EXTREMISM AND MEDIA LITERACY PROGRAMME

Hammersmith & Fulham and Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

September 2020 - March 2021

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Introduction

Since the start of the 2020/2021 academic year, we at Shout Out UK have been delivering our Extremism and Media Literacy programme to young people at pupil referral units (PRUs) and state secondary schools across the Hammersmith & Fulham and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea councils. The main aim of the programme has been to equip young people with the necessary research and critical thinking skills to tackle disinformation, misinformation and extremism online - vital personal skills, which young people are able to apply to different online and offline situations, regardless of the issue at hand.

The course is divided into three sessions, each of which comes with corresponding learning objectives:

1. Media Literacy and Online Forums
2. Rehabilitation over Punishment
3. Extreme far-right

The first lesson of the course helps students learn how to identify misinformation, disinformation, biased writing, echo chambers and filter bubbles, while positioning these topics within the Prevent Duty. The second lesson on Rehabilitation over Punishment equips students with knowledge on the separation of powers and will help them acquire the skills necessary to explain the arguments behind the two sides of the Rehabilitation vs. Punishment debate. The third lesson of the course helps students identify ways to actively prevent themselves from being associated with far-right groups and will enable them to apply political terms in their analysis of the far right.

Despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the changing public health circumstances in London, we were still able to meet and exceed our target of delivering the programme to 400 young people. Specifically, **530 students** across two secondary schools and five pupil referral units from the two boroughs took part in the programme. Out of those 530 students, **408** filled out post-programme or lesson evaluation forms. The difference between these numbers is attributed to the fact that halfway through the project, we had to adapt the programme for online delivery in light of the stricter lockdown measures. This meant that it was more difficult to monitor which participants had filled out the survey(s) and to ask their teachers to chase them for a response. Nonetheless, the findings presented in the report capture how learning about misinformation, disinformation and the extreme far-right, as well as how acquiring critical thinking and analytical skills create changes in young people’s attitudes and behaviours online.
Impact evaluation methods and general stats

Impact evaluation and delivery

In order to capture the programme’s impact, two evaluation methods were used with regards to the target audience we were engaging. Typically, we would implement a distance travelled methodology, meaning participants would be asked to fill out a pre-programme and a post-programme evaluation form, consisting of the same questions and statements, in order to determine a change in their knowledge and understanding of the material, as well as their views and perceptions of certain topics. Having worked previously with PRUs, we were aware that alternative provisions have transient populations, meaning that not all young people that would receive the first lesson would necessarily be participating in the rest of the lessons. This meant that there was a high likelihood that the students who would normally fill out the pre-programme evaluation form would not be the same students that would fill out the post-programme evaluation forms. We still, however, wanted to make sure that there was a mechanism in place that captured the impact of each lesson on participants. For this reason, we introduced three post-lesson evaluation forms, which were tailored to cover the educational and larger social impact outcomes linked to each lesson (i.e. retrospective evaluation). This enabled us to better understand how the programme had impacted participants in each lesson. This methodology was applied to 5 number of PRUs and one secondary school. Delivery for the PRUs took place entirely in person between September and November 2020. During this time, lockdown measures and public health restrictions were looser, enabling us to directly work with the students in a classroom environment.

After lockdown restrictions tightened up again in December 2020, we had to transition to online delivery. Online delivery provisions had already been put in place from the beginning of the project, in order to ensure that in the event of tighter lockdown measures, delivery remains uninterrupted. As such, we were able to work online with two more state schools, with one of the schools using our three post-lesson survey forms. An exception was made for the other school, which did not have the capacity to accommodate the programme over several weeks. We worked closely with the lead teacher from Hammersmith Academy to organise a drop-down day for several cohorts of students from Year 7 to Year 10, during which we delivered all three workshops back to back. As the delivery was taking place in one day with the same participants, students were asked to fill out pre and post-programme surveys.

