



Great Oaks
College:



Youth Engagement project at Great Oaks College

January to March 2023

A Partnership project between Drop the Mask Productions CIC, Film Crew 4U CIC, Compassionate Cuppa CIC and Owl XL CIC with Great Oaks College

Funding was granted to create Virtual Realty, 360 tours and film making courses with young people that face challenges. Platforms were provided within Media and IT for the young people to plan, make and deliver films/videos/VR and 360 filming.

The Great Oaks College project aimed to improve and give new skills within the eldest class.

The Project Group

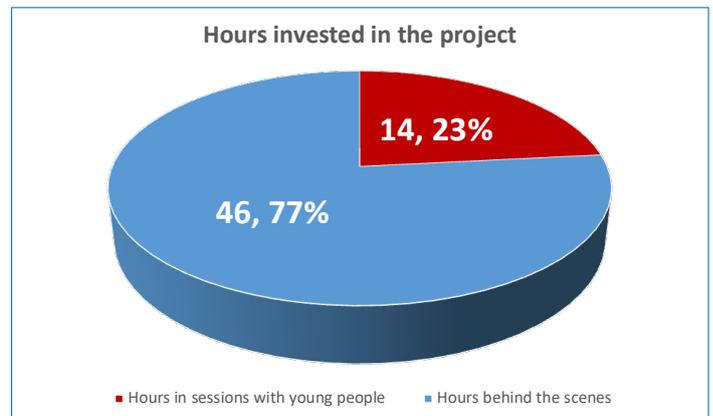
8 sessions were run in the college, with 11 young people attending.

There were 3 project staff members attending every session from Drop the Mask Productions CIC and Film Crew 4U CIC, along with a College member of staff.

4 other CIC project staff also took part on site on occasions.

2 CICs involved did not generally have direct contact with the young people, but were providing support to the 2 key CICs delivering the sessions.

60 hours were recorded as being dedicated to this project work. Film Crew 4U also provided 77% of their time working on the project preparing and editing film material. Not captured was the personal time also invested by the young people behind the scenes researching and preparing their stories.

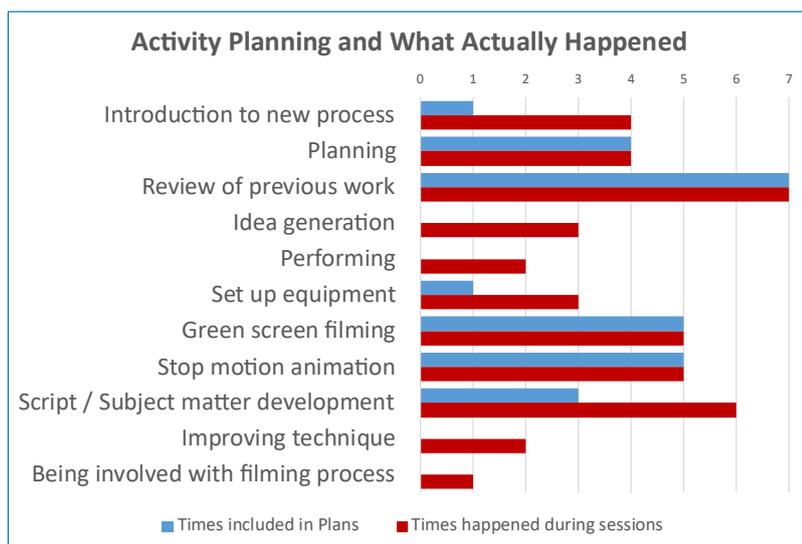


Session Plans

A planning and monitoring system was used that allowed for the plans to develop each week depending on the outcomes of the previous session. It also captured the unplanned for developments within the work.

The plan for the 1st session was to introduce the young people to the green screen workshops, explain how it works, introduce the idea of using stop motion animation and to outline the project outcome. In the 2nd session the plan was to set up the greenscreen, show some previous examples with made by other young people and film some initial scenes. For remaining sessions the plan was to show the previous week's edits and continue with the students' individual project ideas through green screen, script writing and stop motion animation. The only difference to this was in session 4

where a discussion was led, followed by filming, about what it is in Southampton that the young people loved.



To begin with it was unknown how the young people would respond to the filming activities, but as will be seen in the Involvement section of this report, there was an exceptional excitement about this new subject that they could explore.

