships formed with Mentors



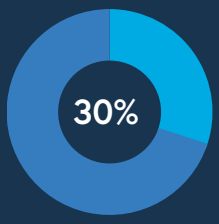
Perceived benefit of having a Mentor



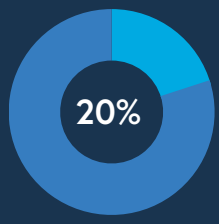
increase in emotional mirroring



increase in belief they know a great deal compared to peers

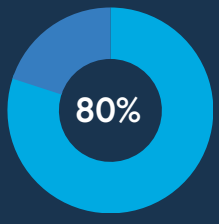


increase in expectation to do well

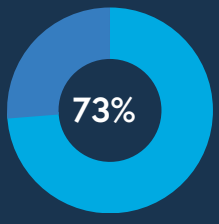


increase in focus on projects

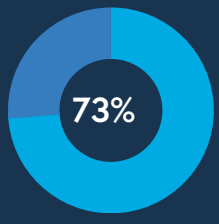
Y7 Mentees



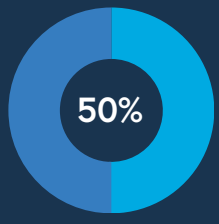
increase in emotional mirroring



increase in understanding why they feel the way they do



increase in understanding why they have behaved in a certain way



increase in sharing things with their friends

Context

Over the 2022/23 academic year, Oppidan Mentors provided training sessions to a group of Y12 Skegness Grammar School pupils. The training took place over a series of workshops spread across two days. The workshops took place in two DRET school hubs. Following the training, each sixth-form mentor was paired with two Y7 mentees, with two-to-one peer mentoring sessions taking place throughout the Spring and Summer terms.

The program aims to foster reciprocal and supportive relationships between pupils from different year groups. These relationships aim to bridge the gap and overcome divisions that can exist in spaces where inter-year interaction is limited - building community and fostering positive relationships across year groups.

The initiative acknowledges the influential role that young people can have on each other within school environments. It seeks to leverage this influence to bring about positive changes in both the mentors and mentees.

Programme Aims

The project's primary objective is to facilitate meaningful conversations and communication between young people, enabling them to express themselves more effectively. This process aims to foster stronger bonds across year groups. Another important goal of the project is to provide pastoral leads with valuable insights. By closely studying the interactions between these groups through the peer mentoring relationships, the program aims to identify and address any existing issues.

For the Y12 pupils, the program aims to enhance their skills as they prepare for life beyond school. Simultaneously, for the Y7 pupils the program offers crucial pastoral support whilst increasing their confidence in their transition into secondary school.

An intended outcome of the program is an increased social and emotional awareness among pupils, leading to an improvement in the school community and more enjoyable experiences for all. The programme aims to endorse a certain type of leadership that focuses on and champions character, emotional support, a heightened awareness of others and the value of situational empathy.

Evaluation Methodology

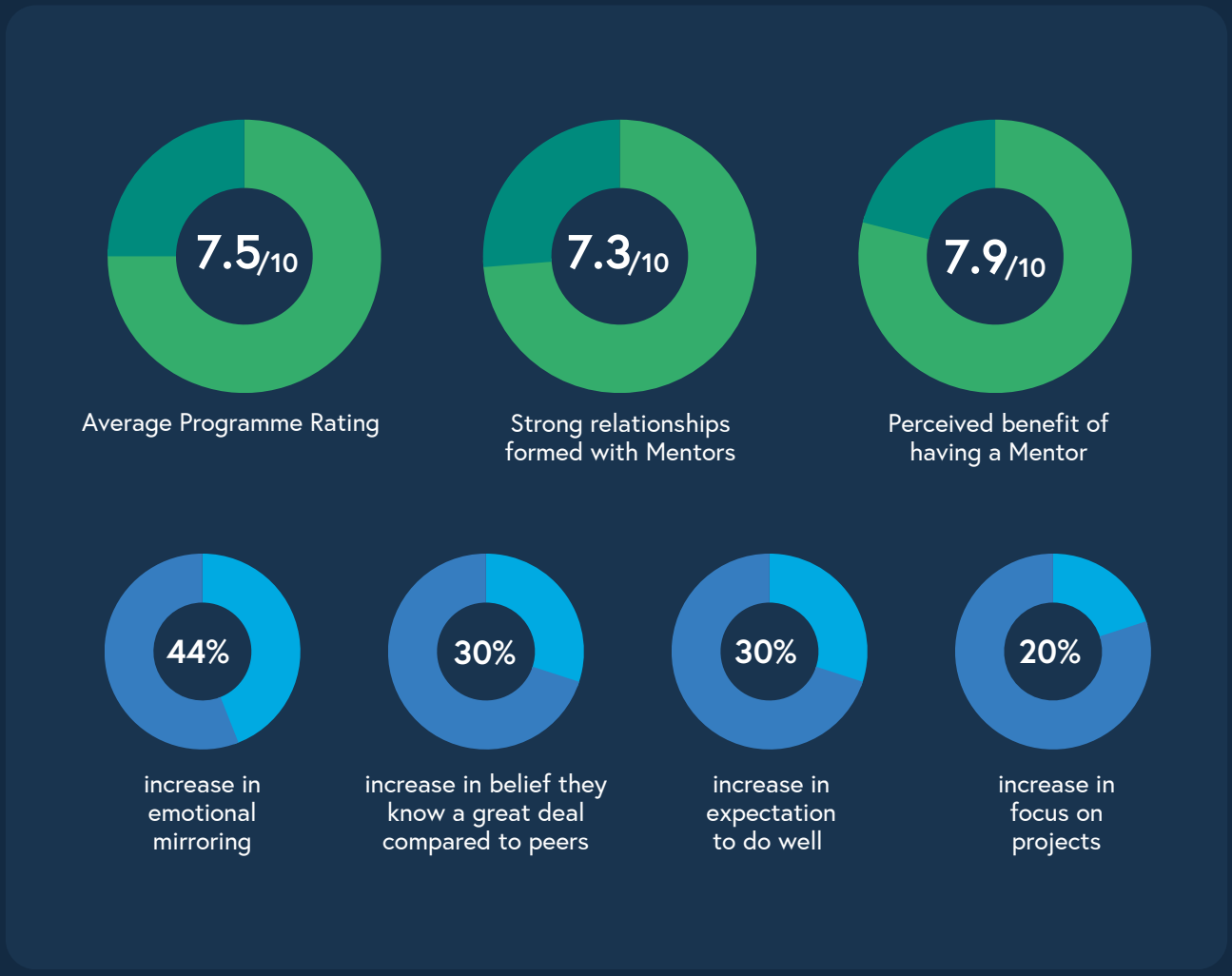
Captured longitudinally, the following data is taken from surveys sent to Y12 pupils at two-time points: before they completed their mentor training and upon completion of their peer mentoring sessions. For the Y7 mentees, the survey was completed before they began the programme and after their final mentoring session.

