SOUK

SHOUT OUT UK

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Annual Report 2020 - 2021

About Shout Out UK

We are Shout Out UK (SOUK). We are on a mission to safeguard and amplify democracy by ensuring Political and Media Literacy education is as widespread as possible, and available to all young people, regardless of their socio-economic background, ethnicity, or gender.

In a time of rising political inequality, whilst young people experience the effects of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic in almost every aspect of their daily lives, our goal is to build their understanding of the world around them, help them see how politics affects their wellbeing and how they can be the most powerful voice of change in our society. We achieve our mission by providing award-winning educational programmes and workshops on Political and Media Literacy, helping schools cover British Values and Prevent Duty requirements.

- Our approach to teaching Political and Media Literacy is highly interactive and discussion-based. Whether in-person or online, our pedagogical approach is rooted in three fundamental principles:

- Building young people's confidence through group work and active participation • Investigation and enquiry to spark their curiosity

- Effective mentorship to ensure they feel supported in creating meaningful impact for those around them.

We deliver our programmes in-person and online via our bespoke E-learning platform, where students and teachers can find all the materials they need to go through an array of educational programmes that supplement their enrichment curriculum.

In the past year:

- We delivered our Political and Media Literacy programme to over 300 young people from across the UK.

- Expanded our Counter-Extremism and Media Literacy operations, delivering our youth programme to 500+ young people and our CPD programme to over 100+ professionals across England.

- Worked for a second year in a row with the Greater London Authority (GLA) for the delivery of London Voter Registration Week (LVRW 2021), and helped register over 39,000 individuals from the capital's most underrepresented communities – young people, B.A.M.E. communities and private renters.

- Worked with the University of Leicester and Cartooning for Peace for the delivery of our bespoke project Covid in Cartoons, engaging over 400 young people.

- Established the [APPG on Political Literacy](#), becoming its Secretariat and organised the UK's first ever Political Literacy Day, working with over 30 MPs and Lords to work towards a better provision of political literacy education for all young people at schools.

- Continued to be passionate about improving Political and Media Literacy and became even more dedicated to reaching young people.
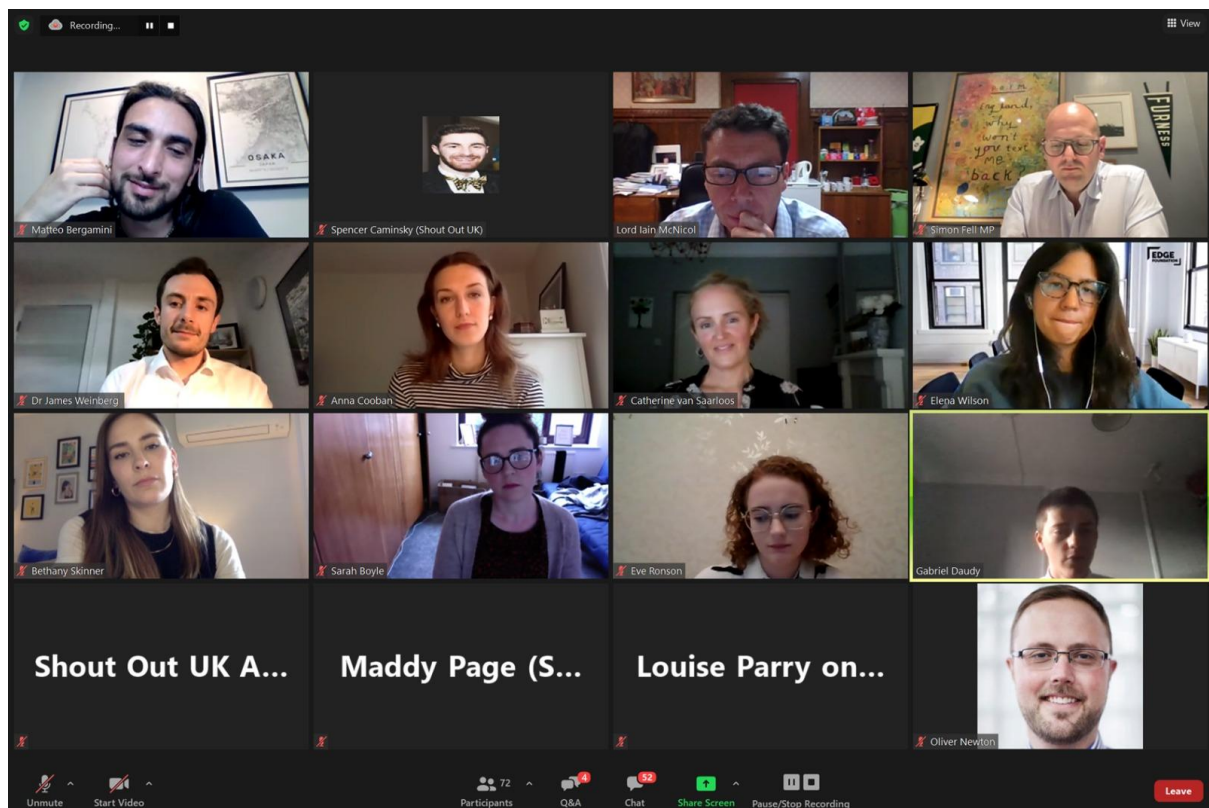
The following report will look at the impact we achieved with our flagship Political and Media Literacy programme for the academic year 2020/2021. We will also showcase some of the impact highlights from our youth and CPD Media Literacy programmes.

The Political and Media Literacy Programme

What we aimed to achieve

In light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and significant social and political changes, it was vital to ensure that our programme was reflective of some of the most pertinent issues of the day. As such, we placed a higher importance on building young people's media literacy and news analysis skills, with the ultimate aim being to protect them from falling prey to malicious disinformation and misinformation. We also continued to introduce students to fundamental political literacy terminologies, such as how the UK's political system operates, including the role of devolution; what responsibilities MPs and Lords have; the role of local councillors and campaigning on a local level. As such, the programme's outcomes were:

1. Increase in knowledge about British/local/international institutions

Due to the lack of formal political education in secondary schools, young people are left increasingly unaware of how our political system operates. They are not taught about the democratic processes in the UK, the roles and responsibilities of local councillors and MPs, the UK's voting system or the major political parties. For this reason, our first outcome is to see an increase in participants' knowledge about the core British, local and international institutions after participating in the programme, compared to beforehand.

2. Improve participants' debating and public speaking skills

Public speaking and debating skills are a significant precursor to confidence and emotional resilience amongst young people. They are also actively sought after at university and by employers. Our programme places a strong emphasis on developing these abilities from a young age, so that the next generation is prepared for the future of work and knows how to speak up on issues they are passionate about.

