

example... the understanding that things take time. The conversation and the range of questions that they can ask because the teachers are so well versed in what they're doing.'

'The ownership of everything, the gardens, the teachers taking a step back. This is a new skill for the children. It gives them confidence. With our children, when you see confidence, the results do go up. They were very much "I can't do it," whereas now that's starting to turn round.'

Particular benefits are cited for children who, for a range of reasons, have been struggling with school. ***'Open Futures is something that could be very important in that as it could potentially provide stability for the children who are very troubled'***

A positive impact on behaviour is noted by several headteachers:

'It gives children the chance to be experts when they might not otherwise be so. We had a challenging group of boys but they would love to dig and cut the grass - they became experts and their self esteem changed considerably and they were recognised as experts by other pupils in the class. '

Children with low levels of language skills, either with English as a first or a second language are encouraged to learn by Open Futures activities, and their achievement enables them to be more positive about school.

'It helps children access things in a very practical way and rather than looking at reading comprehension and hammering away at those basics - ... Cutting an apple and slicing it and learning how to put it into a base, they can look and see and understand without having the vocabulary. A lot of our children have very low levels in terms of language and social skills; it breaks down barriers for them.'

The cooking and gardening are often described as meeting an important inner need for the children: *'They are desperate to cook, to be outdoors gardening and whatever it is that needs doing outdoors'*. Social and emotional benefits are therefore apparent, as well as growth in practical and cognitive skills.

For all children, the various activities enable schools to extend the scope of what had previously been achieved. For example, preparing to film involves: *'... children orally rehearsing, jotting things down, cutting things out, typing it up, messing around with how*

it will be presented, rehearsing what they are going to say, all these different language skills and editing skills'.

In a Philosophy session observed by a head: *'The quality of what they were coming out with, they're posing questions and listening to each other. The impact on standards has been a positive effect'*

There is a universal enthusiasm for the intrinsic value of the strands across a wide range of personal and inter-personal outcomes that resonate with the values of primary school educators. This value reinforces the view that Open Futures aligns well with developing educational agendas, represented by ECM and the new Primary Curriculum.