



University of Strathclyde
Young Strathclyde Primary Programme 2022-23

Evaluation Report

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Executive Summary

Overview

- Run by the University of Strathclyde's Access, Equality & Inclusion Service, Young Strathclyder is a widening access programme of long-term sustained contact and support for pupils throughout their compulsory schooling and is designed to raise awareness of higher education, support attainment, and offer learning opportunities. There are three phases of the programme; Primary, S2 and S5/6.
- A pilot of the Young Strathclyder Primary programme was run in 2022-23, with 404 P6 pupils and 417 P7 pupils taking part in a full day of interactive activities representing the Business, Engineering, HaSS and Science faculties at Strathclyde. P6 pupils visited the Strathclyde campus for their activity day while the P7 day took place in school, with P7 pupils then attending a graduation event on the Strathclyde campus upon completion of the programme.
- 87 current Strathclyde students, representing each of the University's faculties, were recruited and trained as mentors for the Young Strathclyder pilot in 2022/23. Many of these student mentors came from widening access backgrounds.
- Evaluation of the Primary pilot gathered data from various stakeholders; P6 & P7 participants; class teachers; parents/guardians of P7 participants who attended the graduation event; student mentors who worked on the programme.

Evaluation of P7 Pupils

- From the 417 P7 pupils who took part in the activity day, 403 pre-questionnaires and 389 post-questionnaires were completed by pupils.
- The programme had a significant positive impact on pupils with regard to aspiration to attend University and confidence that they could successfully undertake University study.
- Pupils found the Young Strathclyder experience interesting and enjoyable, with many feeling that it stimulated their learning in a range of areas.
- Participants enjoyed working with Strathclyde student mentors, who they considered to be positive role models who are approachable and knowledgeable.
- Pupils felt that, post-programme, they were generally more informed about University, and were aware that University opens up a wide range of study and career opportunities.
- Participants now felt that University was a less daunting prospect with many now feeling that it would be an enjoyable, as well as beneficial, experience.

Evaluation of P7 Pupils Post-Graduation

- 35 P7 pupils from two schools completed a final survey after attending the graduation event.
- Pupils found the graduation event to be exciting and fun, with many feeling proud of their achievement. Pupils enjoyed their day at Strathclyde and felt that it allowed them to find out more about University.
- While pupils were impressed by the campus, they felt welcome and that their experience made University seem less daunting.
- Several pupils mentioned that their experience on campus had made them want to attend University.
- Post-graduation ceremony, the numbers of pupils who wanted to attend University and who felt they could successfully complete a University degree, remained high.

Evaluation of P7 Parents/Guardians

- 101 evaluation forms were completed by the parents/guardians of P7 pupils who attended the graduation ceremony, 94 by parents and 7 by other family members.
- Parents felt that pupils had enjoyed the overall Young Strathclyder programme, with many feeling that it had boosted their young person's confidence. Parents felt that pupils had been given an opportunity to learn new things and take part in new experiences. Many parents also felt that their children had learnt about Higher Education and were now motivated to progress to University after school.
- Parents felt that pupils were excited and happy to attend the graduation event on campus. Many believed that it would be a positive experience that would boost pupils' confidence and allow them to feel proud of themselves.
- A large number of parents/guardians felt that their children would be motivated by the graduation event to attend University in the future, with many suggesting that pupils will now be more informed and inspired, as well as feeling more at home within a University environment.
- While many parents/guardians showed a good awareness of the programme content and aims, 56% of respondents acknowledged that they did not know anything about the programme, with 35% saying that the first time they had heard about the programme was when they received an invitation to the graduation event.

Evaluation of P6 Pupils

- From the 404 P6 pupils who took part in the activity day, 356 pre-questionnaires and 352 post-questionnaires were completed by pupils.
- The programme had a significant positive impact with regard to pupil aspiration to attend University and confidence that they could successfully undertake University study.
- Pupils felt that, post- programme, they were more informed about University, and were more aware that University opens up a wide range of study and career opportunities.
- Pupils had a very positive impression of University in general and of University staff and students in particular. Pupils were excited to spend time on campus and felt it was an impressive, large but welcoming place.
- Pupils found the programme enjoyable and liked working with student mentors.
- Several pupils indicated that the programme had a positive impact on their knowledge, awareness and aspiration with regard to professions related to University study.
- Pupils felt that a lot of learning had taken place during the activity day, both with regard to specific subject areas and also the development of a range of skills.

Evaluation of P6 and P7 Teachers

- 35 P6 and P7 teachers whose pupils participated in the 2022-23 programme completed a post-event evaluation.
- Teachers were very enthusiastic about the programme, believing that the pupils had enjoyed it overall and had especially enjoyed working with student mentors, who they found to be approachable, relatable and inspirational.

- Teachers believed that, post-programme, pupils were more informed about University and potential courses and careers. Many teachers believed that pupils will now aspire to attend University in the future and will now find University more attainable and less daunting.

Evaluation of Student Mentors

- Evaluation of student mentors is key to the programme's success, both in helping understand the programme impact on pupils and how improvements may be made going forwards. The development of the students who work on widening access programmes is also a key aim of the AEI Service and so it is important to measure impact on mentors themselves. 14 student mentors who worked on the 2022-23 pilot completed a post-programme evaluation.
- Mentors found working on the programme rewarding and enjoyable with some finding it inspirational and many mentors enjoying the feeling that they were doing something worthwhile that had a positive social impact.
- Several mentors felt their confidence had been improved by taking on a new role with a lot of responsibility, putting themselves outside their comfort zone and having a positive effect on others.
- Working in a mentor team had allowed mentors to develop social connections with other students that they would not normally have the chance to meet, improving their social engagement and confidence.
- Mentors considered that the programme allowed them to develop a wide range of employability skills, in particular communication, teamwork and leadership skills.
- A large majority of respondents said that working on the programme had an influence on their future study and career aspirations, either by helping them develop new career interests or through confirming existing career plans. Some mentors recognised that the experience gained and the skills they had developed would be beneficial in securing work in the future.
- Mentors considered that the programme had positively influenced pupils in four main areas; increased knowledge of University and future study and career options, increased confidence, making university seem less daunting, increased aspiration.

Recommendations and Action Points

- The Access, Equality & Inclusion service will implement more effective means of communicating with parents/guardians about Young Strathclyde in order to maximise parental awareness of and engagement with the programme.

Programme Overview

Run by the University of Strathclyde's Access, Equality & Inclusion Service, Young Strathclyder is a programme of long-term sustained contact and support for pupils throughout their compulsory schooling and is designed to raise awareness of higher education, support attainment, and offer learning opportunities.

Supported by Strathclyde student mentors, many of whom are from widening access backgrounds themselves, pupils participate in a range of engaging and interactive educational activities, helping them to build a sense of belonging and confidence within a Higher Education setting and to maintain a focus on their post-school goals through advice and guidance on subject choices and career opportunities. There are three main phases of the Young Strathclyder programme:

- Young Strathclyder Primary
- Young Strathclyder S2
- Young Strathclyder Accelerate (S5 & S6)

10 Glasgow City Council primary schools participated in the pilot year of the Young Strathclyder Primary programme in 2022-23. Many of these were schools which had previously taken part in the Children's University programme. The programme looked to have representation from across the city and schools were selected based on percentages of pupils in the following categories:

- SIMD Quintile 1
- Receipt of Free School Meals
- English as an Additional Language
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

404 P6 pupils and 417 P7 pupils took part in a full day of interactive activities. P6 pupils visited campus while P7 pupils were visited in school by the Young Strathclyder team. Pupils were led through these activities by student mentors representing each faculty. 87 Strathclyde student mentors, many of whom came from widening access backgrounds, worked on the 2022-23 programme. P7 pupils attended a graduation event on the Strathclyde campus on completion of the programme. Pupils' parents/guardians were invited to attend the ceremony.

Staff from across Strathclyde's faculties worked together with the Access, Equality & Inclusion service to design activities representing Business, Engineering, HaSS and Science. 3rd year Business School students, participating in the MDP3 Social Responsibility Pathway, worked on the branding for the programme and designed Business activities for pupils to complete.

Participants in Young Strathclyder are part of a continuum of activity and support. As pupils move into High School, they will have the opportunity to revisit the Strathclyde campus for the S2 programme, allowing them to find out more in-depth info about areas of University study they are interested in. In S5 and S6, they will have a chance to participate in Young Strathclyder Accelerate, a week-long programme on campus focussing on the particular academic area they are interested in going on to study at University. There are seven subject-specific challenges on this year's Accelerate programme, representing each Strathclyde faculty. A range of other online and remote activities will be offered to pupils as they progress through school, including activities based on Sport, Sustainability & Entrepreneurship.