3. Improve students' willingness to work with others to foster change in society
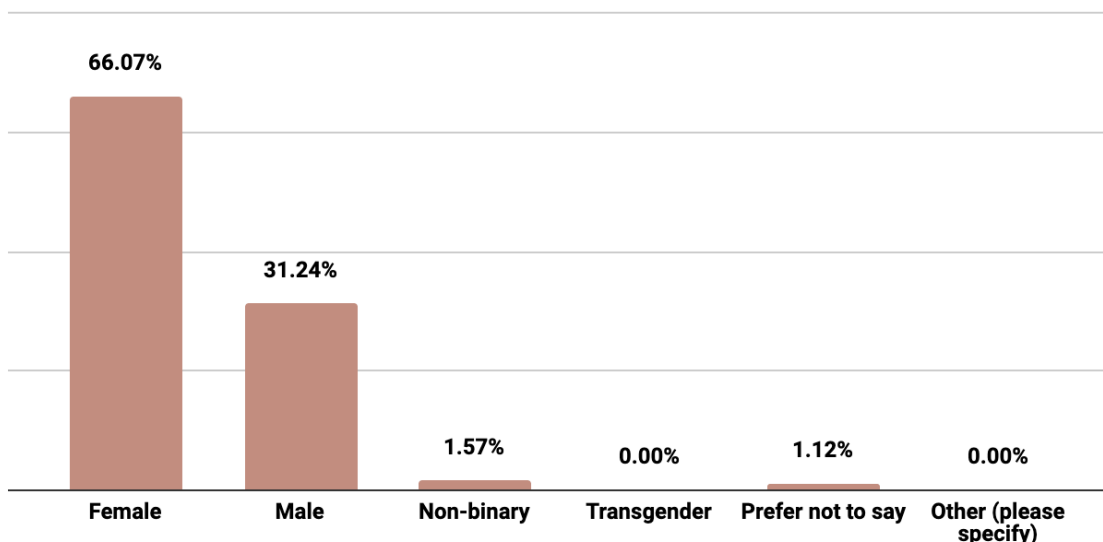
We expect that the final product of our confidence-building activities, alongside the improvement in knowledge about the UK's political systems, will help young people collaborate with others in their community to solve local problems together. We attribute this to the fact that the improved confidence to openly discuss important issues and being able to recognise wider problems would prompt young people to make a positive impact.

4. Strengthen young people's media literacy skills

Media literacy is a difficult and complex phenomenon to measure, with a myriad of facets attached to it. As such, in the scope of our political literacy programme we decided to focus on individuals' ability to identify media bias and to fact-check articles and the information they encounter online. The ability to do so is indicative of students' development of critical thinking skills and resilience towards mis/disinformation.

Gender & Demographic Segmentation

Fig. 1 Gender segmentation

Female	Male	Non-binary	Transgender	Prefer not to say	Other (please specify)
66.07%	31.24%	1.57%	0.00%	1.12%	0.00%

Overall, 445 young people participated in our Political and Media Literacy programme in the past academic year. 41.5% of participants came from B.A.M.E. backgrounds, while 52.6% came from white backgrounds, and 2.5% preferred not to share their ethnicity. Below you can find the gender split between participants.

Our impact

Below you will find the data we obtained from the programme covering the following statements, which students were asked to rank using a Likert scale, with 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree:

- I understand how the UK's political system works
- I know how to spot media bias
- I can influence change in society
- I feel confident to talk about issues I care about
- I feel confident to debate and present arguments in class

In addition, students answered the following question:

- How often do you check the source of the information you consume (using again a Likert scale where 1=Never and 5=Always)?

Q.1: 'I understand how the UK's political system works' Pre & Post Survey Results

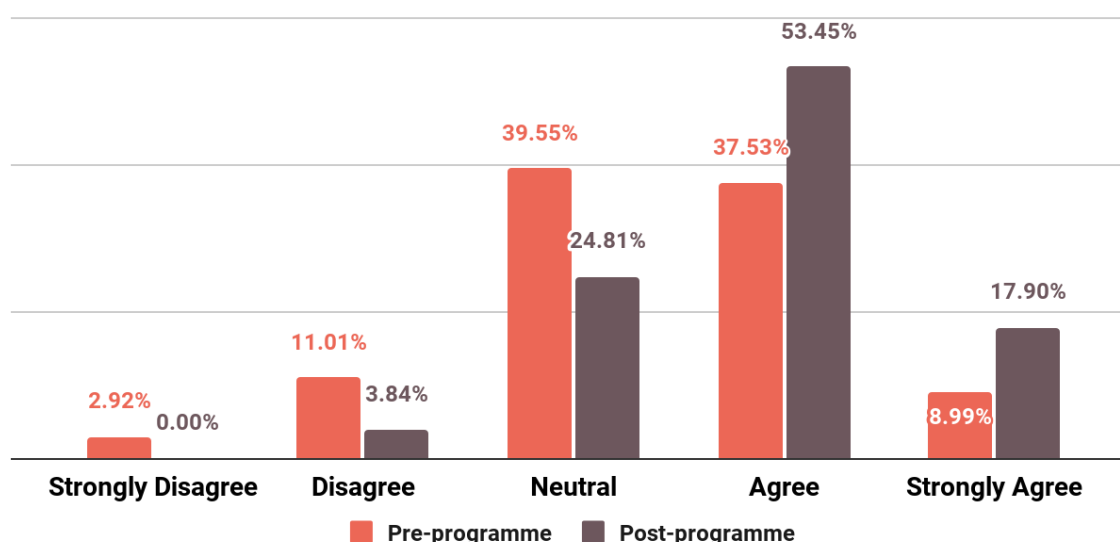### Fig. 2 'I understand how the UK's political system works'

Fig.2 displays the pre and post-programme responses to the statement 'I understand how the UK's political system works'. Before participating in the programme, 46.5% of students strongly agreed and agreed with the statement. After the programme, 71.4% gave the same answer, indicating that the students had improved their knowledge about the intricacies of

the UK's political system. These results can be explained by the fact that the programme covers the national, regional and local democratic structures in the UK extensively, providing young people with a thorough explanation for how they can get involved and have their voices heard by their elected representatives.

Q.2 'I can influence change in society' Pre & Post Survey Results
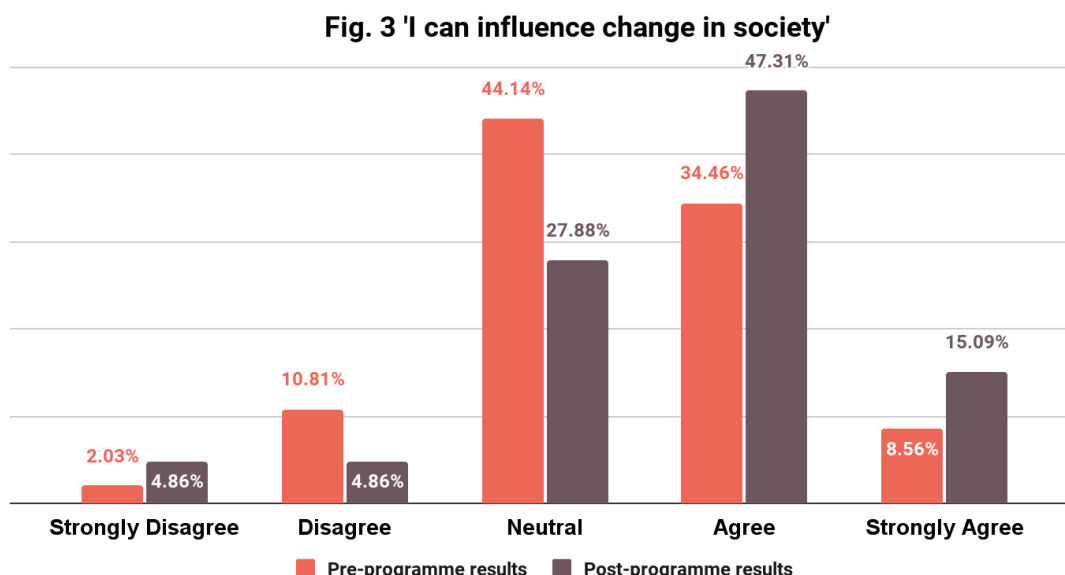
Fig. 3 'I can influence change in society'

Fig.3 displays the results we obtained for the second statement 'I can influence change in society'. Before programme participation, we see that 43.02% of participants strongly agreed and agreed with the statement, while almost the same amount of students (44.1%) felt neutral towards it.