Survey data was collected using adaptations of the Basic Empathy Scale, the Harvard-Panorama Student Perception scale, the Skills Builder Framework, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, MSLQ self-efficacy subscales, the Grit S Scale, as well as bespoke questions on independence, leadership, insight and reflection.

In order to harness student voice and gain deeper insights, qualitative focus groups were conducted, allowing for open-ended discussions and the exploration of individual experiences and perspectives.

The quantitative data collected through surveys has been combined with the rich qualitative feedback obtained from these focus groups, to form a mixed-method approach that puts student voice at the centre of impact analysis.

Y12 Mentors



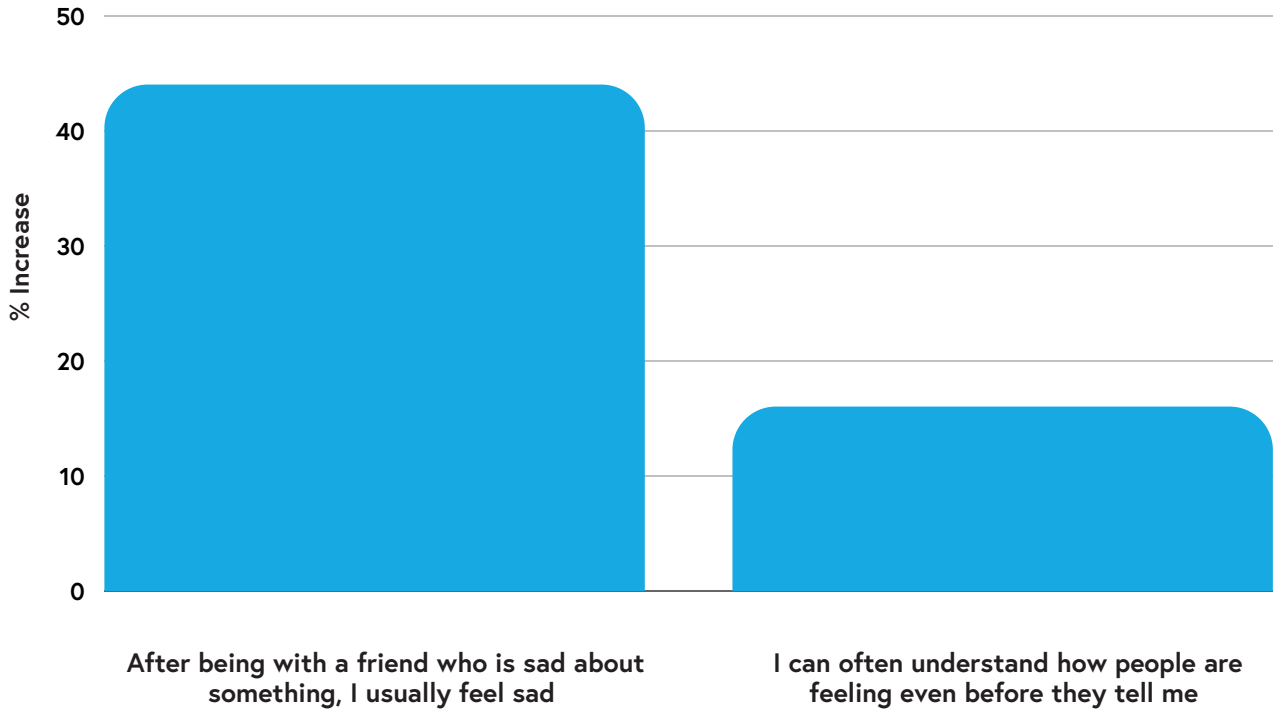
In the Y12 mentor data, notable improvements were observed in the areas of empathy, community, and self-efficacy. The program facilitated an increase in mentors' self-efficacy, empowering them with a belief in their own capabilities and expectations of success. Mentors participating in the program demonstrated significant growth in their ability to empathise, gaining a clearer understanding of thoughts, behaviours, and emotions of others. These notable improvements highlight the transformative effects of the mentoring program on mentors' personal growth and development.