Expansion of the Young Strathclyde Programme in 2023/24 Young Strathclyde Planning

15 primary schools will take part in the Young Strathclyde programme in 2023/24 and 8 high schools will take part in a pilot of the new S2 programme. The Accelerate programme will expand to 10 subject areas from across the four Strathclyde faculties.

Programme Evaluation

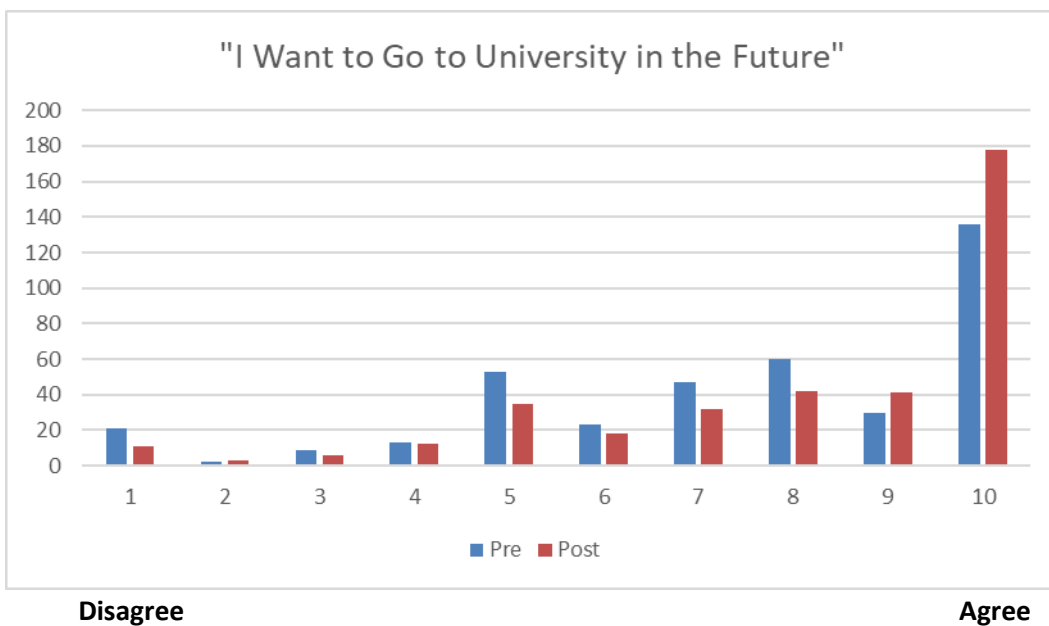
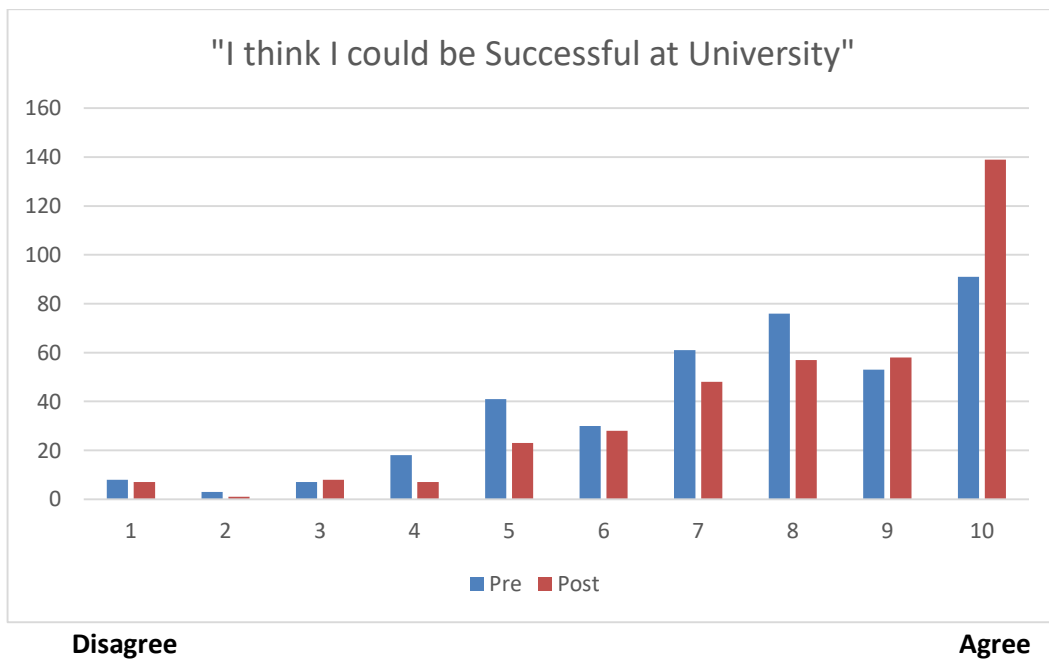
The Access, Equality & Inclusion Service carried out evaluation of the following stakeholders in the Young Strathclyde programme in order to undertake as wide an analysis as possible of the impact of the programme:

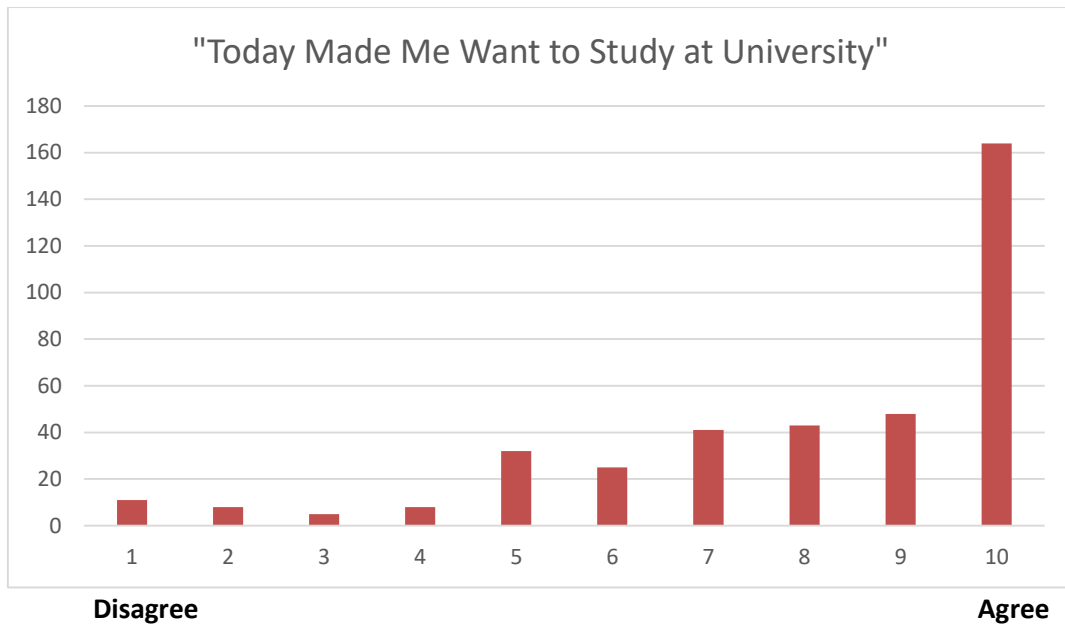
- P6 and P7 Pupil Participants
- Parents/Guardians
- P6 and P7 Class teachers
- Student Mentors

1) P7 Pupil Evaluation

P7 pupils completed a pre-programme questionnaire at the beginning of their Young Strathclyder activity day and a post-programme questionnaire at the end of the day. From the 417 P7 pupils who took part in the activity day, this report uses responses from 403 pre-questionnaires and 389 post-questionnaires.

Evaluation of 2022-23 P7 Young Strathclyder participants shows the programme has a significant positive impact on pupils with regard to aspiration to attend University and confidence that they could successfully undertake University study.





Pupils found the Young Strathclyder experience interesting and enjoyable, with many feeling that it stimulated their learning in a range of areas;

Enjoyed it a lot and learned new things.

I learned new stuff, really enjoyed it because it was very fun.

Because it was very unique and fun, plus I found people who are into my interests.