After programme participation, we see that 62.2% strongly agreed and agreed with the statement, while those in the neutral cohort had dropped to 27.9%, indicating that the programme has had some success in strengthening young people's sense of agency and their belief that their actions can bring about societal change. These results are most likely attributed to our module on campaigning and activism that aims to equip participants with the knowledge and tools needed to influence our democratic structures.

Q.3 'I feel confident talking about the issues I care about' Pre & Post Survey Results

Fig. 4 'I feel confident talking about issues that I care about '
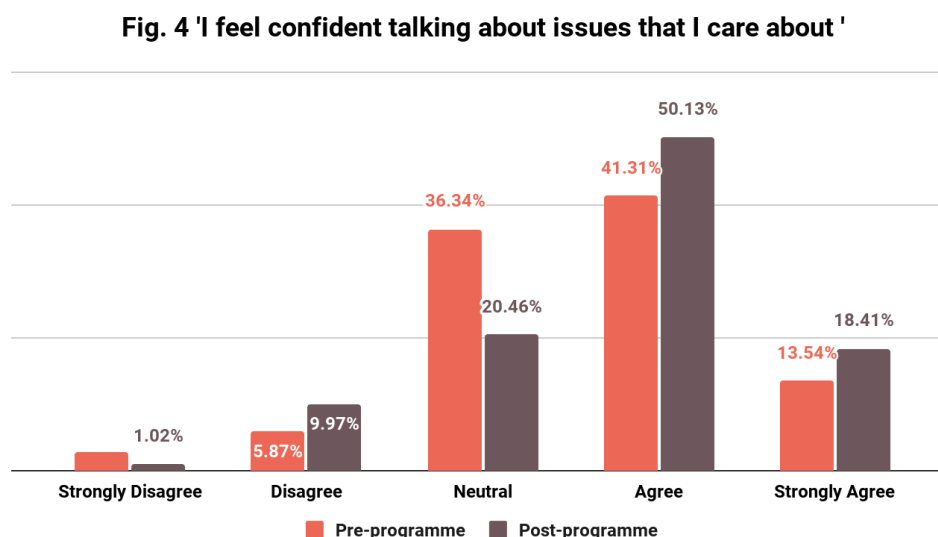

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Fig.4 demonstrates that there has also been a change in young people's confidence to talk about the issues they care about. This is an important precursor to the previous statement, covering their sense of agency to influence societal change, as talking about the issues they care about is one of the first steps to bringing about long-term change.

We see that before the programme, 54.9% of participants already felt confident to speak up and be heard. Hence, our goal for the programme was ensuring that we see a drop in those feeling neutral towards the statement, as this is an indication that they lacked confidence to provide a definitive answer.

When looking at the post-programme results, we can see that 68.5% of students strongly agreed and agreed with the statement, with the largest shift in answers coming from the neutral cohort of students. These positive results are indicative of the programme's ability to encourage even the most disengaged students to get involved and share their views in class.

Q.4 'I feel confident debating and presenting arguments' Pre and Post Survey Results

**Fig. 5 'I feel confident debating and presenting arguments'**
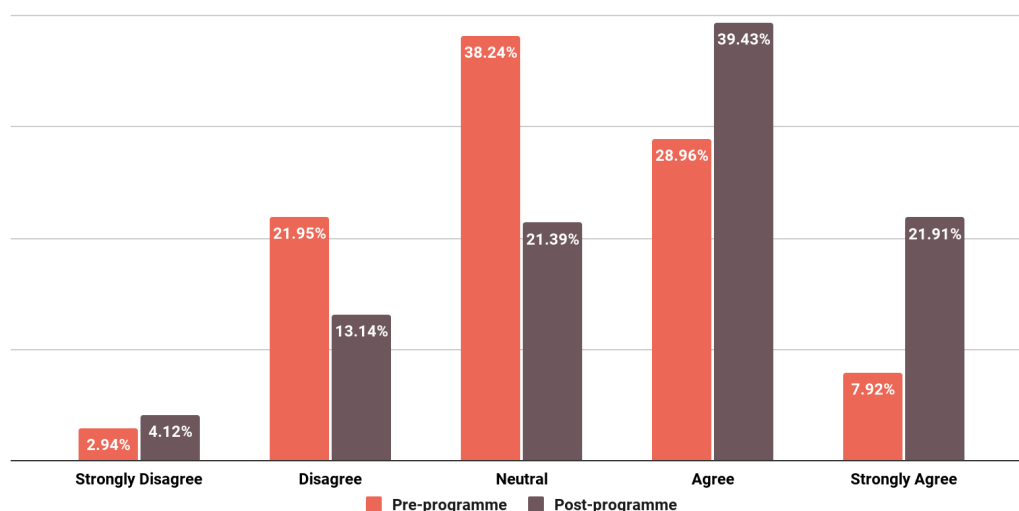
Similarly to the previous question, we also wanted to test the programme's impact on young people's ability to present arguments and debate. Confidence to engage in debates and to use fact-based argumentation are an important precursor for participants' emotional resilience. It is important to also note that debating and presenting arguments takes young people's communication and social skills to a new level, moving beyond informal discussions.

Prior to participating in the programme, 36.9% of participants strongly agreed and agreed that they felt confident debating and presenting arguments, with the highest proportion of students being situated along the 'neutral' answer option (38.3%).

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After taking part in the programme, and specifically the programme's debating exercises and Speech Night, we see that the number of strongly agree and agree answers had increased to 61.3%, indicating an improvement in participants' debating skills.

Q.5 'I know how to spot media bias' Pre and Post Survey Results

Fig. 6 'I know how to spot media bias'
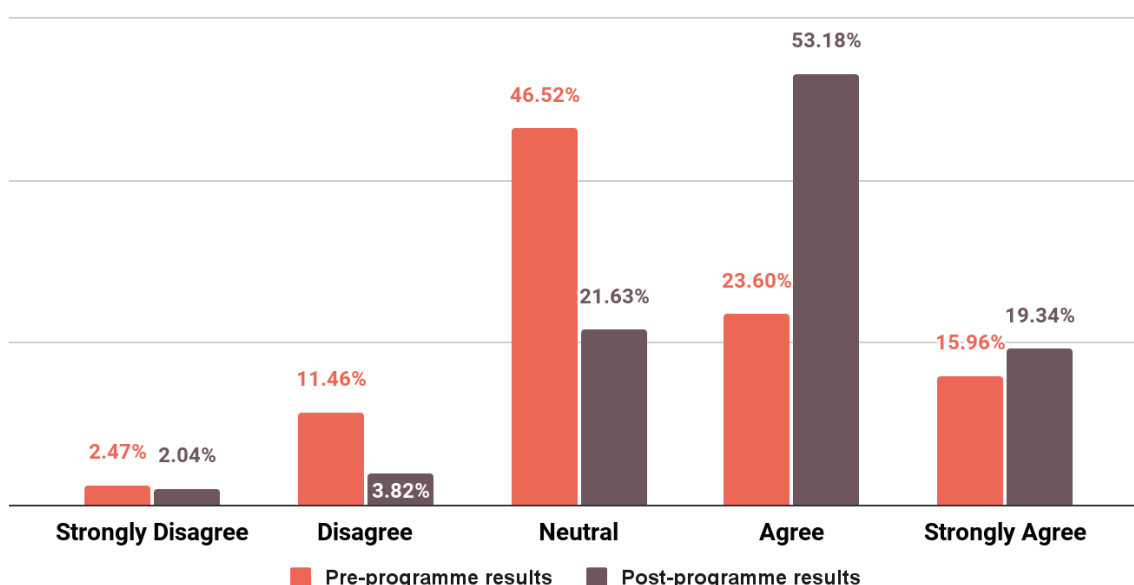
Building young people's news literacy, specifically their analytical skills and ability to spot media bias form a key part of their development as democratically engaged citizens. Understanding that the complex media landscape can be oftentimes misleading, and that the articles they read are not always fact-based (i.e. they can also encounter opinion pieces) is a strong indicator of their ability to navigate the news and sift through information effectively.