Y12 Empathy

The data highlights a remarkable increase in empathy among the older mentors participating in the peer mentoring program. Firstly, there was a significant 44% rise in the percentage of mentors reporting feeling sad after being with a friend who is sad about something. This increase demonstrates their heightened ability to connect with and share the emotions of others, showcasing a greater empathetic response.

Furthermore, the data reveals a notable 16% increase in mentors' capacity to understand how people are feeling even before they are explicitly told. This growth indicates a heightened level of emotional intuition and sensitivity among the mentors, allowing them to perceive and grasp the emotions of others more readily.

These findings demonstrate the effectiveness of the peer mentoring program in cultivating empathy among older mentors. Through regular interactions with their mentees, mentors gain exposure to diverse emotional experiences, fostering an environment that encourages active listening, perspective-taking, and emotional support. These experiences contribute to the observed increases in empathetic responses, enabling the mentors to better relate to and understand the emotions of others. Ultimately, the growth in empathy witnessed among the mentors underscores the positive impact of the peer mentoring program on their ability to connect, empathise, and support their peers in times of emotional need.



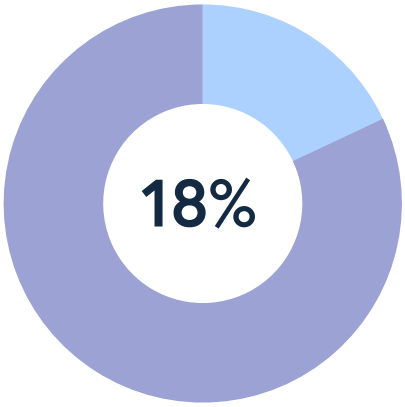
Y12 Community

The program aims to foster a sense of belonging and significance among mentors, as indicated by their perception of how much they matter to others at the school and their overall sense of belonging. The data collected highlights notable positive changes in mentors' perception of the school community resulting from their involvement in the peer mentoring program.

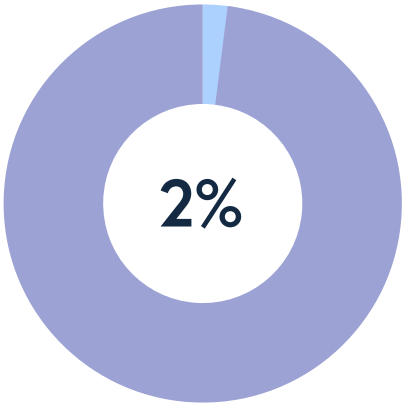
The data shows a significant 18% increase in mentors who reported feeling that they matter a tremendous amount to others at their school. This finding suggests that the peer mentoring program has positively influenced mentors' perception of their importance and value within the school community. Research indicates that a sense of mattering to others contributes to students' overall well-being and academic engagement.

There is a 2% increase in mentors who reported feeling that they completely belong at their school. This finding indicates that the program has contributed to enhancing mentors' sense of belonging within the school community. Academic research by Osterman (2000) emphasises the importance of a strong sense of belonging for students' social and emotional development, as well as their academic success.

Research highlights the positive association between a positive school climate, students' sense of belonging, and their academic achievement. These outcomes highlight Oppidan's commitment to creating a supportive and nurturing school community, where mentors and mentees alike feel valued and connected.



How much do you matter to others at your school?



Overall, how much do you feel you belong at your school?

% Increase

I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know two new people and be a role model to them.

Y12 Mentor

[I enjoyed] helping them through their issues or just giving them some advice.

Y12 Mentor

I thought it was really good, I got to help students I wouldn't have been able to without this programme.