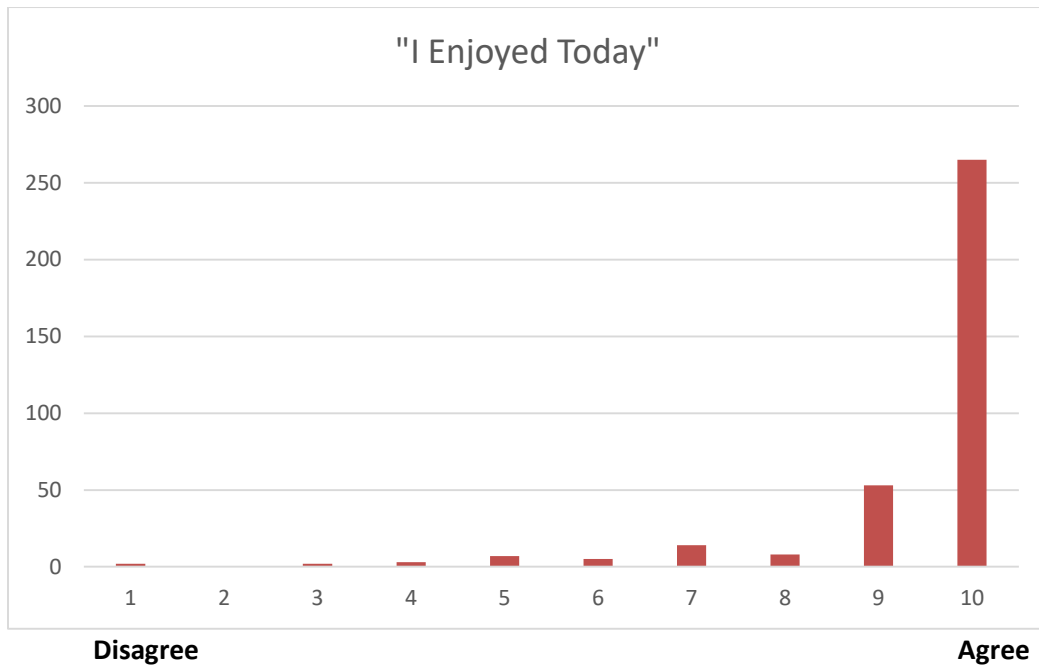
It was about working out things with problem solving skills.

...we did incredible activities!

I liked it because it was fun and I learnt new things.

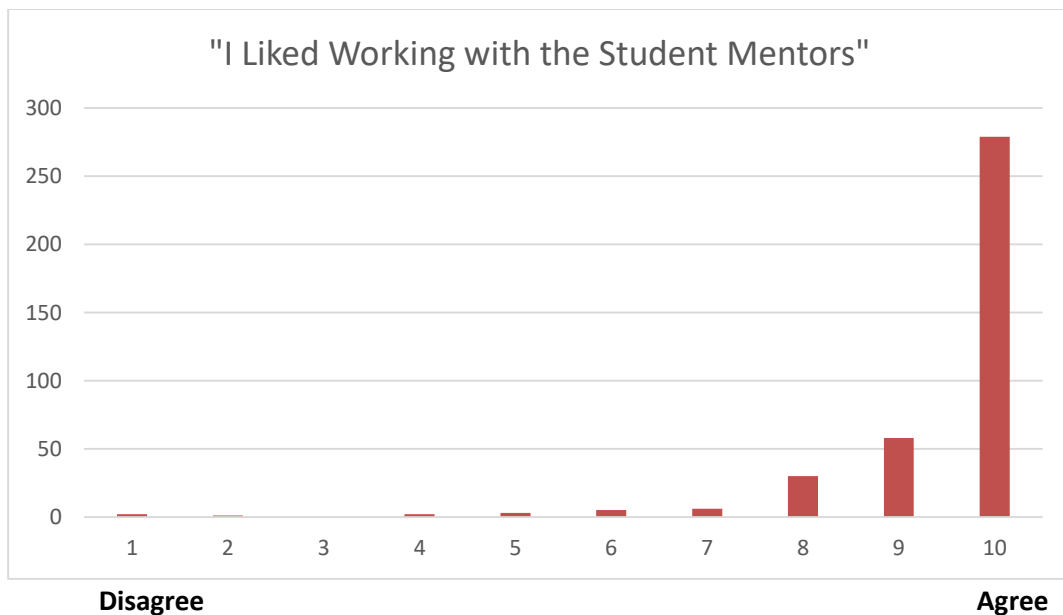
They were all super fun!

I like problem solving and it was fun to do.



Participants also enjoyed working with Strathclyde student mentors, who they considered to be positive role models who are approachable and knowledgeable;

I liked them all because they were all interesting and I loved being with the students.
I really liked it because one of our mentors did the things at university what I want to do when I grow up and I think she was really cool.



With regard to University study, pupils felt that, post-programme, they were generally more informed about University, and were aware that University opens up a wide range of study and career opportunities;

I learnt about a lot of different things you can study in university.

How university works and what amazing subjects are learnt there.

I learnt about how there is different departments in university.

I learnt that depending on what job you want you may have to stay longer. I also learnt that there are different jobs in the different category.

That university could be important to me in the future.

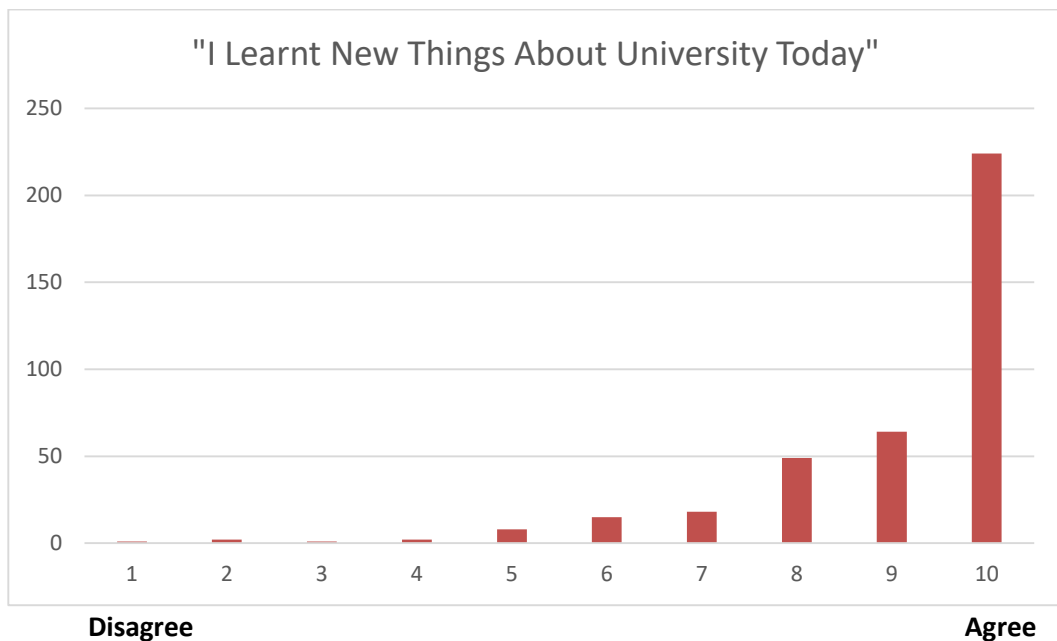
I learnt about a bunch of jobs!

The skills and qualities needed to do certain careers.

Uni opens up a lot of opportunities.

Where the university is and different things you can study for and sooo much more!

You need to work at humanities and social science to be a lawyer.



Participants now felt that University was a less daunting prospect with many now feeling that it would be an enjoyable, as well as beneficial, experience;

I also learnt that going to university shouldn't be scary and you get to meet lots of new people.

I learned its interesting at university.

I learned that in university there are lots of projects and fun.

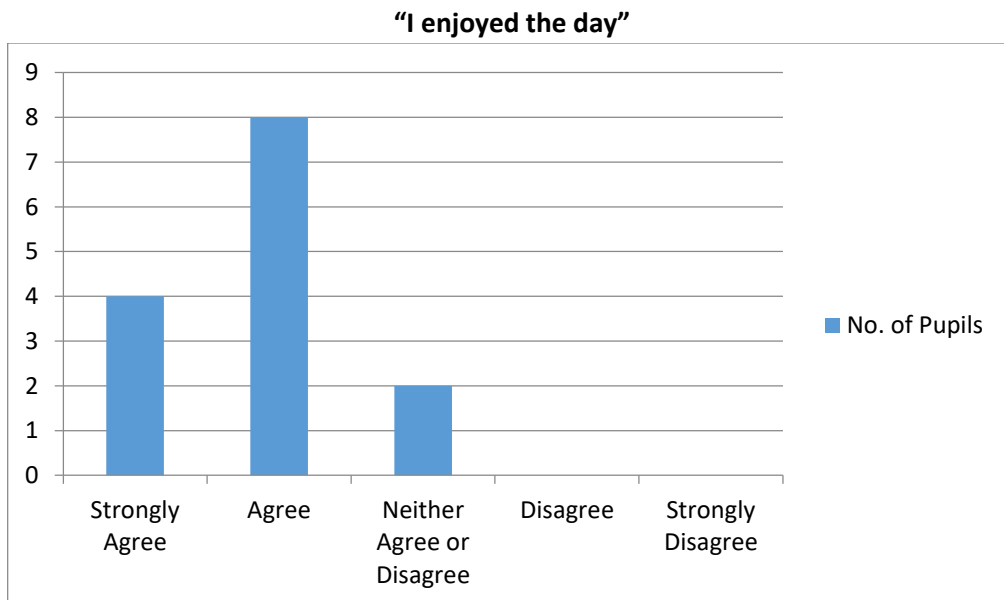
That university is fun.