Fig. 6 showcases participants' ability to spot media bias. We see that before taking part in the programme and working with our team through several critical thinking exercises, 39.6% of students strongly agreed and agreed that they knew how to spot media bias. We also see that 46.5% of students were unsure of how to respond to the question, as shown by the percentage of 'neutral' responses.

Following our intervention, 72.5% of participants strongly agreed and agreed with the statement, and the number of 'neutral' responses had dropped to 21.6%, demonstrating that the programme was successful in building young people's ability to spot bias.

Q.6 'How often do you check the source of the information you consume'

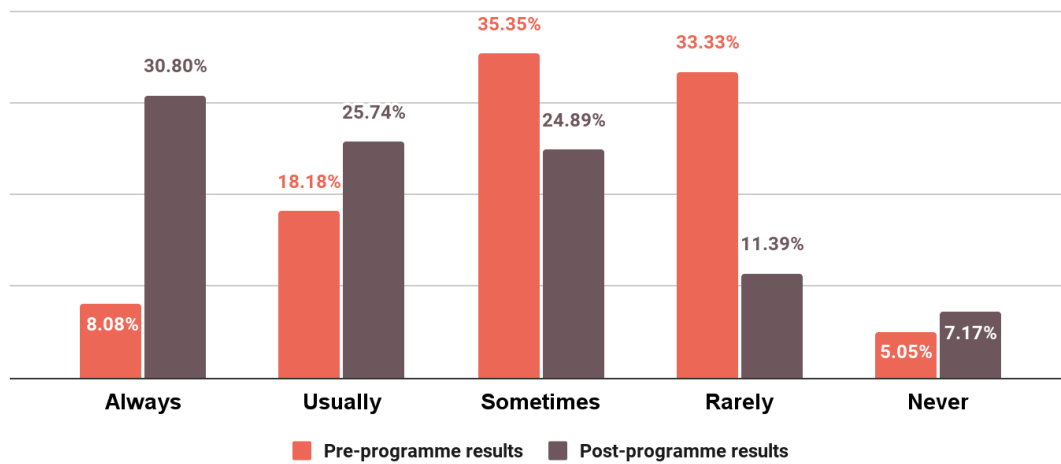**Fig.7 'How often do you check the source of the information you consume?'**

Fig.7 showcases participants' fact-checking patterns. We see that before the programme, nearly 70% of students either checked the source of the information they consume 'sometimes' or 'rarely', while those who do so 'always' and 'usually' comprised 26.3% of all answers. After taking part in the course, we see that 56.5% of students have started checking the source of the information they encounter 'always' and 'usually', while those in the 'sometimes' and 'rarely' cohorts dropped to 36.3% of all responses.

The Extremism and Media Literacy Programme

The CPD programme - key highlights

In line with our mission of ensuring that young people receive effective media literacy education, we began working with educators and local council professionals, building their analytical skills and understanding of how mis/disinformation spread on well-established and newly emerging online platforms. As part of this, we also build professionals' understanding of popular conspiracy theories, how they manifest themselves in online spaces and leave an impact in the real world, and what signs they should look out for amongst the young people they work with. Our training sessions aim to achieve the following outcomes:
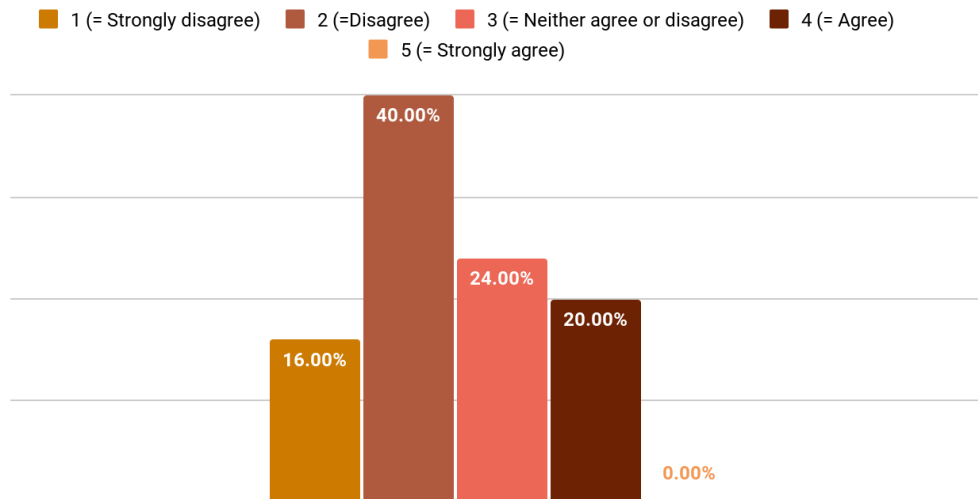
- Improve participants' understanding of key media literacy terminology, such as misinformation, disinformation and mal-information, and how these phenomena populate online spaces (i.e. social media platforms);

- Increase trainees' knowledge of the relationship between bots and trolls and their involvement in spreading mis/disinformation and conspiracy theories; including, fostering an ability to recognise bot and troll accounts;

- Instil an understanding of how new and alternative social media sites have been flagged as hotspots for extremism, hate speech and radicalisation;

- Improve participants' ability and confidence to discuss controversial issues with young people;

- Gain an appreciation of how science literacy is vital for stopping the spread of conspiracy theories and mis/disinformation.

The following graphs showcase the key results highlights we obtained from our first batch of CPD sessions' delivery to professionals from the North Yorkshire County Council. The following statements are included in this report:

- I understand the differences between misinformation, disinformation and mal-information
- I recognise how social media and algorithms increase the spread of mis/disinformation
- I know what steps to take to verify a source
- Science literacy is necessary to dismantle conspiracy theories

Q.1 'I understand the differences between misinformation, disinformation and mal-information'
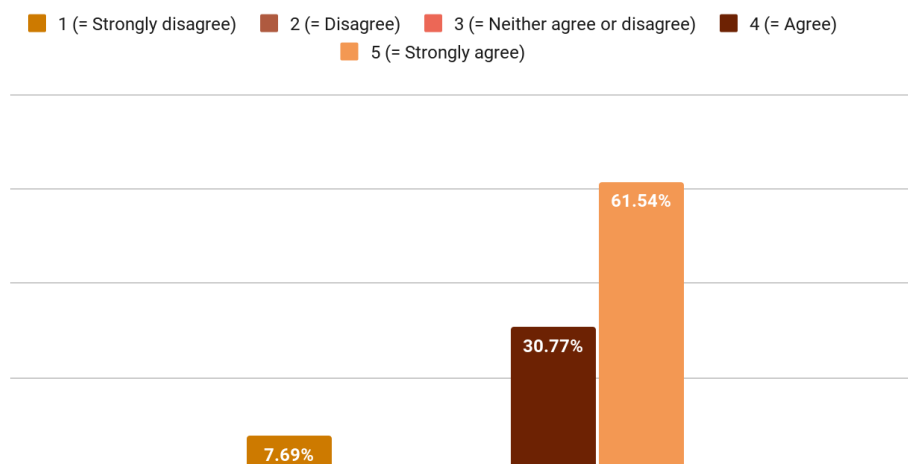
Fig. 8 'I understand the differences between misinformation, disinformation, and mal-information pre survey results'

■ 1 (= Strongly disagree)   ■ 2 (=Disagree)   ■ 3 (= Neither agree or disagree)   ■ 4 (= Agree)
■ 5 (= Strongly agree)

To evaluate participants' understanding of media literacy, we asked them to share with us to what extent they understand the differences between mis, dis and mal-information. Being able to tell them apart from one another is important for interpreting, analysing and understanding media literacy content, so that individuals (regardless of age) have the ability to identify the role of intent when operating in the online world.