The report will, hence, be structured around the different impact evaluation methods, starting with presenting insights from the post-workshop survey forms only and continuing with the results obtained from the drop-down day at Hammersmith Academy.

General stats

The majority of participants (50.7%) were aged 13 and younger, followed by those aged 14 years old (32.4%). Students aged 15 composed 15.0% of all participants, while the remainder of participants were aged 16 and older (2.0%).
The majority of participants identified as male (63.4%); 28.9% identified as female. Below you can find the detailed distribution of responses to the question 'What gender do you identify as?'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28.92%</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>63.73%</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-binary</td>
<td>0.98%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>0.74%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.70%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>408</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of ethnicity, 33.6% of all participants identified as white; 58.6% came from B.A.M.E. (non-white) communities and 7.84% preferred not to say. Below you can find a detailed distribution of the responses to the question 'What is your ethnicity?'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British- Indian</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British- Pakistani</td>
<td>2.21%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British- Bangladeshi</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British- Chinese</td>
<td>0.49%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other Asian background</td>
<td>6.86%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British- African</td>
<td>13.48%</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British- Caribbean</td>
<td>7.11%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other Black/African/Caribbean background</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed- White and Black African</td>
<td>1.72%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Mixed/multiple ethnic groups-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White and Asian</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnic group- Arab</td>
<td>7.60%</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnic group- Any other ethnic group</td>
<td>2.70%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British</td>
<td>17.89%</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White- Irish</td>
<td>3.92%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy or Irish Traveller</td>
<td>0.49%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White- Any other White background</td>
<td>11.77%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>7.84%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>408</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Retrospective evaluation results

Our PRU engagement began in August 2020 for a start in the autumn term of the new academic year. At the start of the academic year, the restrictions around in-person delivery were looser, meaning we were able to facilitate the first 12 sessions in 4 schools offline, while adhering to the public health guidelines. Teachers were nonetheless cautious to bring in external facilitators; however, our Communications Team reported that the appropriate length of the programme, its relevance to the current online context and heightened pressures around online disinformation and radicalisation played a crucial role in securing teachers and Senior Leadership Teams’ (SLT) support. After December 2020, one more state school completed the programme across three weeks and while utilising the post-evaluation forms. The results presented below reflect the post-survey results for 156 students.

### Lesson 1: Online forums and Media Literacy

The main objective of the first lesson was to help young people acquire knowledge about fundamental media literacy terminology (i.e. mis/dis/mal-information), to explain how false news spread online, to outline the differences between facts and opinions and to introduce them to regular fact-checking. As such, students were asked to rate the following statements on the scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating ‘Strongly Disagree’ and 5 indicating ‘Strongly Agree’:

- I consider the motivations behind why people post things online
- If I wasn’t sure a story was true, and I wanted to share it, I’d fact check it first
The first dimension we wanted to learn more about was around young people’s likelihood to consider others’ opinions in online spaces. The responses to this statement provide us with a proxy for young people’s tolerance of others’ online. Higher likelihood to consider others’ motivations online is also an indicator for young people’s understanding of misinformation and disinformation and the main difference between them - namely intent behind sharing information.