I learnt that you don't always just study you have clubs, activities, you have many things to study. You can meet new friends.

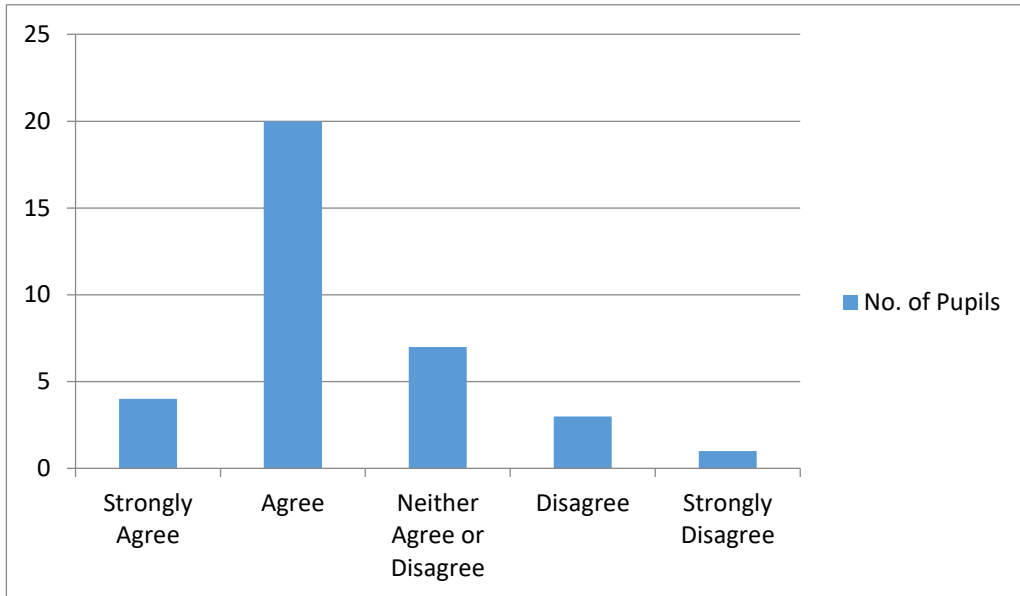
I learnt all about the different jobs I could do and that university isn't all about learning you also have other activities.

A further evaluation was sent out to P7 pupils after they had attended the graduation ceremony on the Strathclyde campus in May. The graduation ceremony took place in the University's Barony Hall and adhered to all the customs of a normal University graduation, with pupils wearing gowns and mortar boards and crossing the stage in front of the congregation to be 'capped' by the Strathclyde Principal and receive their certificate of completion. Family members were invited to attend the ceremony. 35 pupils from two schools, Annette Street Primary and Oakwood Primary, completed this final survey.

Pupils generally found the graduation day to be enjoyable. While 34% said they had been nervous, particularly when crossing the stage, 49% described the day as fun and 49% thought it was exciting. 34% of pupils said they felt proud to receive their certificate on stage. Pupils also felt the day had allowed them to find out more about University.



“I found out more about University”



The graduation was the first time the P7 cohort had spent time on campus as part of the Young Strathclyde programme, allowing them a chance to become accustomed to, and feel welcomed in, the University environment. From evaluation, it is clear that the pupils were impressed by the campus and enjoyed being there and that the day made University seem less daunting. A significant part of pupils feeling welcome was the reception from University staff, with several pupils mentioning that the people were nice. Several pupils also mentioned that their experience on campus has made them want to attend University;

I think it was really nice and big and I want to go to a university.

It was very cool and I loved the people there.

Fun want to go there again.

I thought it was very big and that I would like to study there.

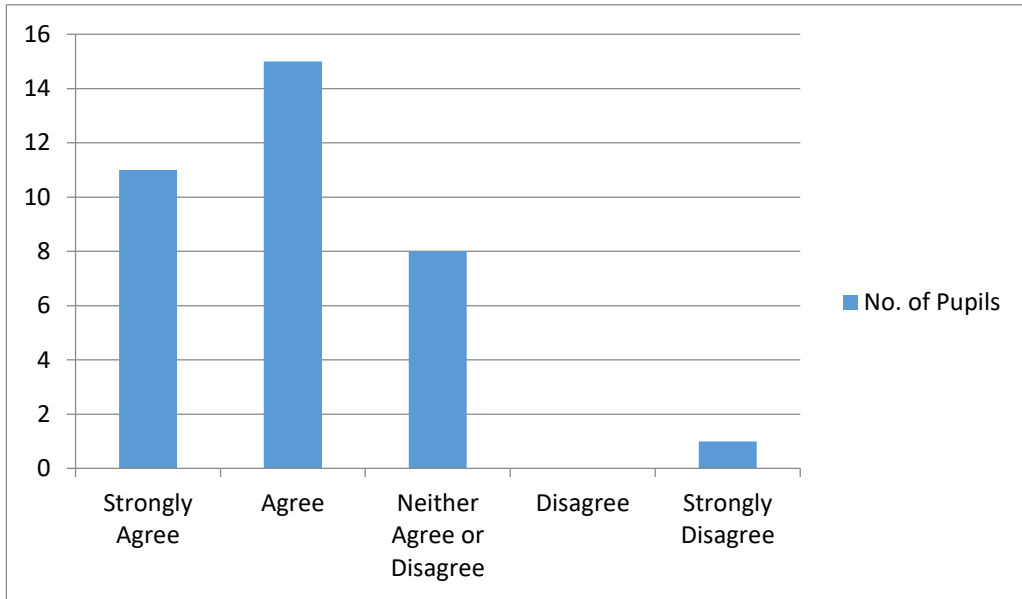
When I first went in there I thought it was very big and I was scared at first but then it was okay when I seen the kind people.

I think it will be fun if I go and I will enjoy it.

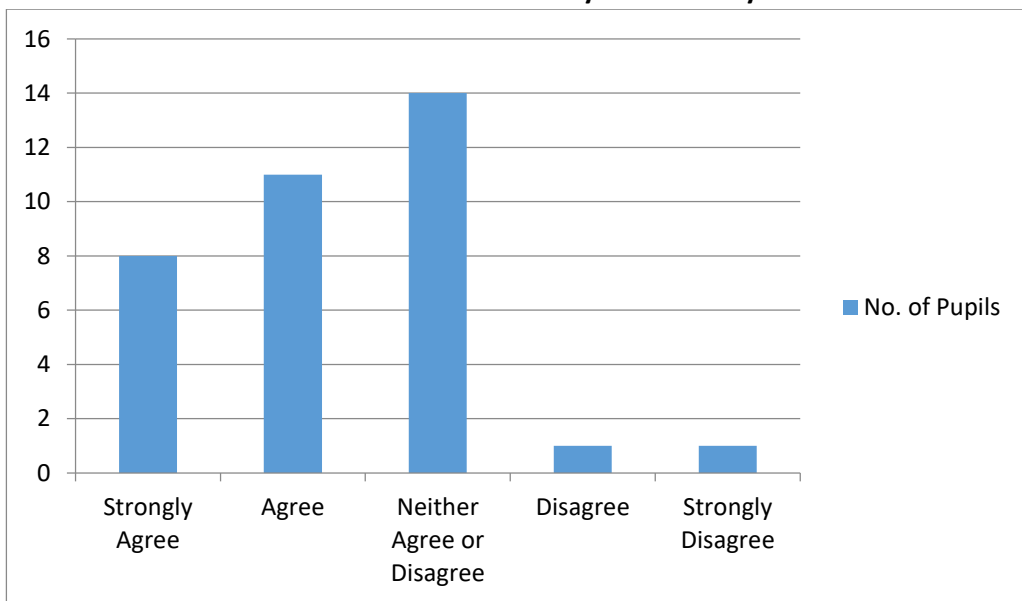
That it wasn't as strict as I thought.

It was really fun and made me want me to go to university.