As seen on Fig.8, 20% of participants agreed and strongly agreed that they understood the differences between mis, dis and mal-information, while 56% disagreed and strongly disagreed, demonstrating a strong need to explain the topic during the training session.

Fig 9. 'I understand the differences between misinformation, disinformation and mal-information post survey results'

■ 1 (= Strongly disagree)   ■ 2 (= Disagree)   ■ 3 (= Neither agree or disagree)   ■ 4 (= Agree)
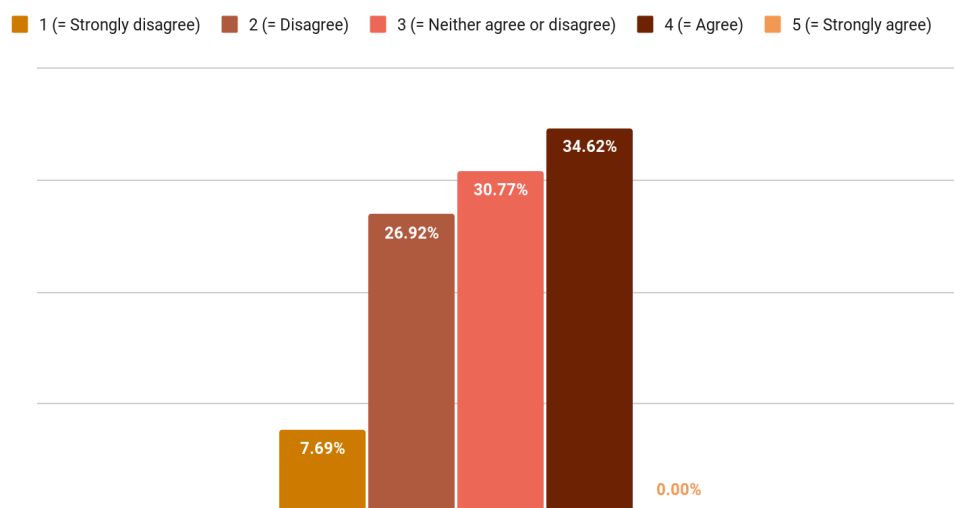■ 5 (= Strongly agree)

After the programme, we can see that 92.3% of attendees strongly agreed and agreed that they understood the differences between mis, dis and mal-information. We attribute these results to the fact that the training session put special emphasis on dissecting how the three terms differ from one another, alongside practical examples.

**Q.2 'I recognise how social media and algorithms increase the spread of mis/disinformation'**

We also wanted to test the extent to which participants were aware of social media algorithms' impact on the spread of mis/disinformation and conspiracy theories. Fig.10 demonstrates mixed results - while the largest number of responses is focussed around 'agree' (34.6%), over 60% of participants strongly disagreed, disagreed or neither agreed or disagreed that they recognise how social media and algorithms increase the spread of mis/disinformation.

Fig. 10 'I recognise how social media and algorithms increase the spread of mis/disinformation pre survey results'

■ 1 (= Strongly disagree) ■ 2 (= Disagree) ■ 3 (= Neither agree or disagree) ■ 4 (= Agree) ■ 5 (= Strongly agree)

The post-survey responses for this statement are consistent with the findings from the previous knowledge-related ones - 92.3% of participants strongly agreed and agreed that they recognise how social media and algorithms increase the spread of mis/disinformation. No participants responded that they neither agreed or disagreed with the statement, and only 7.7% strongly disagreed. These results demonstrate that the training has been successful in bringing participants up to date with some of the latest developments around modern-day mis/disinformation's spread.
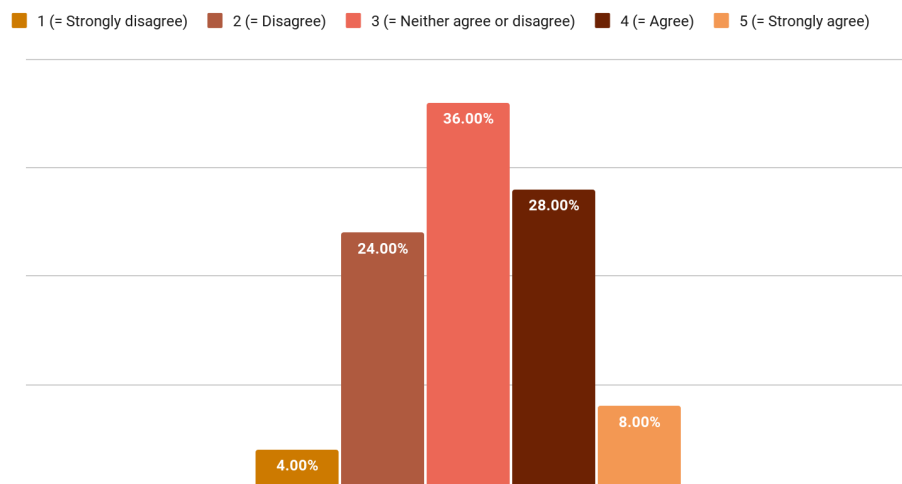
Fig 11. 'I recognise how social media and algorithms increase the spread of mis/disinformation post survey results'

■ 1 (= Strongly disagree) ■ 2 (= Disagree) ■ 3 (= Neither agree or disagree) ■ 4 (= Agree) ■ 5 (= Strongly agree)
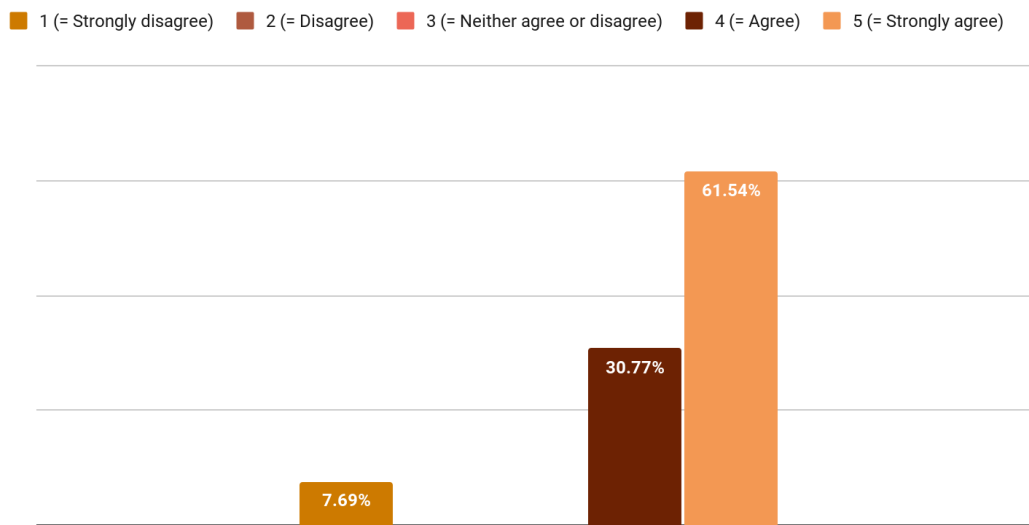
Q.3 'Science literacy is necessary to dismantle conspiracy theories'

We also wanted to gauge participants' attitudes towards science literacy and its ability to dismantle conspiracy theories. This statement is especially timely and relevant, as many of the conspiracy theories spread on online forums and on private social media groups relate to the origin of the coronavirus, the intention behind mass-vaccination efforts and how it affects the human body. Lack of science literacy or inability to understand how to interpret scientific data can easily lead to the spread of conspiracy theories that are actively harmful for individuals. A higher appreciation for the role science literacy plays in countering conspiracy theories can, hence, be used as a proxy for development of critical thinking skills and greater resilience against false (and malicious) scientific claims.