Fig.1 provides a summary of the responses we received to this statement. As seen on the graph above, 59.0% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement ‘I consider the motivations behind why people post things online’. At the same time, 8.3% of participants ‘Strongly Disagreed’ and ‘Disagreed’ with the statement, while 33.6% of students neither agreed nor disagreed. These results are encouraging - they demonstrate that more than half of the young people engaged had attained one of the key educational outcomes linked to the first lesson - that the information they may encounter online is not always factually-based and the actor that posts it may have malicious intentions. The results also showcase a potential change in behaviour - whereas understanding of media literacy fundamentals is implicit in the statement, its focal point is around actively considering others’ motivations online.
The second statement participants were asked to rank was also focussed around an action point - sharing content online. This kind of behaviour is directly linked to the spread of misinformation and harmful disinformation, with clickbait titles surpassing users' willingness to fact-check information before sharing it on social media. Similarly to the previous statement, the majority of students, 70.5% 'Strongly Agreed' and 'Agreed' that if they were not sure whether a story was true, they would fact-check it before sharing it. In comparison, those who ‘Strongly Disagreed’ and ‘Disagreed' composed 11.0% of all participants and those who were uncertain - 18.5%. These results showcase a willingness for a positive behavioural change when online, and can also be interpreted as a proxy for understanding how harmful rhetoric and information spread in online spaces.
In addition to evaluating young people’s likelihood to consider others’ motivations online, students were asked to share with us how willing they were to actively seek out views that are different to their own when spending time online. This is a second indicator of their emotional resilience and tolerance, but also a proxy for understanding the dangers of echo chambers and filter bubbles, which featured heavily in the first lesson. Consistent with the previous two behaviour-related statements, 67.6% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ that they would seek our views and opinions different to their own when online. Those who ‘Strongly Disagreed’ and ‘Disagreed’ comprised 15.8% of all participants, whereas those who were uncertain - 16.7%. In combination with the results from Fig.1, the results confirm a potential change in online behaviour around how young people would interact with other online users, as well as emotional resilience to encountering views that may be different to their own.

The final question from the first lesson revolved around young people’s ability to recognise when they encounter a conspiracy theory. Fig.4 summarises the answers participants gave us - 74.3% of them ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement ‘I know how to identify a conspiracy theory’. Their counterparts in the ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ cohorts comprised 1.8% of all engaged individuals. These results are attributed to the fact that a large portion of the lesson was dedicated to exploring and discussing the real-life consequences of conspiracy theories, as well as the warning signs of this online phenomenon.
Lesson 2: Punishment & Rehabilitation

The second lesson of the programme focussed around the punishment vs. rehabilitation debate. Participants were introduced to the topic through the lens of the Human Rights Act, the principle of the separation of powers in a democracy and how laws in the UK are made. The lesson also discussed the difference between the legal terms ‘terrorist’ and ‘suspected terrorist’ and tasked the students with debating the benefits and downsides of different approaches to penal policy-making.

The students were asked to rate the following statements, also on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating ‘Strongly disagree’ and 5 indicating ‘Strongly agree’:

- I understand how laws in the UK are made
- I understand the difference between rehabilitation and punishment
- I can explain the difference between ‘terrorist’ and ‘suspected terrorist’
- I am confident that if a problem facing my Human Rights arose I would be able to work with others to resolve it
As mentioned previously, the main premise of the workshop revolved around lawmaking in the UK and the separation of power in a democracy. To capture the extent to which participants had grasped the essence of lawmaking and to evaluate their knowledge on the topic, they were asked to share with us how far they understand how laws are made in the UK. As seen on Fig.5, 81.4% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement. There are no ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ answers, while those who neither agreed or disagreed with the statement comprised 18.6% of all participants. The results indicate that participants had gained a good understanding of the fundamentals of lawmaking in the UK. This is an important indicator, as the remainder of the lesson focussed on the Human Rights Act, differences in legal terms and approaches to criminal justice.

An important prerequisite to participating in a debate about rehabilitation vs. punishment is understanding the two concepts and the practicalities associated with each one of them. For this reason, students were asked to rate their understanding about the difference between them. Better understanding and the ability to provide a definitive answer to the question is also used as a proxy for students’ confidence to participate in a debate on this topic in the future. Fig.6 shows that 87.9% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement, while only 0.7% ‘Disagreed’ and 11.4% were neutral. These results demonstrate that the programme had been effective in helping young people improve their knowledge about the different approaches to penal policy and has arguably prepared them to participate in debates on the subject.
Following this, students were asked to share the extent to which they can explain the difference between the terms ‘terrorist’ and ‘suspected terrorist’, in order to demonstrate an understanding about law, order and justice in the UK. As seen on Fig.7, 83.6% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement, whereas 0.7% disagreed and 15.7% were neutral, demonstrating that the students had gained a stable understanding of the topic and are confident to explain what they have learned to others.