Basic techniques were planned, but what stood out was the ideas they developed, their love of performing and storytelling, how they worked to develop their filming techniques and the interest taken in using the technology itself.

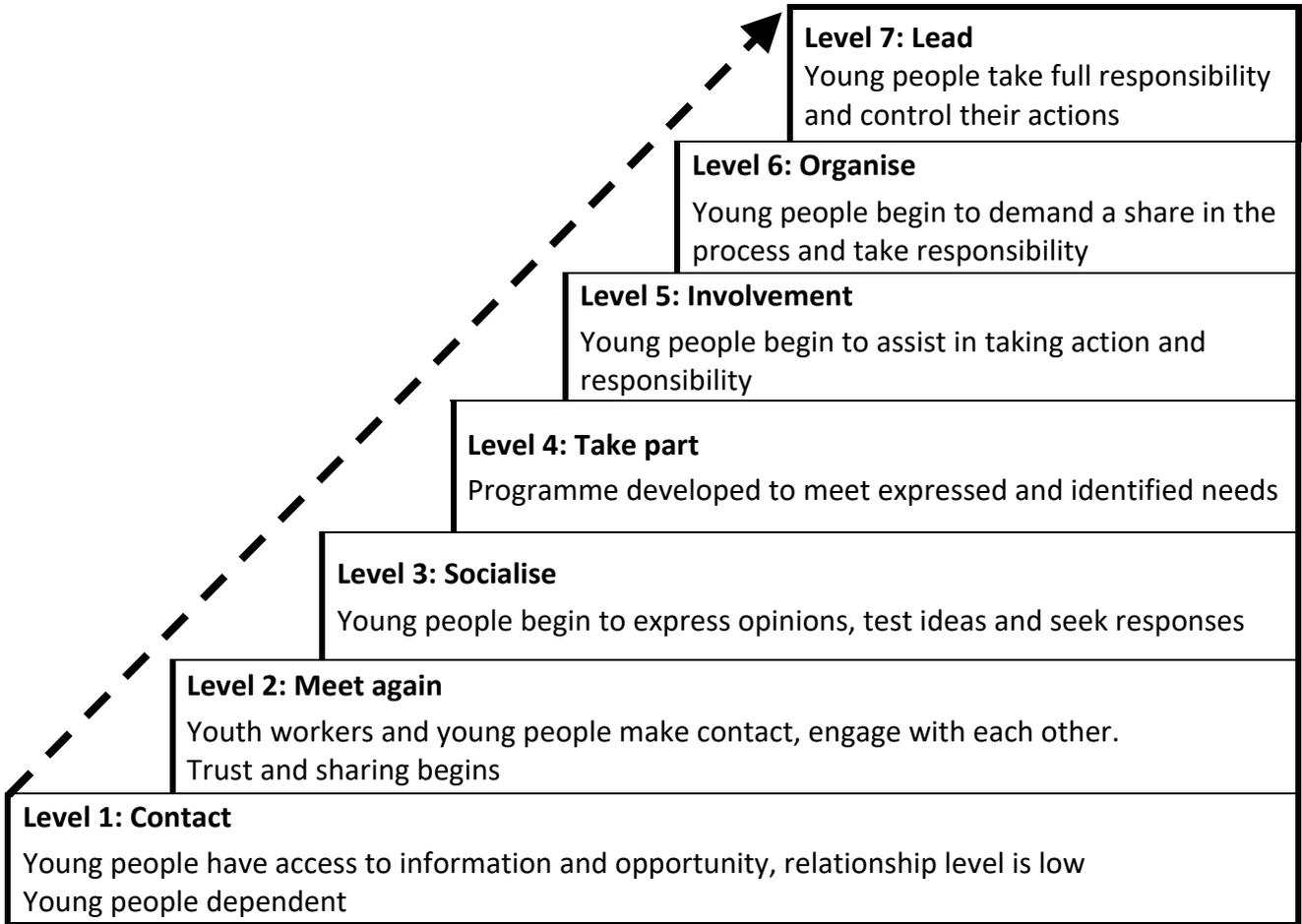
Only 1 member of the group was not prepared to be filmed, but rather than being a negative this turned out to be a real positive. She was shown how to create stop motion animations and found she had a real flare for it, to the extent that she is now exploring this as a possible career.

