

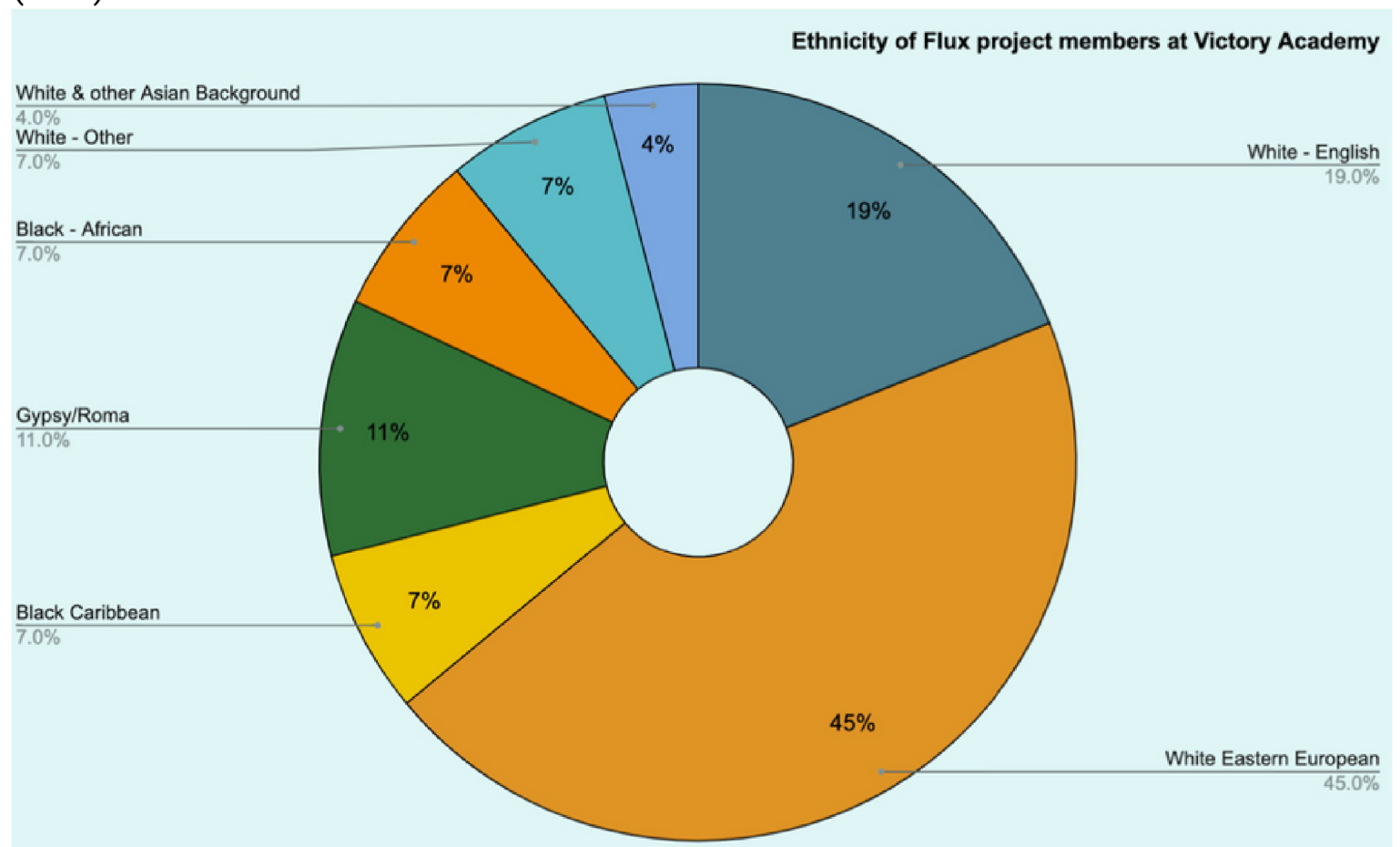


Victory  
Academy  
Case Study  
Report 2022