Fig. 7 'I can explain the difference between ‘terrorist’ and ‘suspected terrorist’ Post-workshop survey responses

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Fig. 8 'I am confident that if a problem facing my Human Rights arose I would be able to work with others to resolve it’ Post-workshop survey responses

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The last statement linked to Lesson 2 of the programme revolved around capturing students’ motivation and confidence to work with others around resolving human rights-related issues. The statement students were asked to rank is also a proxy for participants' ability to notice and understand when they encounter human rights violations. The pie chart on Fig.8 captures the distribution of answers to this question - 70.7% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement, whereas 5.0% of participants ‘Strongly Disagreed’ and ‘Disagreed’, showcasing high levels of comprehension of the topic and confidence to undertake action around human rights violations.

These results can be explained from the lesson’s content - they were not only introduced to the Human Rights Act, but were also shown different spheres of public and private life the Act has influenced and how it has helped improve individuals' wellbeing. They were also familiarised with several examples of when individuals' human rights had been violated and participated in debates on topics, such as ‘Should we give up our personal privacy for national security?’ and ‘Should the police be given more powers when interrogating suspected terrorists?’. These practical activities further encouraged them to apply their knowledge of the fundamental human rights into practice and to think critically about different examples of when those rights may have been hindered, such as A and others v UK – Foreign suspected terrorists cannot be detained indefinitely with no prospect of trial (art 5).

Lesson 3: The Extreme Far-Right

The final lesson of the programme revolved around strengthening young people’s understanding of what the far-right, nationalism, and extremism are; how far-right groups use online spaces to disseminate their ideology; as well as what terminology far-right groups utilise when infiltrating online forums and social media platforms. Like with the previous two lessons, the students were asked to rank the following statements, on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating ‘Strongly Disagree’ and 5 indicating ‘Strongly Agree’:
- I can identify extremist views
- I can identify hate speech
- I feel confident to challenge prejudice views
- I know how to prevent myself from being associated with far-right groups

The first two statements aim to evaluate participants’ ability to spot extremism views and hate speech and relate to a more passive comprehension process, whereas the latter two statements are linked to their confidence to challenge prejudice and to take measures against being associated with far-right groups.

Fig. 9 'I can identify extremist views' & 'I can identify hate speech' Post-workshop survey responses

Fig. 9 shows the distribution of answers to the first two statements - 73.9% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ that they can identify extremist views, whereas 13.7% ‘Strongly Disagreed’ and ‘Disagreed’ with the statement. Those who neither agreed or disagreed comprised 12.4% of all students. The answers given to the statement ‘I can identify hate speech’ follow a similar trajectory - 74.5% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ that they can identify hate speech, whereas 14.4% ‘Strongly Disagreed’ and ‘Disagreed’. Those who neither agreed or disagreed were 11.1% of all participants.

The results demonstrate that the third lesson has helped participants improve their knowledge of extremism in the context of far-right groups and has strengthened their ability to differentiate between the views such groups disseminate online. Going deeper, the students also showed an understanding of what hate speech is and confidence to identify it. The consistency between the answers to these two knowledge-based questions showcases
that the programme had effectively prepared participants for the types of rhetoric they may encounter from extreme far-right groups either online or in-person.