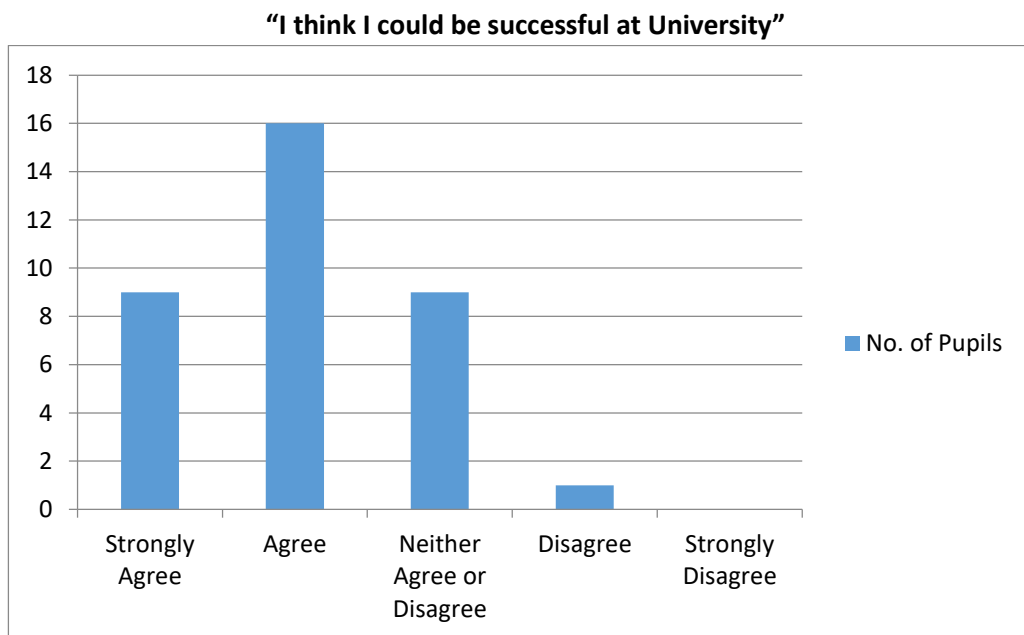
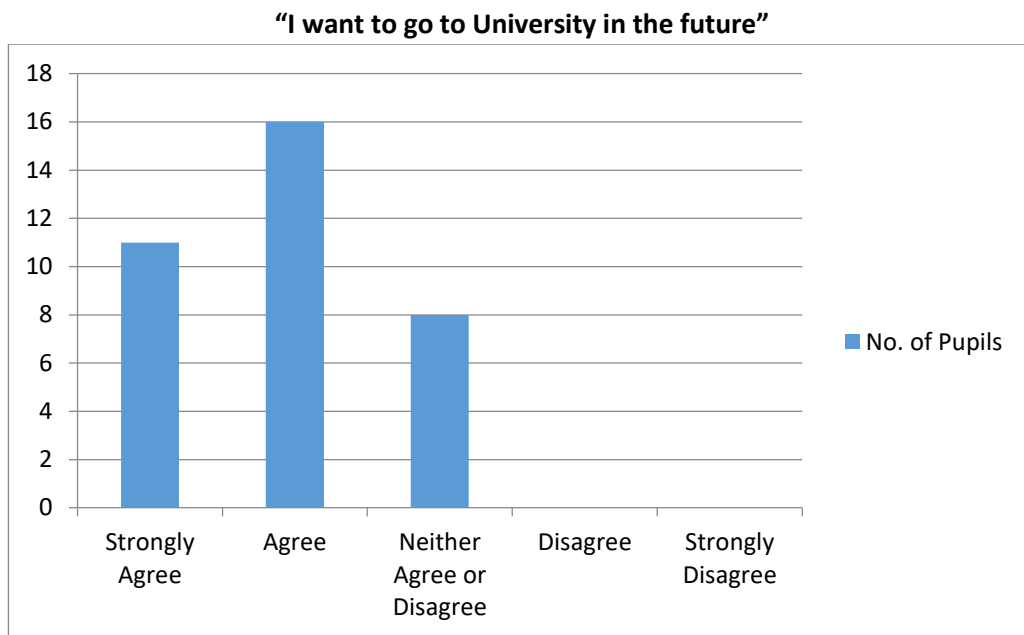
“It made University seem less scary”



“It made me want to study at University”



Post-graduation ceremony, the numbers of pupils who wanted to attend University and who felt they could successfully complete a University degree, remained high;



2) P7 Parent/Guardian Evaluation

It is important to the Young Strathclyde programme that an evaluation of the parents/guardians of participating pupils is carried out in order to measure their awareness of the programme and evaluate the perceived impact that they feel it has. Gathering parental responses can be a challenging task and it was thought that the most effective way to do this was in-person, during the graduation ceremony on campus. Paper evaluations were given to attending parents/guardians and collected at the end of the ceremony. 101 forms were completed, 94 of these by parents and 7 by other family members. The results detailed below can perhaps be caveated with a recognition that these pupils have family members who have demonstrated some commitment to their children's education by their attendance at the graduation ceremony.

a) Programme Impact

Parents/guardians generally thought the Young Strathclyde programme had had a very positive impact on their child. Pupils had enjoyed the programme, and for many it had boosted their confidence;

A massive impact.

Made her happy and excited. Gives her something to look forward to/ something achievable.

Enjoyed. Made more educationally focused.

She likes it so much.

Help with confidence.

Many parents thought that pupils had been given an opportunity to learn new things and take part in new experiences;

Experiencing new things.

More learning.

More interest in learning.

Enhance learning/ knowledge.

Many parents also felt that their children had learnt about Higher Education and were now motivated to progress to University after school;

He will be more keen learner and achieve his goals.

Encouraged him to learn about further higher education opportunities.

She would like to go to uni.

She loved it - has really inspired her to attend Uni herself.

The support she needs to do well.

A very strong impact and made him looking forward to senior school studies and future University education.

He is excited to attend uni.

She is looking forward to higher education.

She is looking to a great future.

b) Attending Graduation

Parents/guardians were asked how their children felt about coming to the graduation event. It's important that, for all the positive benefits of the graduation, that the University ensures that this is not, due to the formality and size of the ceremony, a stressful occasion for pupils. The feedback from this question was overwhelmingly positive with only 5% saying their child was nervous while 66% said their child was excited and 24% that they were happy.

Happy & excited.

Buzzing!

Very happy, excited and looking forward to receiving his award.

c) Impact of Graduation

There were several main areas of impact that parents/guardians thought that attending the graduation event would have on their children. Many thought that overall it would be a positive experience;

A great experience.

Positivity, experience, confidence.

A very good, positive impact.

Good happy thoughts.

Many felt that their children would feel proud of themselves and it would be a boost to confidence;

Proud & excited.

Make her feel so proud.

Build on confidence/ excitement.

Confidence & sense of achievement.

Hopefully it will help improve her self-confidence.

It's good for her self-esteem.

Many felt that their children would be motivated by the programme to work harder in school and be more engaged with their education as they now had a better understanding of the benefits of doing so;

I think he will be motivated by this programme.

Encourage us to participate in more daring activities.

To do more work.

She might want to do better in school to come here one day.

I think it will enlighten her and encourage her to work towards getting here for real.

Will help study hard and choose some good subject.

A positive attitude to learning and further education.

It will motivate her in her future studies.

More of an awareness and positive approach to his education and its importance.

A large number of parents/guardians felt that their children would now be motivated to attend University in the future, with many suggesting that pupils will now be more informed and inspired, as well as feeling more at home within a University environment;

He will be inspired to be a graduate at University.

Has made him want to go when he's older.

Hopefully encourage her to further her education.

Hoping it gives thought to extend his education.

Positive impact- help her in future with decisions and help with University.

Will give her a good sense of what Uni is like (what happens when you graduate) and help with future decisions.

It will give him a sense of belonging and encourage him to aim higher academically.

Hopefully inspire her to achieve as much as she wishes.

Hopefully continue uni level and complete.

Will help pave the way for further education at university.

It will give him a vision of what is possible.

Ambition.

Different opportunities.

Encouraged and more determined to go ahead for further in future.

Remove any hesitation around university environments.

Positive about university.

d) Knowledge of the programme

When asked about what they knew about the Young Strathclyde programme, many parents/guardians showed a good awareness of the programme content and aims, with many offering enthusiastic and positive comments;

This programme is about the rewards which will be given to the pupils for their achievements.

That they work with kids for next few years.

My son has participated in subjects which are on offer at Strathclyde University. These activities have had some impact on his future education/learning.

It's an exciting programme empowering young children.

It's a programme by the university to engage pupils of primary schools, familiarising them with the new learning projects.

It is amazing and encourages young people to achieve their goal.

Encourage students for future studies.

It is very good for young students and it will increase their knowledge and keep them with a vision about the future.

A programme aimed at encouraging young people to look forward to attending or obtaining a university degree in future.

It gives children opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have.

It encourages young pupils to know the value of further education, and opportunity to learn and know their talents.

It raises awareness of higher education among primary students.

Programme is preparing them for the future.

It's a programme to encourage more young people to go to university and to start thinking about their career goals early on.