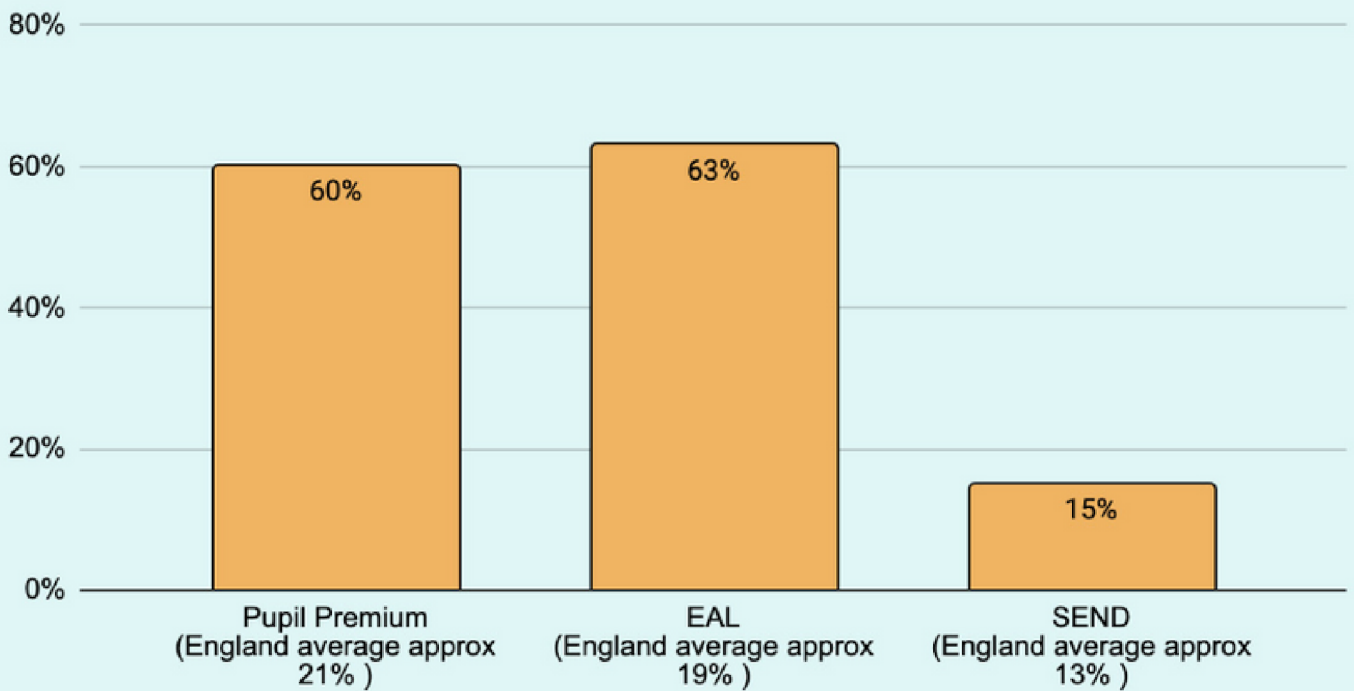
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# Da Base Music at Victory Academy