Following the two knowledge-based statements, it was also important to evaluate the extent to which their ability to identify harmful rhetoric translates into taking active measures to challenge prejudice. It was expected that there would be a slight drop in ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ answers to the statement, as challenging prejudice can be a daunting activity that individuals would treat with caution. The results displayed on Fig.10 are consistent with this assumption - 62.8% of students ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement ‘I feel confident to challenge prejudice views’, which is a slight drop from the results we obtained from the previous two statements around identifying extremist rhetoric and hate speech. Despite this, more than half of participants display a confidence to take a stance and act against prejudice, demonstrating the programme’s ability to prepare students for the type of disinformation and harm they may encounter in their daily lives. Moreover, we see a slight increase in the number of students who neither agreed or disagreed with the statement, compared to the results on Fig.9 - 22.9% of all participants were uncertain as to whether they feel confident or not. However, there doesn’t appear to be a significant increase in the ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ attitudes, which comprise 14.4% of students. This finding is especially encouraging, because it demonstrates that the more challenging activity of standing up against prejudice has not demotivated a significant number of students from taking action.
The final statement participants were asked to rate revolved around their ability to prevent themselves from being associated with far-right groups. As such, we see in Fig.11 that 71.2% of students 'Strongly Agreed' and 'Agreed' that they know how to prevent themselves from being associated with far-right groups, with only 13.7% displaying the opposite attitude (i.e. strongly disagree and disagree). Neither agree or disagree answers remained consistent with those displayed in the previous graphs - 15.0%. These results can be explained by the fact that the programme covered a significant amount of examples of the types of techniques such groups utilise when recruiting members either online or offline and provided information of the type of symbols and language used to signpost adherence to far-right principles. As such, it was expected that students would learn how to identify those symbols and not use them when communicating with others online or offline.

14. or Fourteen Words, is a Nazi symbol referring to the white supremacist slogan, “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”.

18 is code for Adolf Hitler. The number comes from the position of the letters in the alphabet (1=1 and 8=H). It’s commonly associated with the British white supremacist group Combat 18 or C18.

28 is a white supremacist code for Blood & Honour, a UK-based neo-Nazi music promotion network with branches across the world.

88 is a neo-Nazi code standing for Heil Hitler, the Nazi salute. The number 8 represents the letter H.

318 is code for British white supremacist group Combat 18 – 3 representing C, and 18 Adolf Hitler.
Distance travelled methodology

As mentioned previously, the retrospective evaluation approach to impact measurement was our default evaluation method, with which we were able to capture the impact on the first 156 participants in the programme. After the December 2020 lockdown measures were introduced, we secured the interest of Hammersmith Academy. The teacher we were in touch with enrolled 356 students to the programme. Due to logistical constraints, our communications team had to figure out an alternative method to delivering the course to the standard 3-weeks approach. The solution they came up with was to organise a drop-down day, during which our team was delivering all three lessons back to back to students from 19 different form groups, fully online. While a significant amount of preparations were necessary in advance of the delivery, we were able to engage young learners at scale within a day and to still achieve excellent results. As the delivery format had changed, we also needed to think about what impact evaluation method would work best with this cohort of students. As there was a guarantee that the same students in the beginning of the programme would remain until the end of the programme, we opted for a distance travelled impact methodology, meaning participants were asked to fill out pre and post-survey forms, aiming to capture the extent to which they had met the educational and social impact outcomes. All participants filled out our pre-programme survey and we were able to get 252 post-programme survey responses. The difference in the two numbers is attributed to the fact that it was difficult to continuously encourage students to fill out the post-survey forms, as we were not directly in the classroom with them. Nonetheless, we obtained a substantial amount of results to start observing some trends.

Like with the retrospective evaluation methodology, students were asked to rate each statement on the scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating ‘Strongly Disagree’ and 5 indicating ‘Strongly Agree’. Figures 13 and 14 showcase the pre and post-programme results for the statement ‘I know how to identify a conspiracy theory’. Before programme participation, it can be seen that 45.8% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ that they know how to identify a conspiracy theory, indicating a relatively high level of baseline knowledge before programme enrolment. Despite this, it is important to note that the highest number of responses were ‘neutral’ (33.9%), meaning the students did not display a high level of confidence to provide a definitive answer to the statement. The ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ responses composed 20.3% of all responses. These pre-programme results demonstrated to us that
there was significant scope for improvement in students’ abilities to identify a conspiracy theory.