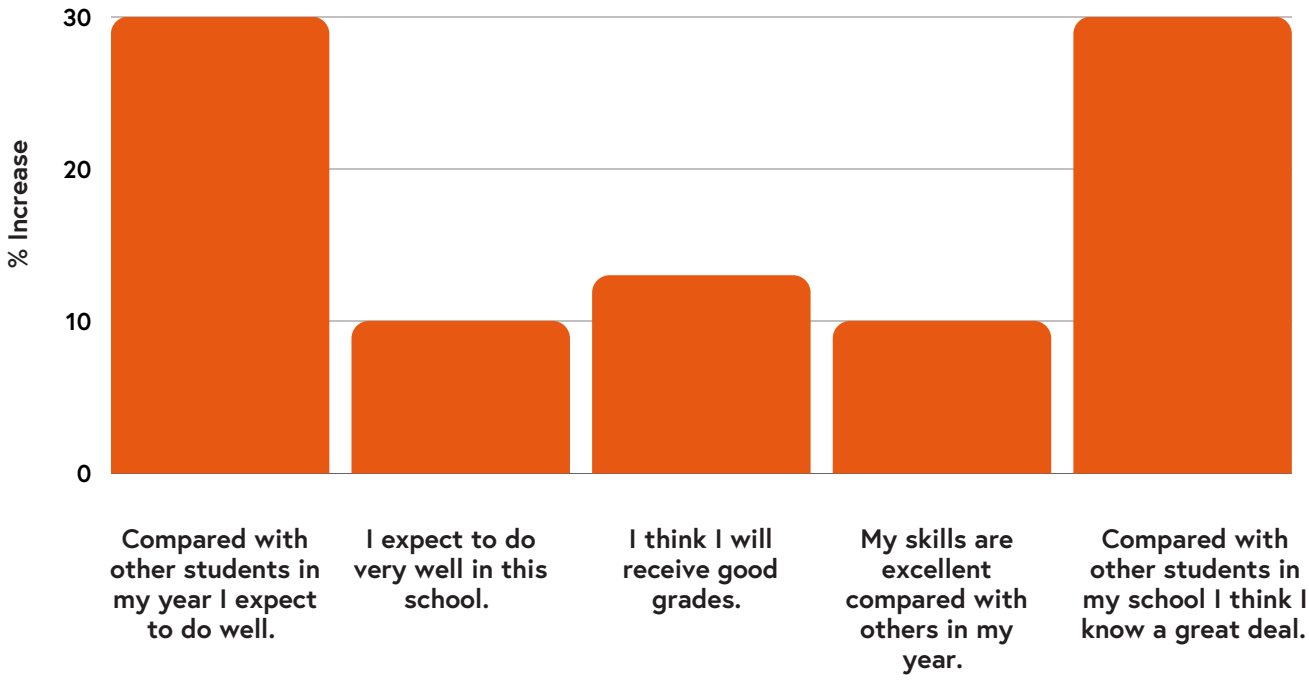
Y12 Mentor

Y12 Self Efficacy

Mentoring has been shown to significantly enhance self-efficacy in mentors, providing them with a sense of confidence and belief in their own capabilities. By taking on the role of a mentor and supporting younger peers, mentors are able to witness the positive impact they can have on others' lives. This firsthand experience of making a difference and contributing to the growth and success of their mentees fosters a greater belief in their own abilities. The act of guiding and assisting others in their learning journeys empowers mentors, strengthens their skills and knowledge, and cultivates a deep sense of self-assurance and competence. Mentoring provides mentors with the opportunity to see the tangible results of their efforts, leading to increased self-efficacy and a stronger belief in their potential to succeed.

There is an impressive 30% increase in mentors' expectations of success at school compared to their peers. As mentors engage in guiding and supporting their younger peers, they develop a stronger belief in their own capabilities and set higher standards for their academic achievements. Through their mentoring role, mentors gain a sense of responsibility and leadership, which enhances their confidence and self-perception.

There is a notable 30% increase in mentors' perception of knowing a great deal compared to their peers. As mentors assist and guide their mentees, they gain a deeper awareness of their own knowledge and expertise. The act of mentoring allows mentors to reflect on their own abilities and compare them with others, leading to an increased recognition of their own skills and a greater sense of confidence in their capabilities.