The practical skills learnt included:

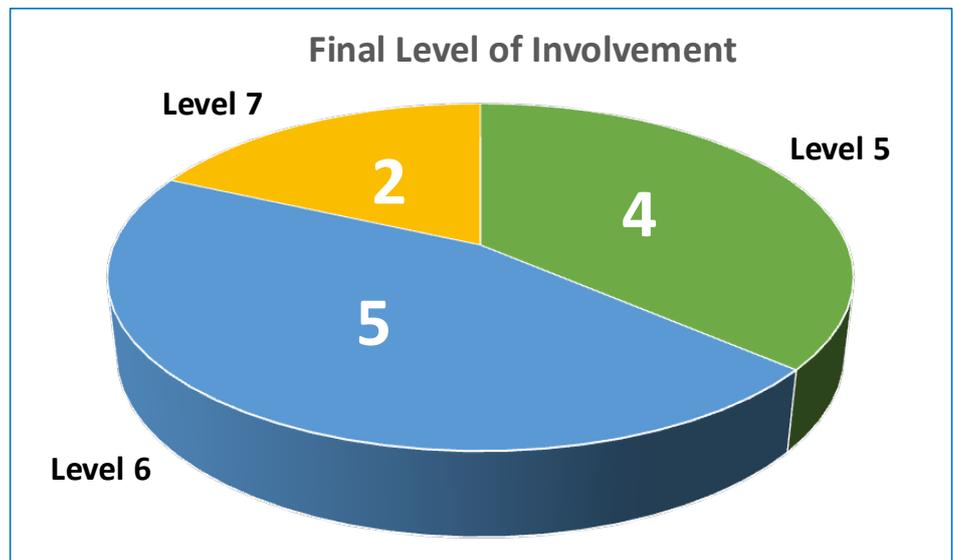
Filming	<p>To begin with just interested in being in front of camera.</p> <p>By 3rd session beginning to show some interest in the filming process. MC already does some editing of his own videos on YouTube and keen to learn more.</p> <p>KJ directing the action and instructing "quiet on set". Went on to learn more about camera operation, lighting, setting up the green screen and directing.</p> <p>KB writing own scripts from the beginning and learnt how to produce stop motion animation with a DSLR camera.</p> <p>360° films were made of each session.</p>
Subject matter	<p>From the beginning all the young people had ideas about their own story lines and keen to develop them.</p> <p>One session was taken exploring their ideas of what were the highlights of Southampton, providing a surprising mix of responses.</p> <p>The subject matter remained light and fun for the young people - talking about things that they enjoy and are interested in.</p>
Computer editing	<p>Using stop animation app.</p> <p>Setting camera on tripod for stop animation.</p> <p>Use of stop animation software at home.</p> <p>Animating stop motion footage on phones.</p> <p>Editing stop motion footage on phones.</p>
Special effects	<p>Greenscreen and Claymation extensively used throughout the project.</p> <p>The special effects were demonstrated in the edits at the beginning of each session, prompting idea development for each story line.</p>

Levels of Involvement

The greatest focus of work with young people is to empower them and John Huskins' Youth Involvement Model provides a constructive way to measure their progress. Many young people will attend activities and only get to level 4, to be able to evidence progress from level 5 upwards demonstrates the quality of the empowerment opportunity provided.



As an established group the young people taking part in this project moved from level 1 to 5 in the first session. They easily adapted and welcomed into their group the staff members from the CICs, eager to explore the new subject being offered to them.



