

Connected Belonging in Practice

Primary



Cohort:
Girls in target year group

St Marks Primary
School, London

How Connected Belonging was used: **Insight survey – Pilot School**

Individual identity

The Connected Belonging Questionnaire flagged that a high proportion of girls had low self-esteem, feared failure and were critical of themselves.

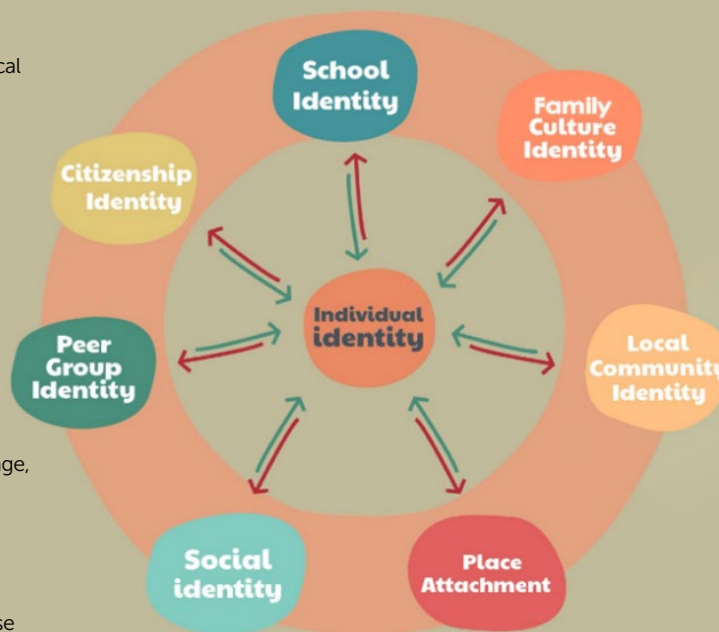
To build resilience and self-concept, the school ran a Rights for Girls programme. External facilitators mentored the girls over 10 two-hour sessions, covering topics including puberty, hopes and fears about growing up and how to help each other safely.

This helped them build on what makes them special; identify different emotions and the physical and mental impact of these; understand the emotional and physical changes around puberty.

Social Identity

The cohort included girls who: speak English as an additional language, have refugee status; are from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds; are neurodivergent; have SEND; and are from socio-economically deprived families.

Sensitive discussion and consideration of the different ways individuals experience and think about puberty acknowledged diverse perspectives. Mothers were invited to attend selected sessions to include cultural views and build their trust through involvement and knowing what was being discussed.



Connected Belonging Model

Impact

- Girls reported increased confidence, self-esteem and a stronger sense of their individual identity.
- Participants developed a better understanding of emotions, puberty and strategies for managing physical and emotional changes.
- Girls demonstrated greater resilience, were more willing to seek support and showed increased confidence in supporting their peers safely.
- The programme created a safe, inclusive space where girls from diverse backgrounds felt valued, respected and able to share their experiences: strengthening the affirmation of social identity in school.
- Involving mothers strengthened relationships between home and school, increased trust in the programme and encouraged conversations about puberty and wellbeing at home.

Next steps

- Continue delivering the Rights for Girls programme to future cohorts.
- Continue to engage parents and carers through information sessions and resources that support conversations at home.
- Continue to adapt the programme to meet the needs of diverse learners and ensure it remains inclusive and culturally responsive.
- To research and roll out a similar programme for boys.