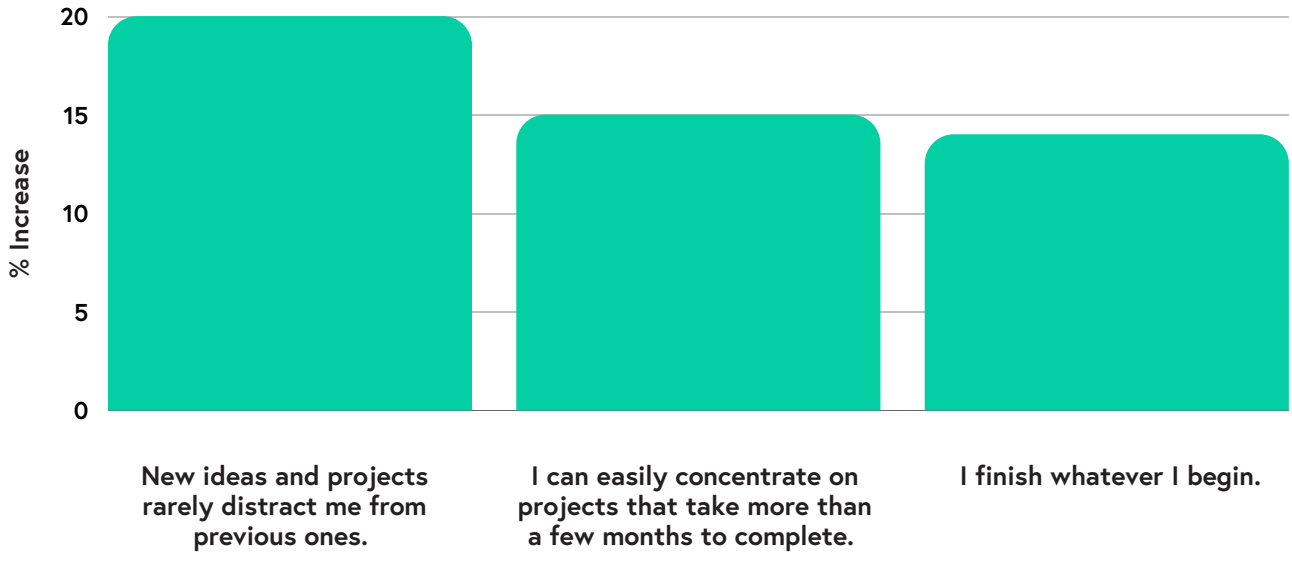


Y12 Resilience

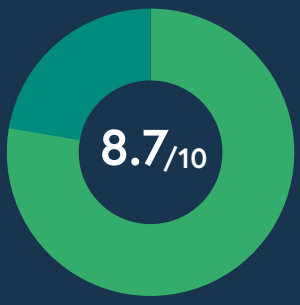
Mentoring serves as a catalyst for enhancing resilience skills among mentors, providing them with valuable experiences and opportunities for personal growth. As mentors engage in guiding and supporting their younger peers, they encounter various challenges and setbacks that require resilience and adaptability. The mentorship journey allows mentors to develop coping mechanisms, learn from adversity, and build a strong sense of perseverance. By navigating these obstacles alongside their mentees, mentors strengthen their own resilience, ultimately equipping them with valuable skills to overcome future challenges and thrive in their personal and academic pursuits.

Mentoring also fosters a remarkable 20% increase in mentors' ability to maintain interest in ideas or projects. Through the process of mentoring, mentors are exposed to various concepts and projects, which stimulates their intellectual curiosity and engagement. This sustained interest is nurtured by the ongoing mentor-mentee interactions, as mentors witness the growth and development of their mentees, reinforcing their own enthusiasm and commitment. Moreover, the data reveals a 14% increase in mentors' inclination to finish whatever they begin. Mentoring necessitates a sense of responsibility and follow-through, as mentors strive to provide consistent support and guidance to their mentees.

Overall, the peer mentoring school programme promotes mentor resilience by exposing them to challenges, fostering sustained interest in ideas and projects, cultivating a strong work ethic, enhancing their ability to concentrate on long-term objectives, and reinforcing the commitment to follow through on tasks.



Y7 Mentees



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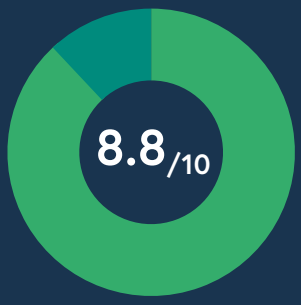
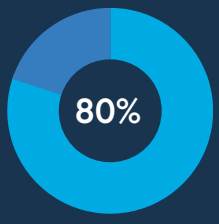


Strong relationships formed with Mentors



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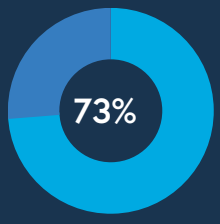
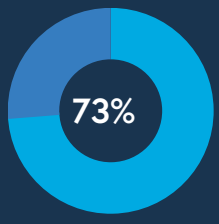


increase in understanding why they feel the way they do



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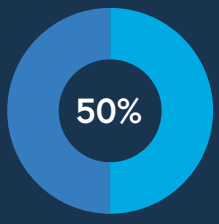


increase in sharing things with their friends

Post-mentoring results at Skegness Grammar School revealed notable enhancements in mentees' self-awareness, self-esteem, empathy, and self-efficacy. Mentoring fostered secure environments for mentees to empathise with others, and develop a stronger sense of self. Reflective discussions and feedback contributed to increased self-efficacy, instilling a belief in mentees' capabilities, empowering them to set and achieve goals with determination. These outcomes align with existing research on the profound impact of mentoring on various aspects of personal and social growth.