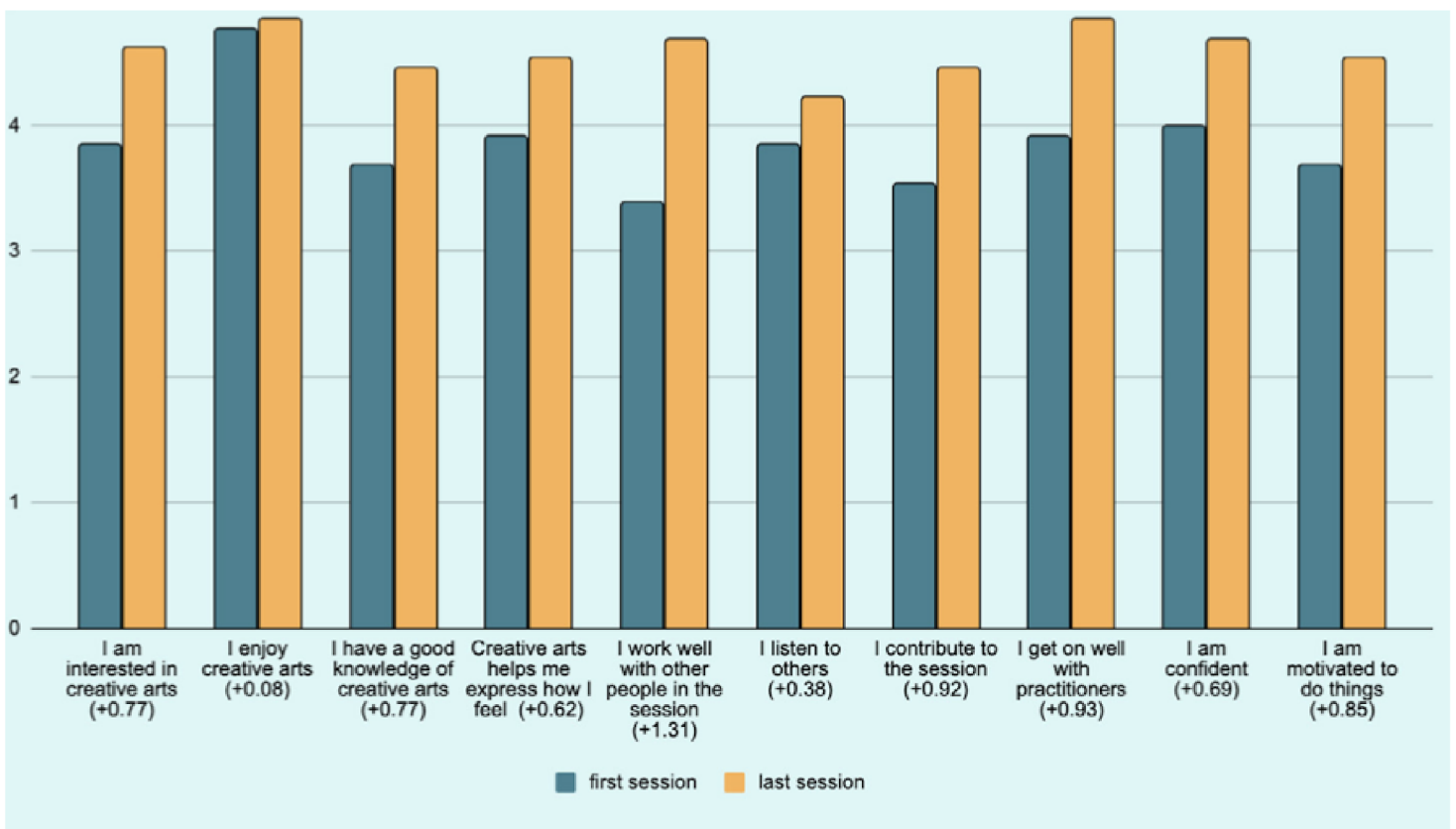
Music workshops were run at Victory Academy in Chatham. Sessions were led by practitioners from Da Base Music Centre who worked with young people to write and record music. The school selected young people from marginalised groups who they hoped would benefit from arts interventions supporting the mental health and wellbeing of the pupils. This included young people from the Gypsy/Roma (11%) and Eastern European (45%) communities, those in receipt of pupil premium (60%), with English as a foreign language (63%) and some with special educational needs (15%).