The results on Fig.14 demonstrate a significant movement away from the ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’ and ‘Neutral’ answers towards the ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ responses. In particular, 71.4% of students ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ that they knew how to identify a conspiracy theory after participating in our programme. This is an increase of 25.6%, compared to the pre-programme survey results. At the same time, we see a significant drop in ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ responses - only 6.4% of participants provided either of these two answers after taking part in the drop-down day. Importantly, we also see a drop in the ‘Neutral’ responses to 22.2% (from 33.9%), indicating students’ improved understanding of the logic behind conspiracy theories and confidence in their ability to identify such logic in their daily lives.

Furthermore, students were asked to rate the statement ‘I would seek out views and opinions that differ to my own online’, in order to better understand how students’ perception of others might change after learning about extremism and media literacy. Fig.16 shows the pre-programme results - 38.3% of students ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement; 41.5% felt ‘Neutral’ and 20.9% ‘Strongly Disagreed’ and ‘Disagreed’. These results are consistent with the previous statements’ pre-programme answers - we see that there was significant room for improvement in students’ willingness to seek opinions that are different to theirs.

Fig.16 shows the post-survey responses. We see an increase in the ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ responses to 56.0% (from 38.3%) and a drop to 12.8% in ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ answers. There is also a slight drop in the ‘Neutral’ responses to 31.20%. The increase in ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ responses, alongside the drop in ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ responses demonstrates the programme’s effectiveness in guiding and encouraging students to consider opinions that differ to their own. It is also important to make a comparison between the responses from the drop-down day and those obtained during in-person delivery (mostly) on p.8, where approximately 67% of students responded with ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’. The difference in responses across the two delivery methods can be explained by the online delivery element. Even though appropriate adaptations were put in place, in order to maintain the same level of effectiveness, it appears
that in-person delivery even after one lesson only is better suited for building trust with programme recipients and for helping them better understand the meaning and value of listening to diverse opinions. Nonetheless, the responses we obtained from the drop-down day are still encouraging, as there was a shift in attitudes.

Following this, we also evaluated participants’ ability to identify extremist views. Before programme participation, 48.2% of participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement ‘I can identify extremist views’ and 29.2% of participants felt ‘Neutral’, demonstrating once again a lack of confidence to provide a definitive stance. ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree responses composed 22.7% of all answers. Fig.18 showcases the post-programme results. We can see that just above 70% of participants ’Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement, and we see a slight drop in ‘Neutral’ responses to 22.7%. The most visible difference is amongst the ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ answers, who now were 6.8% of all answers, demonstrating the programme’s strength in explaining the type of rhetoric extremist groups use to attract attention and to persuade potential supporters. Students’ improved ability to identify such rhetoric is a proxy for their emotional resilience to it - once they understand how exactly it works, they are less likely to be captivated by it.

Besides knowledge about conspiracy theories and ability to identify extremist rhetoric, we also asked students to rate their confidence in their knowledge about extremism and radicalisation. We can see that 34.7% of students ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ that they
feel confident in their knowledge about extremism and radicalisation. The largest cohort of students was clustered around ‘Neutral’ - 37.8% of all responses. Those in the ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ groups comprised 27.6% of all students. After programme participation, we can see that 67.3% of all participants ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ with the statement, which is an increase by just above 32% compared to the pre-programme results. Neutral answers had also decreased to 23.9% (a 13.9% change from pre-programme results) and the ‘Strongly Disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ responses had dropped to 8.8% (a 18.8% change from pre-programme results).

**Fig.21 'If someone has become radicalised, which method do you think will best stop them from becoming a terror threat?’**

- **Prevention**: 19.20%
- **Punishment**: 16.80%
- **Rehabilitation**: 51.60%
- **I don’t know**: 12.40%

It was also important to better understand young people's attitudes towards the different criminal justice approaches when it comes to terror threats. Fig.21 demonstrates that the majority of participants are clustered around the ‘Rehabilitation’ answer - 51.6% of all responses, while the second biggest group is ‘Prevention’ - 19.2%, followed by ‘Punishment’ - 16.8% and ‘I don’t know’ - 12.4%. The reason why the majority of responses are clustered around the ‘Rehabilitation’ and ‘Prevention’ answers is that the programme had a specific focus on discussing the benefits of the rehabilitation and the prevention approaches, with a focus on the importance of building critical thinking, analytical and emotional resilience skills.