> **I really enjoyed it.**
>
> Y7 Mentee

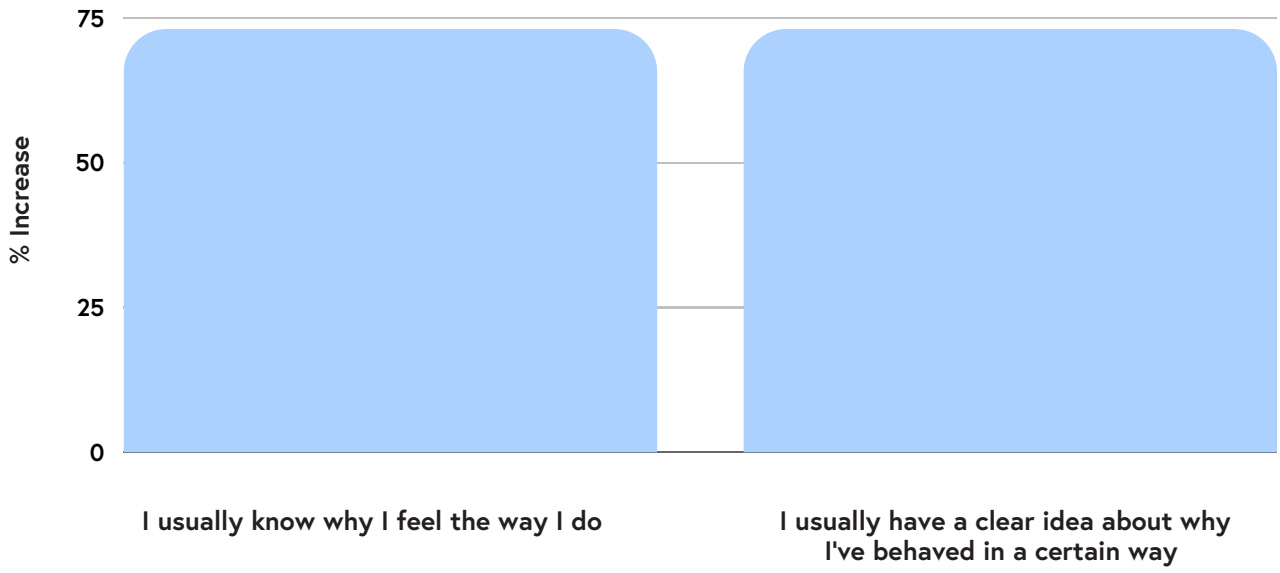
> **I have learned new values.**
>
> Y7 Mentee

Y7 Self-Awareness

This programme has had a significant impact on improving mentees' self-awareness, as demonstrated by the data provided. There is a noteworthy 73% increase in mentees having a clear idea about why they have behaved in a certain way. This increase suggests that mentoring fosters self-reflection and encourages mentees to examine their actions and motivations. Mentors provide a supportive space for mentees to discuss their behaviours, guiding them towards identifying underlying reasons for their actions. Through these discussions, mentees gain insight into their own behaviours and develop a greater understanding of their own motivations and intentions.

Additionally, there is a 73% increase in mentees knowing why they feel the way they do. This increase suggests that mentoring relationships assist mentees in developing emotional literacy and insight into their emotional states. Mentors can provide mentees with frameworks and strategies to identify and understand their emotions. Through these conversations, mentees learn to recognise and label their feelings, fostering a greater awareness of the reasons behind their emotional responses.

In summary, mentoring has proven to be beneficial for the development of self-awareness in mentees. The increases observed in mentees' ability to examine their feelings, understand their behaviours, and know the reasons behind their actions can be attributed to the presence of mentors who facilitate self-reflection, provide emotional support, and offer guidance. Through their mentorship, mentors help mentees develop introspective skills, emotional literacy, and a deeper understanding of themselves, leading to increased self-awareness and personal growth.

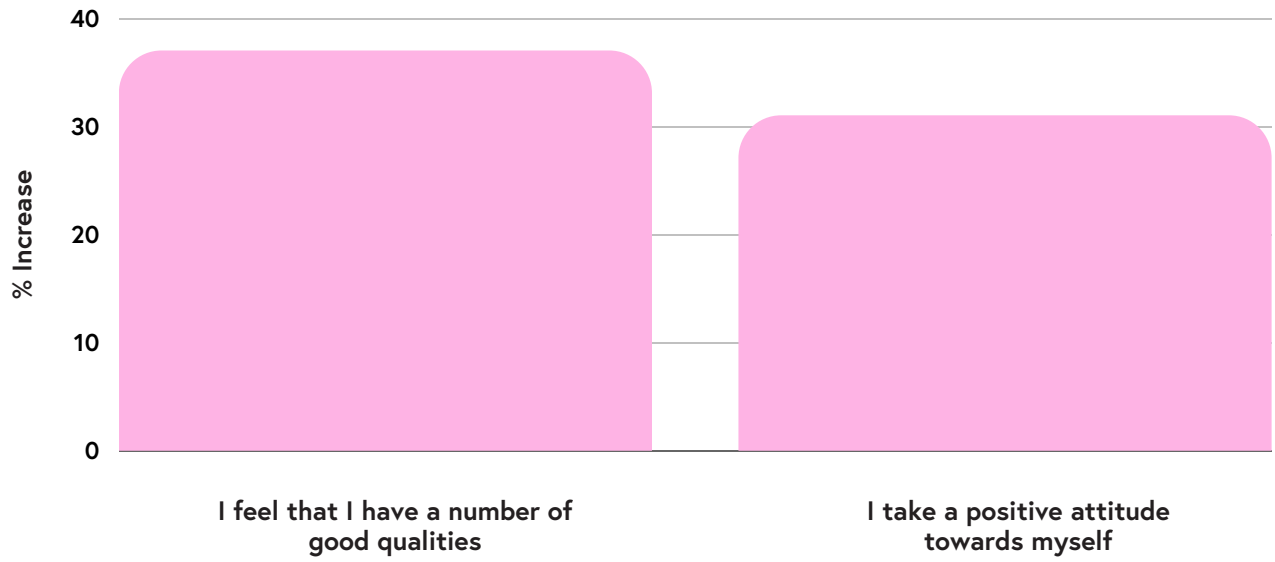


Y7 Self-Esteem

This mentoring program has demonstrated significant positive impacts on mentees' self-esteem, as evident from the data. There is a 37% increase in mentees who reported feeling that they possess a number of good qualities. This increase can be attributed to the support and encouragement provided by mentors. Mentors play a pivotal role in highlighting mentees' strengths and positive attributes, helping them recognise their potential and value as individuals. Regular feedback and constructive praise from mentors can foster a sense of self-worth and confidence in mentees, empowering them to embrace their unique qualities and contributions.