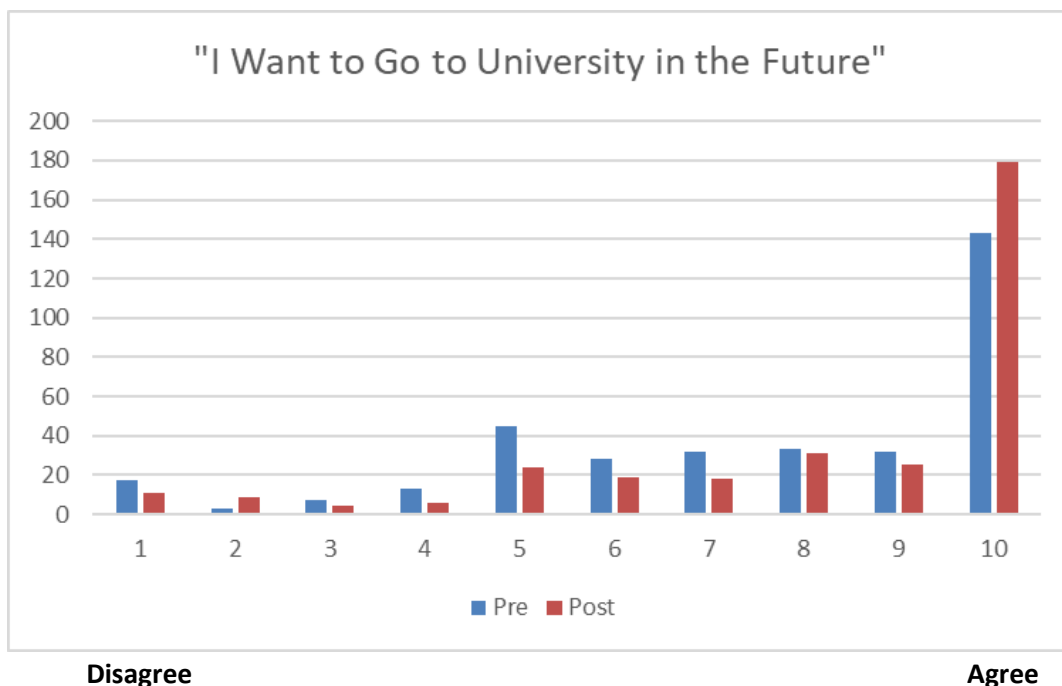
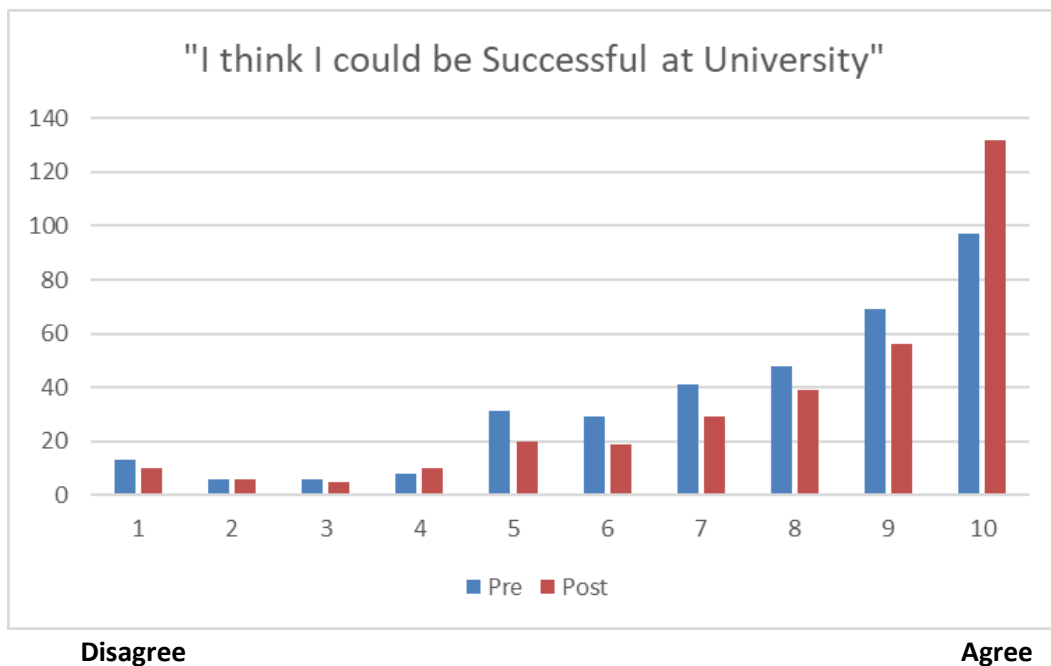
Great programme.

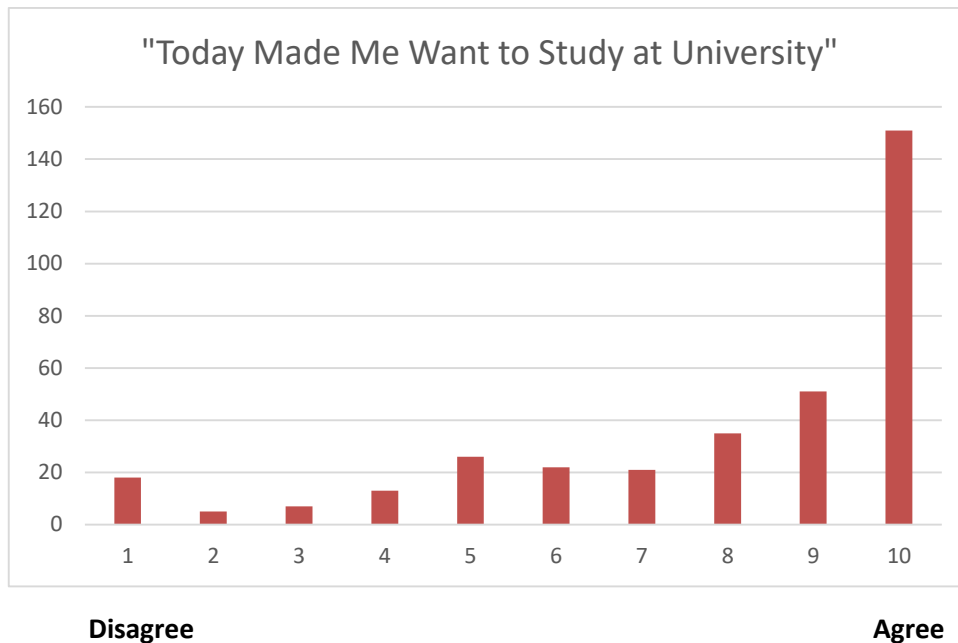
However, 56% of respondents acknowledged that they did not know anything about the programme, with 35% saying that the first time they had heard about the programme was when they received an invitation to the graduation event. Moving forwards, the Access, Equality & Inclusion service will ensure that we have more effective means of communicating with parents/guardians about Young Strathclyde in order to maximise awareness of and engagement with the programme.

3) P6 Pupil Evaluation

P6 pupils completed a pre-programme questionnaire at the beginning of their Young Strathclyder activity day and a post-programme questionnaire at the end of the day. From the 404 P6 pupils who took part in the activity day, this report uses responses from 356 pre-questionnaires and 352 post-questionnaires.

Evaluation of 2022-23 P6 Young Strathclyder participants shows, as with the P7 pupils, the programme has a significant positive impact with regard to aspiration to attend University and confidence that they could successfully undertake University study, though it is also encouraging to note the high levels of aspiration and confidence pre-programme.





With regard to University study, pupils felt that, after the programme, they were generally more informed about University, and were aware that University opens up a wide range of study and career opportunities;

I learnt about all of the amazing stuff you can learn in University.

We learnt about everything you can do in university.

I learned that you will be able to study mostly anything you want.

I learnt that certain subjects have smaller subjects you can study.

I learned about dorms.

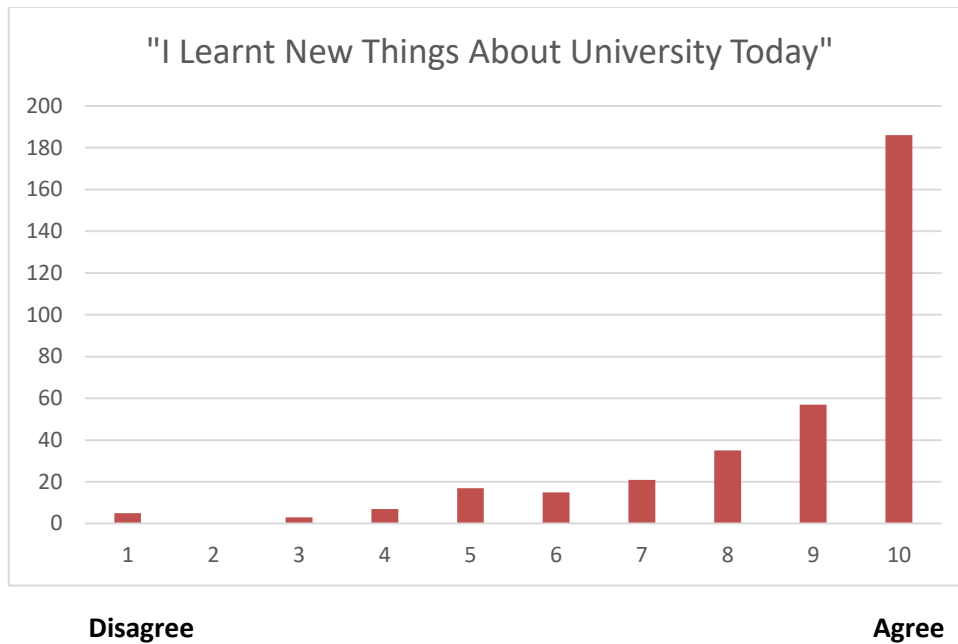
I learnt what the university is like.