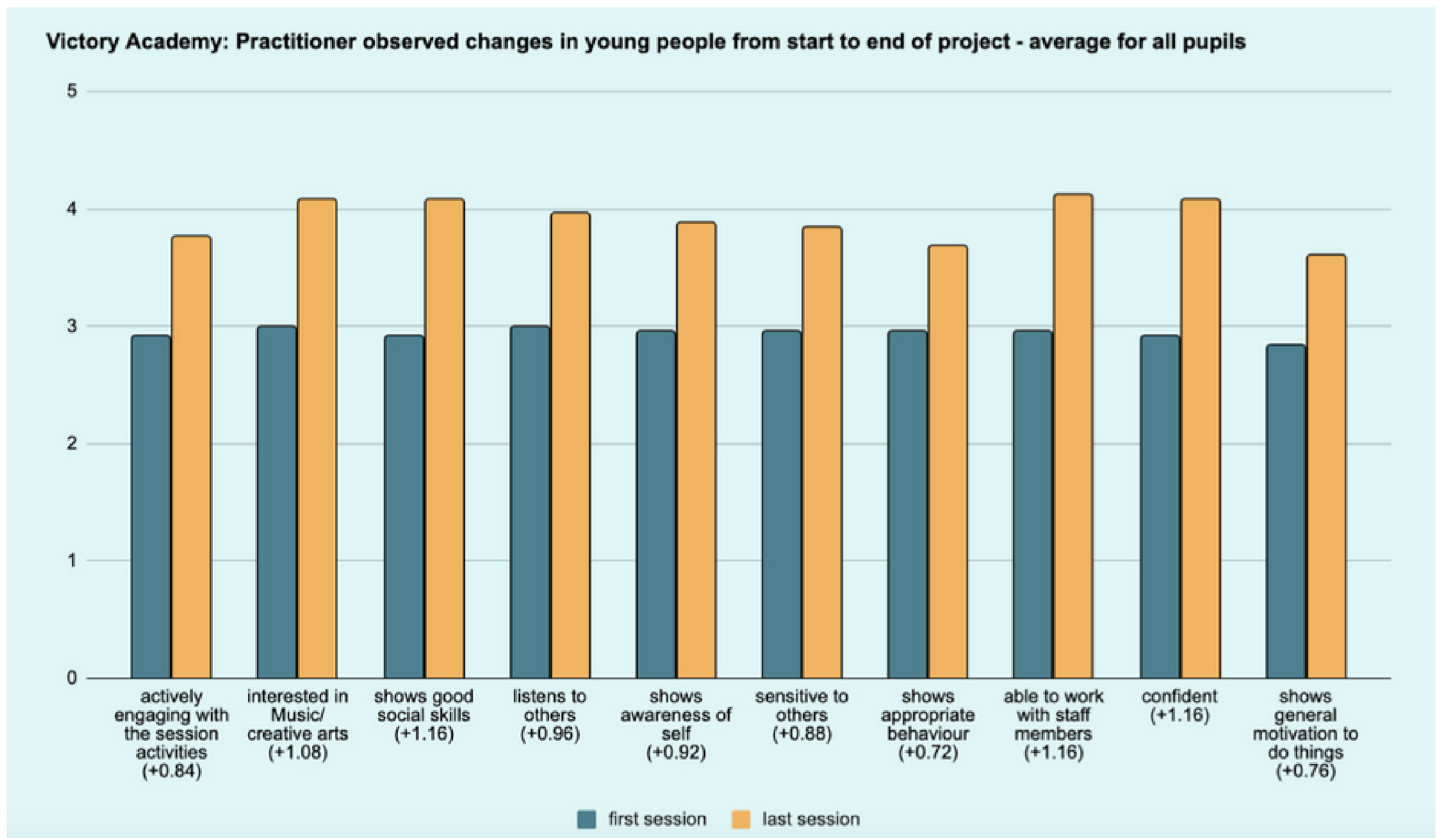
**Victory Academy project members: percentages of students receiving pupil premium and pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)**



As part of the Sussex University Evaluation, project members were asked to indicate how much they think the statements on the graph below had changed from the start to the end of the project. They indicated 1 (not at all true) to 5 (completely true). The graphs show the average changes respondents from Victory Academy indicated from their first to last session. The '+' scores indicate how much they feel they have improved in these areas.



Similarly, practitioners were asked to indicate how much change they saw in the young people from the start to end of the project based on slightly different questions:



The charts show that the project members and practitioners on average felt they had improved across all areas, with notable improvements in social skills/working with others and working well with staff/practitioners and young people appearing more confident by the practitioners.