Furthermore, the data shows an impressive 31% increase in mentees who expressed taking a positive attitude towards themselves. This boost in self-affirming thoughts can be attributed to the nurturing environment that mentoring creates. Having a mentor who listens, understands, and provides non-judgmental support allows mentees to develop a more positive self-perception. As mentors offer validation and belief in their mentees' capabilities, the mentees become more adept at recognising their achievements and progress, leading to increased self-assurance and a positive self-image.

Mentoring proves to be highly beneficial for self-esteem because it offers young students a supportive and trusting relationship with an experienced and caring older person. Mentors act as role models, demonstrating acceptance, empathy, and genuine interest in the mentees' well-being. Moreover, the mentorship process often involves setting achievable goals and celebrating small successes, reinforcing a mentee's confidence in their abilities.

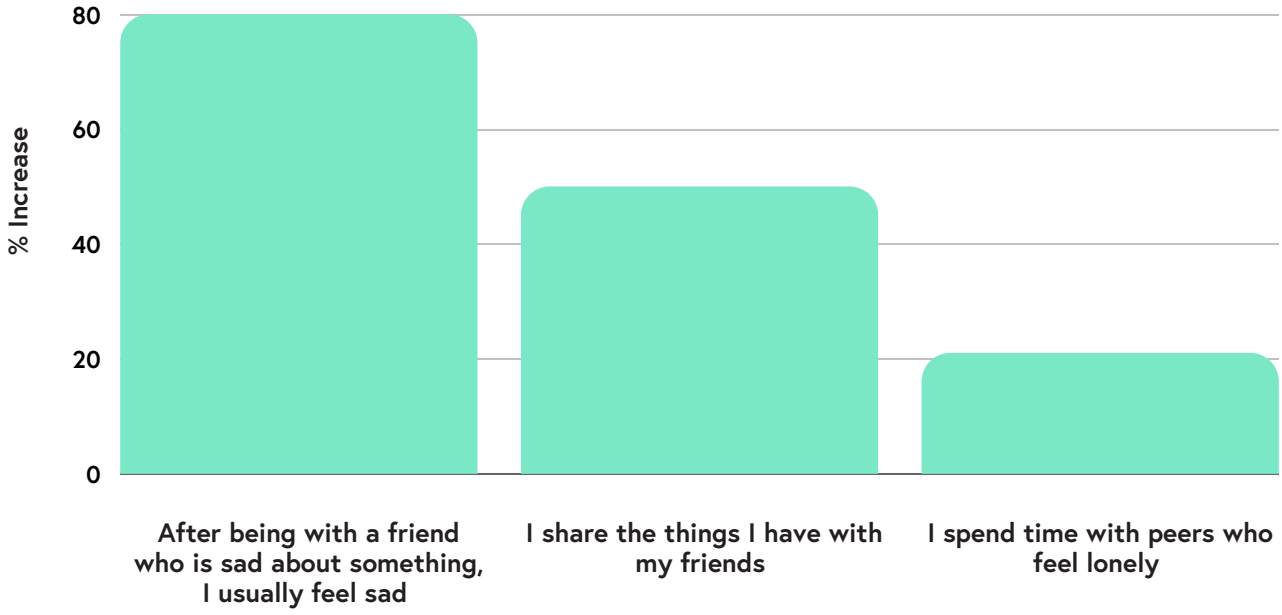


Y7 Empathy & Pro-Social Behaviour

This programme has shown significant improvements in mentees' ability to empathise with others, and engage in pro-social behaviour - indicating the positive influence of mentoring relationships on their willingness to help others and engage in compassionate actions.

There was an 80% increase in mentees reporting feeling sad after being with a friend who is sad about something. This increase in emotional mirroring indicates a growing capacity for empathetic resonance. Mentoring provides a supportive environment where mentees can openly express their emotions and receive validation and understanding from their mentors. The data reveals that 50% increase in mentees reporting spending time with peers who feel lonely. This increase suggests that mentoring relationships cultivate empathy and compassion in mentees, leading them to reach out and support their peers in times of need. Mentors serve as role models, demonstrating the importance of social connection and the value of supporting those who may be experiencing loneliness. There was a 21% increase in mentees who reported sharing the things they have with their friends. This increase indicates that mentoring relationships foster a sense of generosity and altruism in mentees. Mentors can emphasise the importance of sharing and caring for others, encouraging mentees to consider the needs and well-being of their friends.

The increases observed in mentees' willingness to help others, share with friends, and spend time with lonely peers can be attributed to the presence of mentors who model pro-social behaviour, provide guidance, and create a supportive space for mentees to practice compassion and empathy. Through their mentorship, mentors help mentees develop a sense of social responsibility, kindness, and a desire to make a positive impact on others.