Fig 12. 'Science literacy is necessary to dismantle conspiracy theories pre survey results'

■ 1 (= Strongly disagree) ■ 2 (= Disagree) ■ 3 (= Neither agree or disagree) ■ 4 (= Agree) ■ 5 (= Strongly agree)

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We can see that a large portion of participants were not confident enough to provide a definitive answer to the statement (36%) or disagreed and strongly disagreed - 28%. Together, 64% of all participants either disagreed with the statement or neither agreed or disagreed, compared to 36% of attendees who agreed or strongly agreed with it.

After participating in the training, we see an increase in the number of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' answers to the statement 'Science literacy is necessary to dismantle conspiracy theories' to 78.3% of all responses. We also see a large drop in the 'neither agree or disagree' responses (down to 8.7%) and a more moderate drop in the number of 'disagree' responses (down to 13.1%). These results demonstrate that the training had provided a sufficient explanation of how greater science literacy leads to a better ability to decipher the claims conspiracy theories make, meaning participants have become better equipped to help the young people they work with dismantle conspiracy theories.

Fig 13. 'Science literacy is necessary to dismantle conspiracy theories post survey results'

■ 1 (= Strongly disagree) ■ 2 (= Disagree) ■ 3 (= Neither agree or disagree) ■ 4 (= Agree) ■ 5 (= Strongly agree)
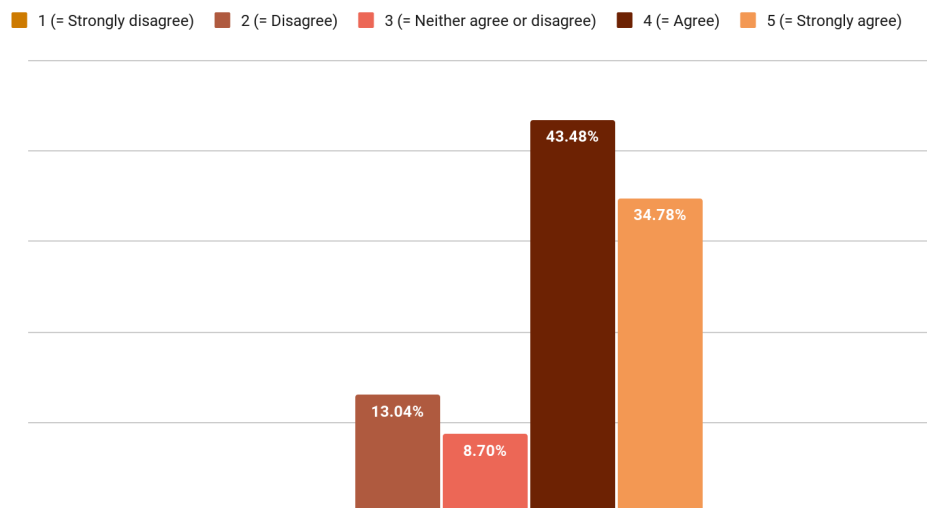
Q.4 'I know what steps to take to verify a source'

In addition to explaining the importance of science literacy, our participants were introduced to the steps they can take and analytical tools they can utilise to verify sources of information. We wanted to see what abilities they had prior to the session, and Fig.14 portrays the pre-survey results.

Fig 14. 'I know what steps to take to verify a source pre survey results'

25.93%	29.63%	33.33%	3.70%	7.41%
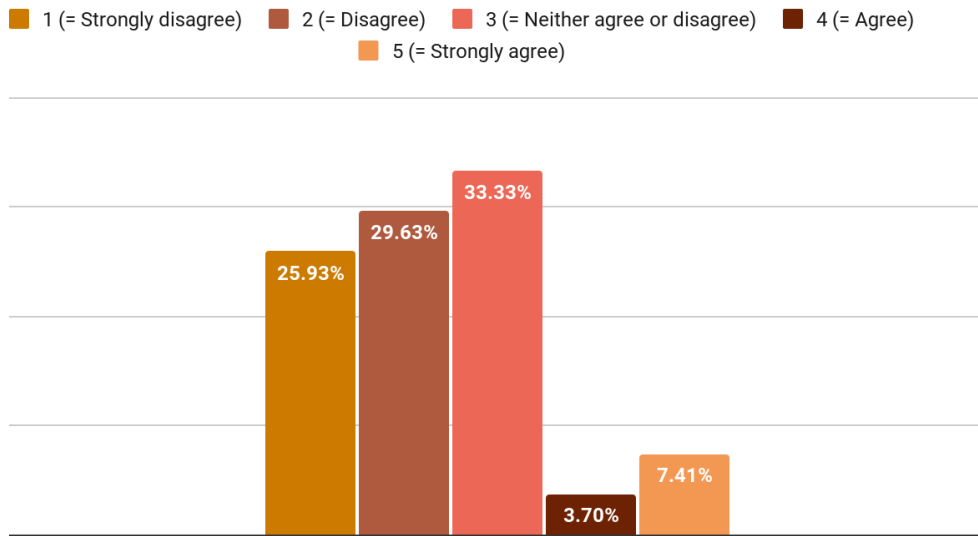
The pre-training survey results demonstrate that the majority of participants were not aware of the steps they need to take in order to verify a source - 55.6% strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement, while 33.3% were not confident to provide a definitive answer. Only a few participants - 11.1% of all attendees, strongly agreed and agreed that they knew what steps to take to verify a source. These results demonstrate that there was a significant gap in participants' knowledge about source verification and therefore a necessity to provide the relevant skills for participants to verify sources and information.

Fig 15. 'I know what steps to take to verify a source post survey results'

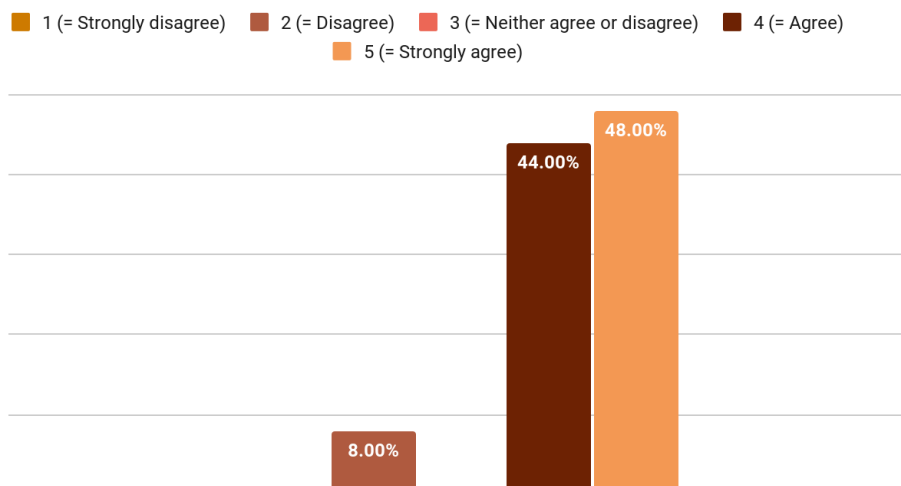|		
8.00%	44.00%	48.00%

Fig.15 showcases attendees' answers to the statement after taking part in the training session. We can see a large shift away from 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' towards 'strongly agree and agree', the latter of which compose 92% of all post-training responses. This meant that the training had been effective in improving participants' practical fact-checking and source-verification skills. It also means that there is a higher likelihood of the participants sharing these positive online behaviours with the young people they work with, and to create a spillover effect amongst members of the local community.