What university is like and what you do in each faculty is like.

I learned the different subjects that are taught in the university. I learned how people learn about different stuff.

Different sections of the university.

I learned about business, engineering, human & social sciences and science.



Pupils also had a generally very positive impression of University;

University is the best.

Engineering is very fun.

That uni is good and helps you learn.

It is hard work but it is fun. The students are fun.

I LEARNED UNI IS BETTER THAN PRIMARY!!!

That uni is really fun and I would love to come back.

The P6 activity day took place on the Strathclyde campus, allowing the pupils to spend some time becoming accustomed to the University environment. While, as would be expected, some pupils found the campus very large and a little confusing, there were clear benefits from this experience, with many being impressed and excited and one particularly positive aspect being that staff and student mentors make the University a very welcoming environment;

Fun, exciting and interesting.

It was beautiful. The University is better than school.

I thought it was really cool.

I loved it today. It was fantastic. Can I come back?!

I thought it was amazing.

They are kind people and it helped me learn a lot more.

It's very fun and there is a lot of nice people.

The mentors were kind and it was cool.

I think I would like to study there when I am older.

I LOVED it!

10/10 It's fancy

Kind people, massive and beautiful.

It was huge! And amazing! It was an amazing experience!

Several pupils indicated that the day had a positive impact on their knowledge, awareness and aspiration with regard to professions related to University study;

I learned I want to be an engineer.

Some jobs can be more fun than they seem.

About different professions.

I learnt about different types of jobs and what they are and do.

Pupils felt that a lot of learning had taken place during the day, both with regard to specific subject areas and also the development of a range of skills. Many pupils also considered both the activities and the chance to work with student mentors to be very enjoyable;

Today we learned lots of different things.

I learned too much to explain.

How to identify good logos and bad logos.

I learnt what to use to make a logo.

I learned that some logos have hidden messages behind them =)

I learned how to code.

I learnt about Newton's Law.

I learned that brains are full of nano polymers.

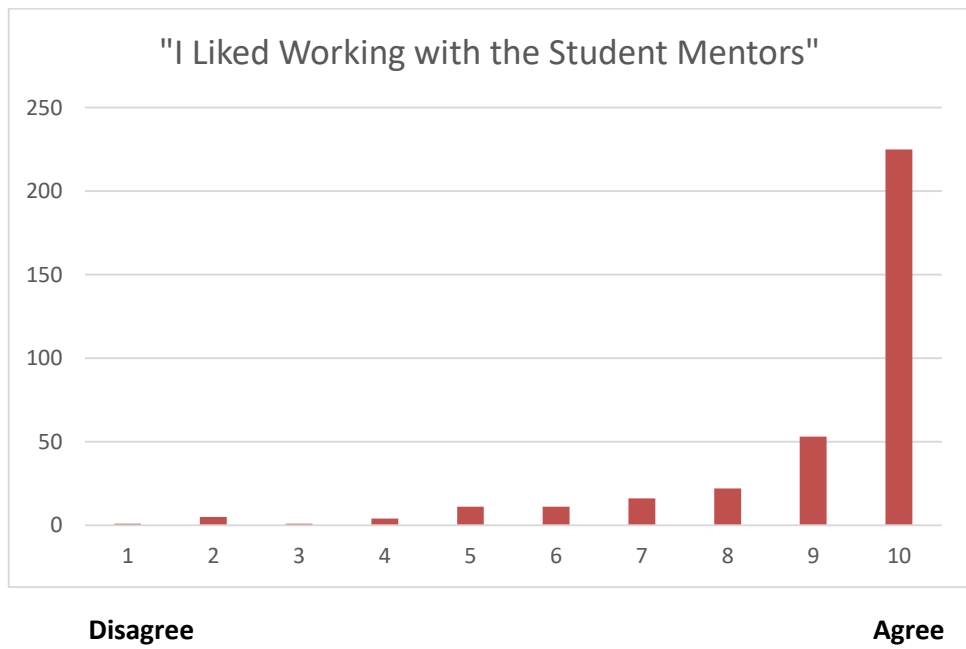
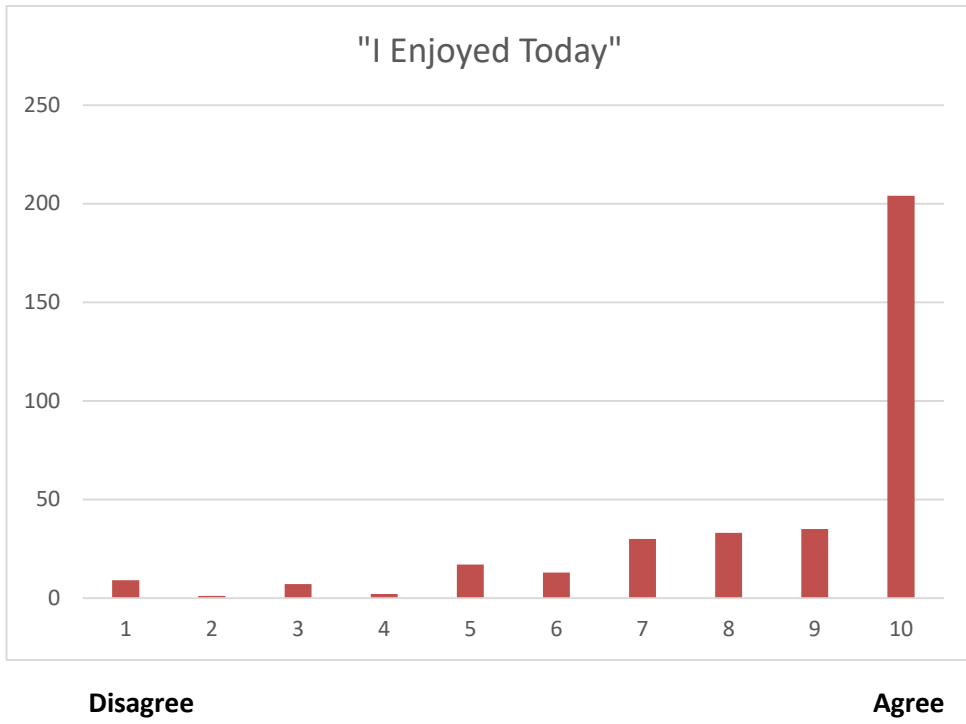
To make nanogel!!! Was so FUN!!

I learn that salt acts like scissors with nanogel.

Learning can be fun.

I learned new problem solving skills.

Problem solving science.



4) P6 and P7 Teacher Evaluation

Evaluation of 35 P6 and P7 teachers whose pupils took part in the 2022-23 Young Strathclyder demonstrated that they believed the programme had a positive impact in the following ways:

a) Pupils enjoyed the programme

It has been a fantastic day for the children.

More activities similar to this programme would be amazing! The children and myself have learned a lot and have really enjoyed the day.

b) Pupils enjoyed working with student mentors, finding them approachable, relatable and inspirational;

I think pupils have loved working with and getting to know the mentors, and having those meaningful conversations about their career paths will have a good impact on the pupils.

The day was motivational. Mentors were good role models.

Talking to mentors who are just like them.

..they are more informed and hearing from mentors would have made it realistic for them.

I think pupils will think university is a more achievable option for them. I think the student role models were really helpful and pupils may want to follow their example.

Seeing & working with students who mirror themselves.

c) Pupils are more informed about University, and potential courses and careers, after the programme;

Their eyes have been opened to careers they have never heard of.

I think for some it was their first experience learning about university and they are now more aware of their options.

They now have a better idea of what happens at University.

More aware of what opportunities there are.

They were taught about different faculties, told about the difficulty of different subjects within university and about routes into university (costs, grades and electives).

Engaging tasks and well explained routes to future jobs and learning.

The sessions also showed them the range of subjects available to study.

Given insight to learning about different subjects, knowing the importance of study & success.

I think it has shown the positive experience which can arise from going to university.

They got to experience the subjects you can study which they may previously not have had knowledge of.

They saw today that there are a variety of courses to suit everyone's interests. The activities were fun and engaging and demonstrated that the course work can be practical!

I think our pupils were given a really good flavour of subjects on offer at uni.

d) More pupils will aspire to attend University in the future

It was a very inspiring session that provided many opportunities for pupils to reflect and think about their futures.