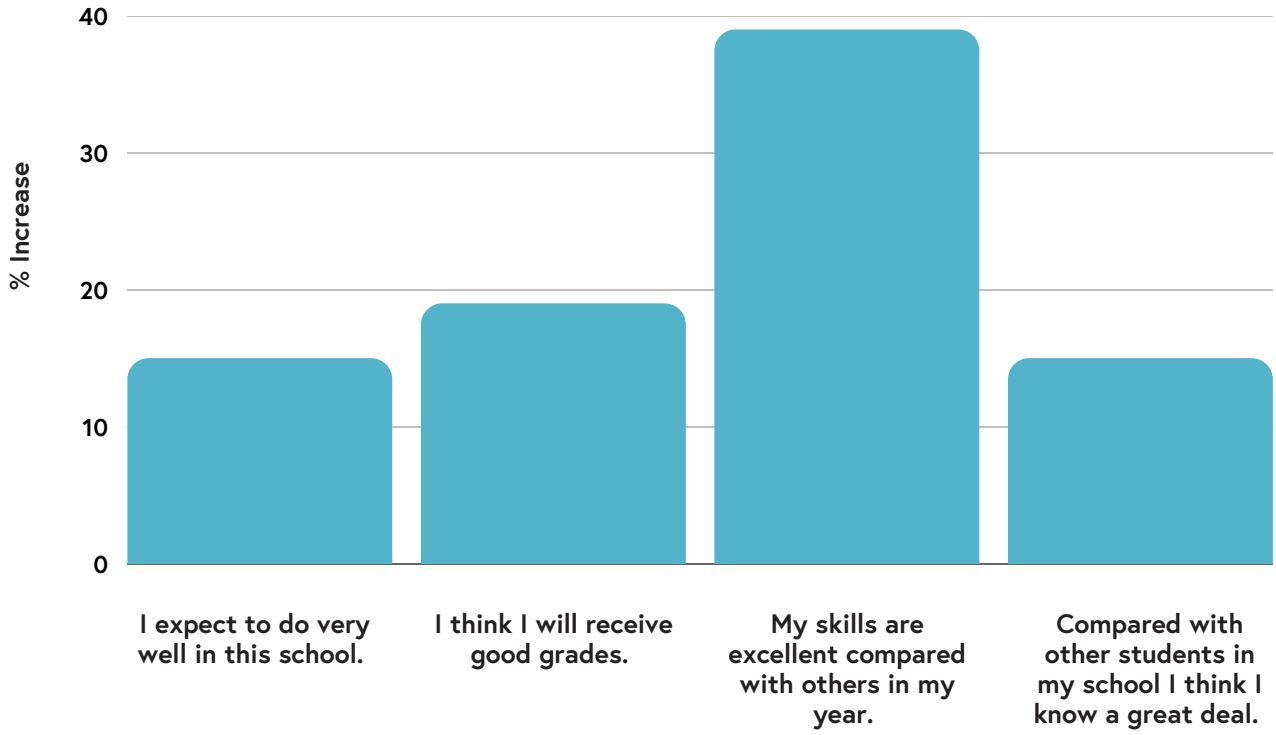


Y7 Self Efficacy

The data reveals noteworthy improvements in mentees' self-efficacy following the programme. Mentees reported a significant 39% increase in perceiving their skills as excellent compared to their peers. Mentoring relationships can positively influence students' self-belief by helping them recognise and value their own abilities and achievements.

There is a positive 19% increase in mentees who believe they will receive good grades. Research suggests that mentoring relationships can positively impact self-efficacy by providing mentees with guidance, support, and role modelling, which help them develop higher expectations for their own academic success. Mentees reported a significant 15% increase in belief that they know a great deal compared to their peers. This finding aligns with research which highlights that mentorship can enhance students' self-perception and belief in their academic abilities, leading to increased self-efficacy.

Mentors serve as role models, providing mentees with guidance, support, and encouragement, thereby helping them develop a stronger belief in their abilities. Through regular interactions, mentors can foster a growth mindset, instilling in mentees the understanding that they have the capacity to succeed with effort and perseverance. Moreover, mentors can offer constructive feedback and help mentees set achievable goals, which contribute to their increased confidence and self-perception as capable students.



Concluding Thoughts

Oppidan was delighted to work with Skegness Grammar School. We would like to congratulate all mentors who took part in the training for their dedication, enthusiasm and hard work. We would also like to thank the teachers and members of staff involved for their continuous support.

The success of the programme lies in developing bonds between students across different years, thereby challenging a hierarchical status quo that can exist in school environments. The forging of mentor/mentee relationships aims to provide added support in the hope that year groups will bond and influence each other in positive ways. Looking at the data captured, there is a real strength to the project in terms of enabling greater open and honest conversation between young people, the content of which requires a developing set of skills (empathy – honesty – trust) to play out in the relationship.

The insights reflect the continuing role that mentoring plays in the context of school life and strengthening the sense of school community. The programme aims to better support the pupils through the development of empathetic and honest relationships.

Many thanks,

The Oppidan Team

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