Post-training evaluation results

In addition to the pre and post comparison statements, the attendees were also asked to provide answers to several open-ended questions.

All participants (100%) shared that they would recommend the training to a colleague. All participants (100%) also ranked the instructor's overall delivery 5/5 and 4/5, indicating that the SOUK team delivered engaging work, of high relevance and in an effective way.

We also wanted to learn more about how the participants would apply the knowledge and skills they had acquired during the training into their regular line of work. Below we are including some of the comments we received from them:

"I feel more comfortable in challenging views - I will use some of the discussion activities with groups and individual young people."

"Initially use on one young person I am working with, with Nazi views. Prevent work. This is all so interesting and will help me open conversations."

"When doing either 1:1 with young people or lesson + when a young person brings up one of these topics, I feel I can now respond appropriately, rather than moving on."

"I will use this training in a school/home setting when talking to young people - e.g. someone who has been highlighted to us by schools as saying racist terms - will use skills learnt to discuss and debate their views."

"Changing behaviours and beliefs"

"When working with young people on the street and knowing how to interject, to question/help them understand."

"Working with groups who are displaying racial and homophobic attitudes with very set opinions, denying they are racists or homophobic & not accepting evidence as social media says something different."

"I'm going to incorporate a lot of this into Wake Up Call (I've made a list!). It's given me the confidence to challenge young people constructively. I especially like scientific literacy; I've never felt confident enough to look at this before but I like the idea of asking the young

people to reverse the process back to the science at the beginning. I'm going to look more at TikTok! I like the idea of using it in a session. THANK YOU!"

The youth programme in 2020/2021 - key highlights

The main aim of the Extremism and Media Literacy 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, biassed 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.

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. 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.

The following section outlines some of the key impact the programme had on participants' knowledge about media literacy, online behaviours and emotional resilience, broken down into the three programme lessons.

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 several statements on the scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating 'Strongly Disagree' and 5 indicating 'Strongly Agree'. Below you will find a distribution of the responses we obtained for the following two statements:

- 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.16 'I would consider the motivations behind why people post things online' Post-workshop survey responses
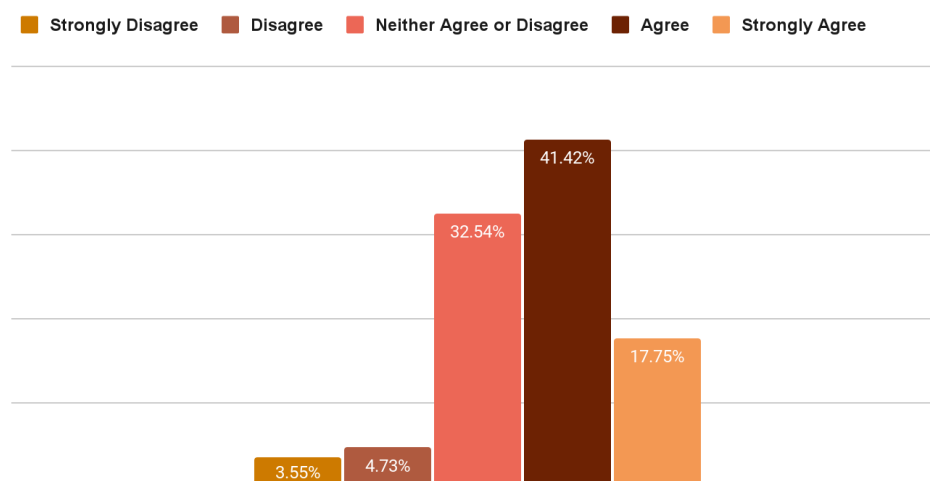

Fig.16 provides a summary of the responses we received to this statement. As seen on the graph above, 59.0% of participants 'Strongly Agreed' and 'Agreed' with the statement 'I consider the motivations behind why people post things online'. At the same time, 8.3% of participants 'Strongly Disagreed' 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.

Fig.17 'If I wasn't sure a story was true, and I wanted to share it, I'd fact check it first' Post-workshop survey responses

■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Agree   ■ Neither Agree or Disagree   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly Agree
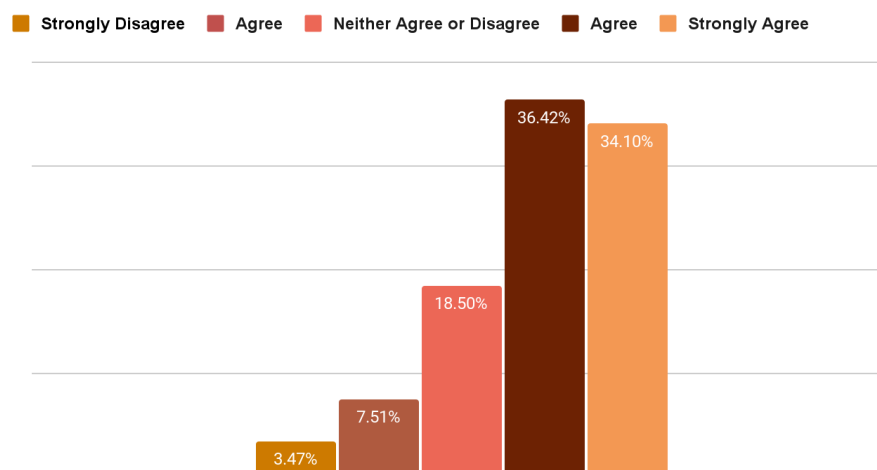

Lesson 2: Punishment & Rehabilitation

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 several statements again, also on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating 'Strongly disagree' and 5 indicating 'Strongly agree', with the following two being presented as part of this report:

- I understand how laws in the UK are made
- I understand the difference between rehabilitation and punishment

As mentioned previously, the main premise of the second 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.

Fig.18 'I understand how laws are made in the UK' Post-workshop survey responses

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Agree or Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree
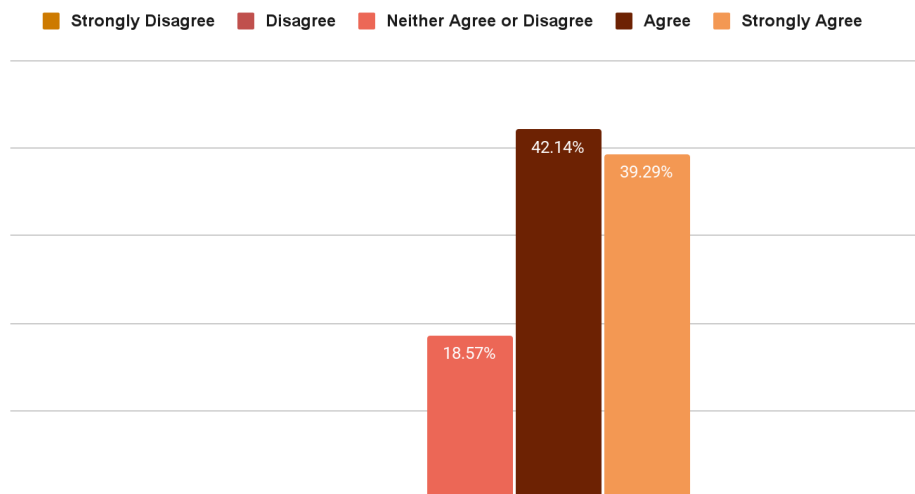
As seen on Fig.18, 81.4% of participants 'Strongly Agreed' and 'Agreed' with the statement. There are no 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' answers, while those who neither agreed or disagreed with the statement comprised 18.6% of all participants. The results indicate that participants had gained a 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.19 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 has 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.