This is a great experience/opportunity to encourage children to go to university even if their family have no experience.

More children are discussing university and thinking about different careers.

I think it was good for them to see the range of subjects that are available and this has expanded their horizon.

Early exposure to something they may not otherwise know about/experience. Broadening their horizons.

Pupils I've spoken to so far are motivated and said they now want to go to university.

A positive experience which will hopefully inspire children to find a job they love + go to university.

Very positive - hopefully giving them more ambitions and the belief that uni is for them should they choose.

Our pupils will now see there are a lot of subjects on offer at uni and hopefully will spark their curiosity/interest.

Research more about uni. Start conversations at home. Think about career paths & opportunities.

They may begin to contemplate other jobs than they had previously.

e) Pupils now find University more attainable and less daunting

Those who were nervous about today have been smiling all day and now understand that it can be fun and interesting - not something to dread.

It will seem more accessible to them both socially and academically.

I think they will realise they all have an equal opportunity.

The programme was encouraging and framed university as being something that was open and inclusive to all.

It gives them an insight what to expect and won't seem so scary.

I think a lot of them will be more interested in going to university and some of their worries about going have been extinguished.

5) Student Mentor Evaluation

87 current Strathclyde students were recruited and trained as mentors to deliver activities and support participants on the Young Strathclyde Primary pilot in 2022/23. Mentors represented a range of departments and subjects from each of the University's faculties and were at a variety of stages in their University journey, from first year undergraduate through to postgraduate. The AEI service had a focus on recruiting Young Strathclyde mentors from widening access backgrounds, as a means of offering positive role models to participants but also as part of the University's policy of offering meaningful, reliable and useful employment to its widening access students.

Evaluation of student mentors is key to the programme's success, both in helping understand the programme impact on pupils and how improvements may be made going forwards. The development of the students who work on widening access programmes is also a key aim of the AEI Service and so it is important to measure impact on mentors themselves.

14 student mentors completed a post-programme evaluation.

Impact on Mentors

a) Mentor Experience

'Rewarding' and 'enjoyable' were the most common words used by mentors to describe their experience on the programme. Many mentors also found aspects of the programme inspirational;

I've really enjoyed the work and the people I've worked with, and it has really improved my teaching skills and shown me how much I enjoy working with children.

The utter joy that despite these primary school children coming from a less affluent, underfunded area they still aspire for more. I was in their shoes once and was so glad to hear that they had ambitions, never once saying that they probably couldn't go to university because of where they came from.

Yes - as its very rewarding and an enjoyable job. I always looked forward to coming to my work and I'm so grateful to have been a part of something that helps students realise their full potential.

It was rewarding and enjoyable.

It is a fantastic opportunity which if you engage with and put in the work by being committed and actively involved can be rewarding.

Work is enjoyable and interesting. Very positive and rewarding aims and outcomes.

Many mentors enjoyed the feeling that they were doing something worthwhile with a positive social impact;

A sense of doing something good.

Contributing to social change and personal growth.

..the programme allows people to directly impact the lives of young people and contribute to their personal, social, and academic development. They will also have an opportunity to contribute to larger social change initiatives and advocate for equity, inclusion, and equal opportunities.

This was a great opportunity to engage in outreach, particularly with those pupils from underprivileged households. It was rewarding to be a positive influence on the pupils.

b) Confidence

When discussing the impact that the programme had on them, several mentors mentioned improvements in their confidence from taking on a new role with a lot of responsibility, putting themselves outside their comfort zone and having a positive effect on others;

I have gained confidence myself, by helping young people and being a role model and a leader.

I have gained a new found confidence and I hope I can spread that onto others.

Generally improved confidence resulting from taking on something that was initially outside my comfort zone. More confidence to seek out and take on other opportunities which are new to me.

Increasing my confidence in multiple different ways.

General confidence and ability to tackle unfamiliar challenges.

c) New social networks

Some mentors mentioned that the programme allowed them to get to know fellow students whom they might not normally have the opportunity to meet; those from other year groups, and different faculties and departments. Given the negative impact that two years of online classes had on the social engagement and confidence of students, this is to be viewed as an important benefit;

I think the programme is beneficial to both students and the primary school pupils. It made me consider what I wanted to do after university and improved my communication, cooperation and leadership skills! I made new friends from the different schools in Strath too, which I never would have, had I not took this opportunity!

Chance to meet new people from different year groups and courses within your faculty.

d) Development of Skills and Abilities

Mentors considered that the programme allowed them to develop a wide range of employability skills. Chief amongst these was improvement in a range of communication skills, along with team-work and leadership skills;

I further developed my leadership, negotiation and communication skills. I gained the ability to adapt quickly and change schedules successfully if we were running over or behind time.

Ability to quickly form effective teams with new people.

The most important thing I have gained from the experience is the building of my skills, for example team working,

Public speaking, communicating with a wider age group and efficient team working skills.

Explaining myself, keeping people engaged, and instructing/advising multiple people at once - it was not something I had much experience of before.

As I engaged in discussions, expressed ideas, listened actively, and worked in diverse groups, communication and interpersonal skills were developed. Additionally, networking and social skills were also developed.

Adapting knowledge to a younger audience

communication, mentoring, confidence talking in front of large groups, presentation skills

Adapting knowledge to a younger audience

I've improved how I communicate with others, and teach things more clearly.

I would recommend it because it is very rewarding and helpful in terms of developing communication and public speaking skills.

e) Influence on study/career aspirations

12 out of 14 respondents said that working on the programme had an influence on their future study and career aspirations. For some, it had made them develop new career interests and consider new career paths:

I now am debating whether to go into some form of chemistry teaching as I have had such a positive experience from the programme

It has made me consider alternative pathways like education

It's made me realise how much I do enjoy working with children and teaching, and if I am able to combine this into my job when I am older I wouldn't be averse to it.

It has helped me realise different passions as well as develop skills which I believe will help me find a career path that suits me the best.

Has made me much more likely to consider being involved in similar outreach programs once I graduate (for example becoming a STEM Ambassador).

It has encouraged me to pursue a career as a teacher.

Yes! I spoke to the Widening Access department about future vacancies. I would like to help students to achieve the very best for themselves and to give them that confidence!

For others, the work had confirmed their existing career plans;

Further confirmed I want to teach.

Yes, engaging in the Young Strathclyde programme helped clarify my career goals and aspirations. It provided first-hand exposure to assess my interest, passion, and aptitude for working with young children.

Some mentors recognised that the experience gained and the skills they had developed would be beneficial in securing work in the future;

It has helped me realise different passions as well as develop skills which I believe will help me find a career path that suits me the best.

The opportunity to gain the experience of being in the classroom, on the side of educating and leading group activities.

Excellent addition to CV and unique talking point for interviews.

Impact on Participating Pupils

There were several areas on which the mentors considered the programme had impacted pupils;

a) An increased knowledge of University and future study and career possibilities

an increased awareness of university as well as allowing them to see it as a clear option for themselves.

Participants engaged and got an early opportunity to learn what a university is and engagement with current students allows for a more relaxed and engaging programme.

It also raised awareness on the basic benefits of studying in a University and encouraged the pupils to pursue further studies or careers.

A positive impact, it seemed a friendly approach to bringing up or introducing university to young kids, without stressing academic requirements.

I am confident that many students are much more aware of university and further education as an option. Additionally, I believe many pupils have increased their interest for the subjects involved in the activities.

I think it has showed them that there are opportunities there which they could end up being a part of regardless of background or social status etc

Given them a positive impression of engineering and university as a potential career/study path.

I believe it has shown younger students the diversity of people in the science fields and the many different subjects in science itself.

b) Increased confidence

I do think it's helped them with their attitudes towards university and higher education in general, as well as being more confident meeting older people.

hopefully being able to build their confidence and expand their knowledge of life after school.

c) Making university study seem less daunting

I think it made university feel more achievable and less scary for the students. It's a long time away for them but the opportunity to gain independence and see what they could achieve at university

created a lot of chat between the students, which was interesting for myself to observe and listen to. The participants were fantastic and would be an asset to any university!

they feel like they can confide in people and not as anxious about their future education plans.

d) Increased aspiration

It has brought career aspirations to the forefront of their minds and how in a lot of cases university is necessary or helpful. Hopefully this helps them to see university as an exciting step down the road to achieving their dreams.

It has sparked an interest in kids and got them excited about new things/topics they may not have encountered before.

Thanks

The Access, Equality & Inclusion Service would like to thank the Nairn Foundation for their very generous funding of the Young Strathclyde programme.

Appendix 1: Young Strathclyder Primary Schools 2022-23

- Annette Street Primary
- Chirnsyde Primary
- Cuthbertson Primary
- Dunard Primary
- Glendale Primary
- Oakwood Primary
- St Benedict's Primary
- St Patrick's Primary
- St Rose of Lima Primary
- St Timothy's Primary