Following the same 1-5 rating scale, with 1 indicating ‘Strongly Disagree’ and 5 indicating ‘Strongly Agree’, the students were asked to provide general feedback after each workshop about whether they find it interesting and useful, whether the instructor had helped them think critically and whether they would recommend the workshop to a friend. Fig.22 showcases the average results participants provided after each workshop and the drop-down day at Hammersmith Academy and provides us with a good understanding of the workshops’ strengths and weaknesses. We see that 73.2% of participants found the workshops interesting and 75.5% of them found them useful. This feedback shows us that our approach to teaching extremism and media literacy had resonated with our target audiences and has contributed to the participants’ strengthened understanding of these subjects, which are typically considered difficult to teach in a classroom environment.
Furthermore, we see that nearly 64% of students would recommend the programme to a friend and that nearly 70% ‘Strongly Agreed’ and ‘Agreed’ that the facilitator had helped them think critically about the issues that the programme covers. The latter results are especially encouraging, because they confirm that the programme has helped students develop and enhance their critical thinking skills.

![Fig.22 Overall evaluation of the workshops](image)

Qualitative feedback

In addition to rating the different statements, students and teachers were also asked to share with us some comments about the programme. Below we have included some of the feedback we collected from teachers and students about the programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback from Teachers</th>
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<td>'I just want to say a huge thank you for arranging the workshops for our young people, Aaron was a fantastic host and facilitator; the students really enjoyed all the workshops and were able to recall information from the previous ones. The students gained a lot from the content shared as it was made relevant to them. I look forward to working with you again in the future.' - Patricia Fletcher, The Childerley Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'It's been our pleasure to work with you both. The students said they thoroughly enjoyed it, and staff have commented on just how great William was with the students, and how engaging the presentations were.' - Shanice Burke, TBAP 16-19 Academy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ‘Thank you all so much for such a fantastic day on Friday. Feedback from everyone'
(students, parents, teachers and support staff!) has been exceptionally positive and the students clearly got a huge amount out of the sessions. All the facilitators were great – it is definitely a challenge delivering sessions remotely, however the students were clearly engaged and thoroughly enjoyed the session. Thank you all so much for such a great day.’ - Eli Samuels, Hammersmith Academy

(Regarding the final session): ‘We spoke about the Shamima Begum case and went into grooming. The conversations were incredible.’ - Shakera Graham-Whyte, Latimer AP Academy

Qualitative Feedback from Programme Participants

‘I loved the programme, it's probably the best online lesson I have ever done, especially since I have been on the internet for 11 years and have extensive knowledge of this subject’

‘Loved this lesson would do it again’

‘Important in this day and age’

‘The instructor was really nice and helped me understand radicalisation’

‘I think this should be talked about more.’

‘I really liked the programme’

‘I've learned how to deal with people who are racist and rude’

‘ignore, block and report the people u dont know or the people u know that shows u hate’

‘Thank you shout out uk people for teaching me this knowledge’

‘This programme was very useful because I used to not know half of the things she showed us but now my knowledge has been increased.’

‘I understood more about recognizing misinformation.’

‘The workshop helped me open up what is going on in the world right now and how it can affect other people.’

Conclusion

Overall, the Extremism and Media Literacy programme was successful in improving students’ knowledge and understanding of far-right extremism, online radicalisation, conspiracy theories, how extremist groups spread their ideologies across multiple online forums and platforms. We attribute these results to our teaching approach, which is rooted in debates, discussions, research activities and visually stimulating interactive presentations. This is also confirmed by the overwhelmingly positive feedback we received from students about whether they found the workshops interesting and useful, and whether the instructors had helped them think critically about the issues at hand.