Fig. 19 'I understand the difference between rehabilitation and punishment' Post-workshop survey responses

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree or Disagree ■ Strongly Agree
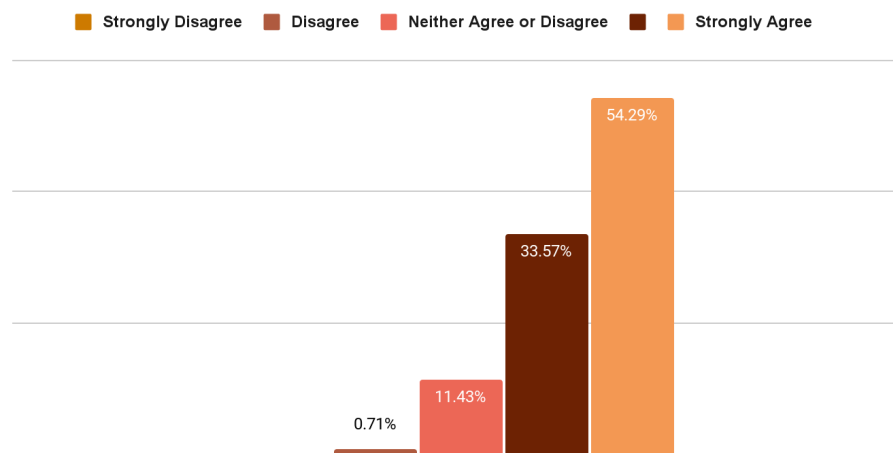
**Lesson 3: The Extreme Far-Right**

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 several following statements, on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating 'Strongly Disagree' and 5 indicating 'Strongly Agree'. The following three will be showcased in this report:

- I can identify extremist views
- I can identify hate speech
- I feel confident to challenge prejudice views

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.20 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.

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**Fig. 20 'I can identify extremist views' & 'I can identify hate speech'
Post-survey responses**

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neither Agree or Disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree
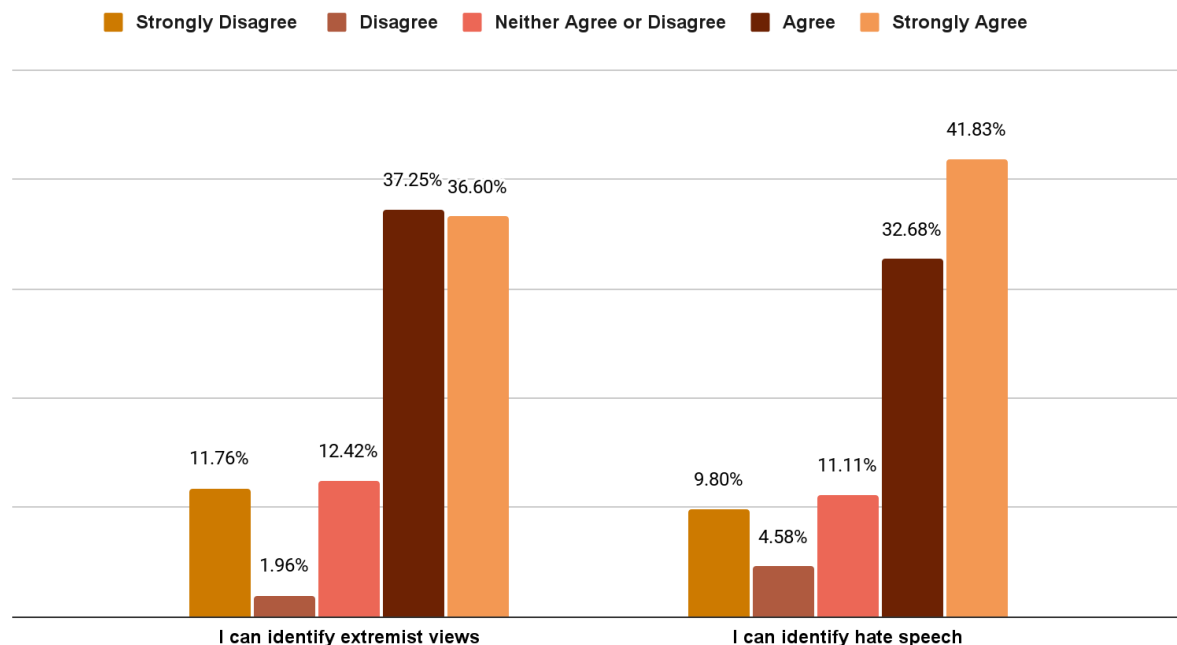
The results demonstrate that the third lesson has helped participants improve their knowledge of extremism in the context of far-right groups and has strengthened their ability to differentiate between the views such groups disseminate online. Going deeper, the students also showed an understanding of 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 students' 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.21 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.

Fig.21 'I feel confident to challenge prejudice views' Post-workshop survey responses

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree or Disagree ■ Agree
■ Strongly Agree
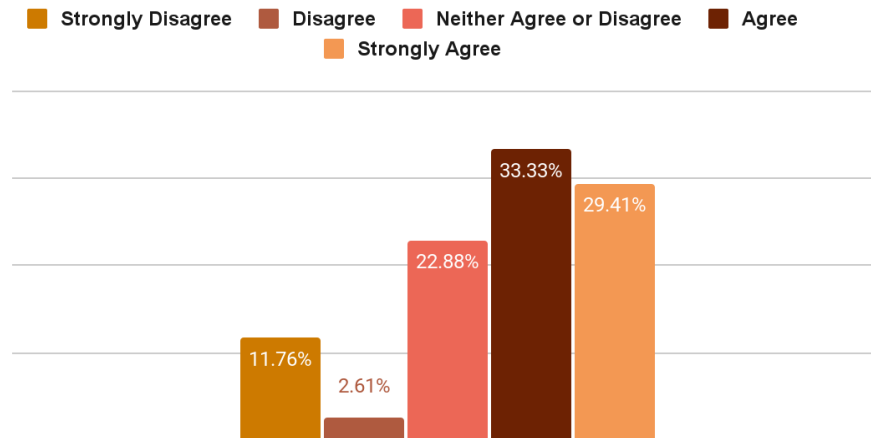
Despite this, more than half of participants display a confidence to take a stance and act against prejudice, demonstrating the programme's ability to prepare students for the type of disinformation and harm they may encounter in their daily lives. Moreover, we see a slight increase in the number of students who neither agreed or disagreed with the statement, compared to the results on Fig.20 - 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.

Conclusion

Overall, the 2020/2021 academic year provided us with a myriad of opportunities to expand our political and media literacy programmes' reach. We were able to deliver our youth programmes to nearly 1,000 students from across the country, as well as begin engaging teaching professionals and local council officials via our Extremism & Media Literacy CPD sessions. This feeds directly into our strategy of strengthening civic engagement and protecting our democracy from some of the most pressing threats the 21st century is facing – political apathy and mis/disinformation. By showing to young people how their voices can be heard within our democratic structures and how they can impact the decisions political representatives make, our goal has been to strengthen our democracy's responsiveness to what the next generation needs and wants. At the same time, in order to truly prepare the next generation for life as active democratic citizens, it has been pivotal to increase their resilience to mis/disinformation and conspiracy theories – something, which our Extremism and Media Literacy programme has been incredibly successful in achieving.

At the same time, the past academic year has taught us that we also need to involve educators and other public body professionals into the political and media literacy upskilling process. Our CPD sessions in North Yorkshire showed us that these professionals often lack the necessary democratic knowledge and media literacy skills to pass on to the young people they work with. This is an area Shout Out UK will be focusing on in the coming academic year – ensuring that this vital knowledge and skills are also passed down to future cohorts of young people. Only in doing so, can we ensure that our work has a long-lasting impact and contributes to a more resilient and healthy democracy.

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