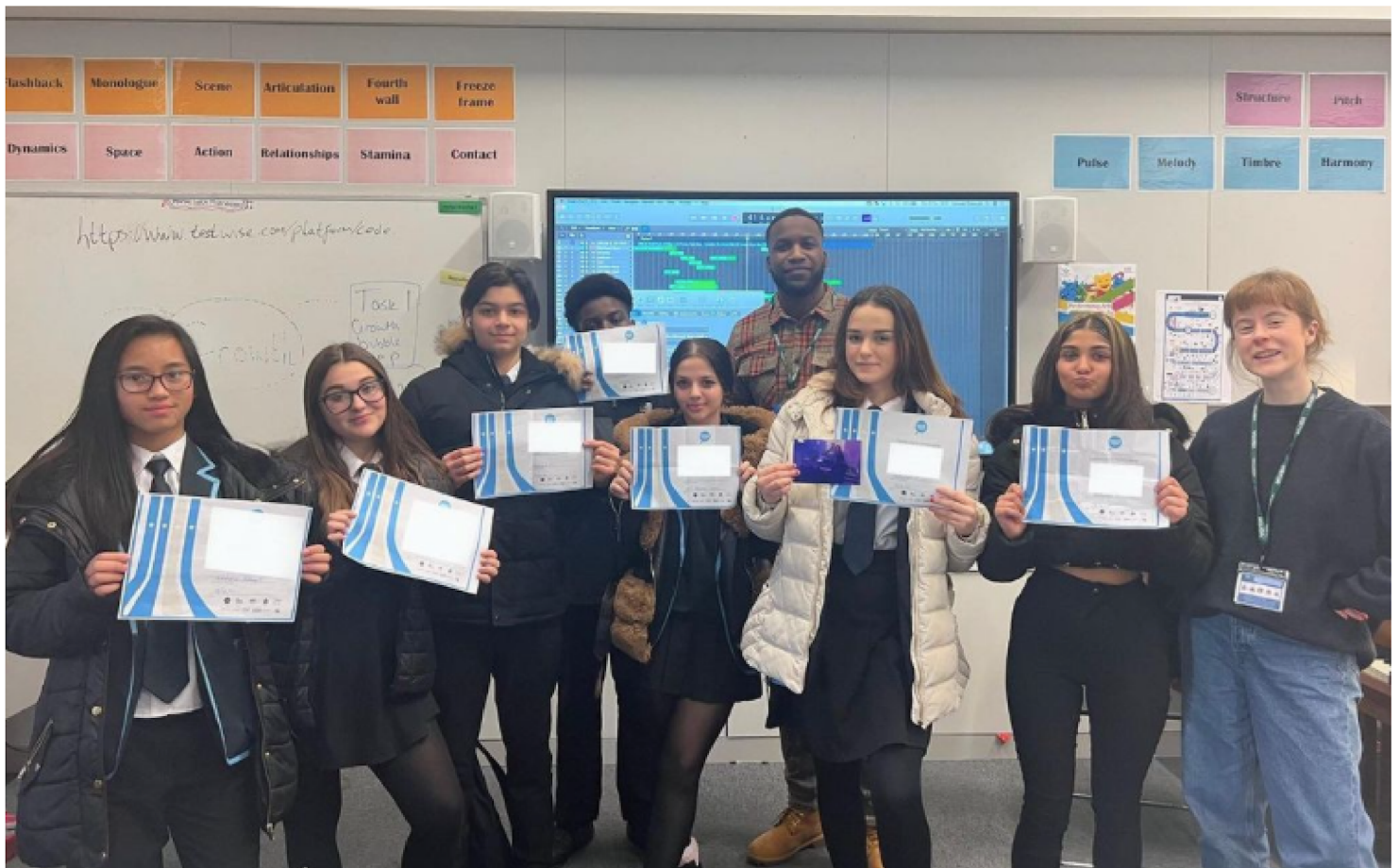
Some of the pupils were disengaging from school and are from communities that the young people said had a *'cultural distrust of engaging with services'* and anything *'overtly about mental health would deter the students they felt would most benefit.'* (59) The school identified that students were most likely to be responsive to music. The practitioner said music sessions helped young people *'boost their confidence, raise their self-esteem and interact with peers that they wouldn't normally interact with. I think the great thing about music is that music is such a universal language. It brings people from different cultures, different backgrounds, different genders. Music can bring people together and that's exactly what happened.'* (60) The pupils were given creative freedom and agency in what they were doing which enabled them to open up about their experiences. *'It's slightly therapeutic, it's a way of getting away from bad stuff that people my age do.'* (61)

59 Steering Group Highlight Reports/Bryony Farrant-Davis, Ideas test interviews.

60 FLUX Video interview with practitioner Nathaniel from Da Base Music Centre

61 Verbal feedback from Victory Academy Student, Flux: Film, Oct 2022

Their sharing of their experiences through music highlighted the extent of their vulnerabilities to the adults around them. In the summer term, the sessions were dominated by a group of boys whose lyrics and discussions highlighted concerns about their possible involvement in gangs. They had named their music group 'C-Block.' Ideas Test attended Medway network meetings where their sharing led to one of the Mental Health Leads contacting Ideas Test regarding concerns about the 'C-Block' name being linked to a local gang known to exploit young people. They were then able to put Ideas Test in contact with relevant support services. The opportunity to express themselves openly led to them receiving support and Da Base gave them a positive experience of an art project where they were heard. Tim Woodhouse, Kent and Medway ICS Suicide Prevention Programme Manager, said that it 'highlights the fact that actually, the project is working with those kids that we really need to get to.' He explained that some of those young people anticipated ending up in prison and that Da Base gave them a different 'outlook on life.' (62) The school decided that the 'C-Block' song could not be shared publicly so in the second set of workshops the practitioners focused on wellbeing and aspiration and young people created a new piece of work which was performed at Flux: Fest and is available online as part of the Flux: Fest film.(63) Da Base gave opportunities for young people to potentially see their futures differently as a result of engagement in the project, thus improving their mental health outlook.



62 Tim Woodhouse, Kent and Medway ICS Suicide Prevention Programme Manager, interview 14.11.22

63 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5MxvwnEjY8&t=10s>