	Key progression evidence	What they love about Southampton	Individual Project/s	Final Involvement Level
AL	Often the first to get involved during a session. From session 6 participating with different sketches on the green screen, enjoying acting.	Swimming at Romsey rapids.	Home Alone, Keep the Change, Nanny Plum, Wizard of Oz	5
BL	Always enjoys talking about a wide range of topics in front of the green screen. In session 6 demonstrated how the stop motion app worked to his peers. By session 7 had made his own green screen alien invasion video and keen to perform different ideas in front of the green screen.	The lake in the common. Likes the Canadian Geese, Pigeons and ducks.	The Weather (2 different versions made), Racer Pigeon	6
IW	While she is initially shy she often gets involved in front of the green screen by the end of the session and enjoyed high-fiving the team.	The Saints Stadium (St Marys)	The Lion King	5
JB	Enjoyed working with KJ to talk about the circus, including performing a comedy duo. In session 7 made some stop motion animation.	St Michaels church. Talked about the Rev David Miller.	Popol & Kakehole (3 different versions with KJ), Jo Pilot	5
KB	Worked with Film Crew 4U to write a script for her animated models. While she did not want to go on camera she is a talented clay model maker and enjoyed putting stories together for her characters. In session 6 led the group working on her script, coming up with new story ideas and organising where they would go in the story. In session 7 set up the camera and brought her stop motion characters to life using the green screen and camera, organising the shots for her animation. At the final session 8 was incredibly excited about the workshop and went to meet the film crew at the gate on arrival. She was very keen to get her whole story filmed. She organised the shots and provided additional versions of her characters that could be used. She made amendments to her story and decided things to leave out and made some changes to the narrative.	The cat cafe in Romsey.	Wednesday & Stranger Things animation film	7

	Key progression evidence	What they love about Southampton	Individual Project/s	Final Involvement Level
KE	Could be shy at first however enjoyed herself once she got involved. In session 6 made models and participated in the green screen activities. In session 7 liked being shrunk in her video and being added to her clay models in a video.	Lepe Beach	Mary Poppins (3 different versions), The Farm (including clay models made)	5
KJ	Brought in his photos from visits to the circus for inspiration in front of the green screen. From session 6 helped Film Crew 4U to set up the camera for the sessions and took the lead over the green screen set up, enjoying directing the green screen activities.	The Circus Wonderland in Mayflower park.	Popol & Kakehole (3 different versions with JB), Get Well Kakehole, Flight Controller	7
LF	Was always excited to participate and enjoyed getting involved. In session 6 worked with KB on her script and found backgrounds to use. In session 7 got in front of the green screen to talk about the workshops.	The Hamble club pan disability inclusive football.	Paddington and Rainbow (2 different versions made)	6
MC	Frequently comes up with new creative ideas for his edits.	The Arcades.	Sasuke, Alien Invasion, Shadow Clone	6
NC	Was always happy to get in front of the green screen and enjoyed working with building props such as woodworking equipment. In session 6 put a set together for the stop motion characters. In session 7 got in front of the green screen to say how much he had enjoyed the workshops.	The Lego shop in West Quay shopping centre and the woodwork room at Great Oaks College.	New School (2 different versions made)	6
SL	Came up with new ideas and stories every week. Enjoyed making the clay models.	The Southampton city farm (the schools zoo)	Zombie Invasion	6

Personal & Social Skills Development

Self Awareness	All were conscious of how they want to come across on screen. KB was only interested in the stop motion because she didn't want to be on camera, but was involved in all of the discussions. As they became used to the camera, the young people worked to their strengths and freely expressed their ideas and emotions.
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Communication	The whole group were very talkative and assertive with what they wanted to do for their own individual projects and what they liked about Southampton. They were all confident in putting their ideas forward.
Interpersonal	All very supportive of each other. Listened to instruction and kept quiet when asked to when others were performing. They worked well as a large team and in smaller groups.
Explore & Manage Feelings	From the beginning they were all good, open and able to express themselves. The topics that come up were often around positive feelings and good experiences such as visiting the circus or the duck pond.
Understand & identify with others	All mindful of each other and supportive of everyone's individual projects. Each film was clapped when videos were shown at the beginning of the sessions.
Values development	The young people learnt to not interrupt or make too much noise when someone was in front of the green screen or trying to express an idea. They discussed issues with the teacher, the Film Crew 4U staff, as well as with each other.
Problem solving	From the beginning they were all working out their finished project and how it would look at the end. When filming, they would ask for multiple takes if they were not happy with the filmed result. As the session progressed they identified issues with their stories and worked on improving them. When KB did not want to be filmed, it was not seen as a problem, alternatives found which proved very positive.
Negotiation	All had good skills. Just in session 4 was there a disagreement between 2 of the young people, where a teacher needed to help resolve the issue. The young people took it in turns to go in front of the green screen and sometimes collaborated on scenes.
Action planning	From the beginning the young people were thinking about the project as a whole, seeing how it would unfold and the outcome. Each week they were aware of the timescale and plan how to complete their project through developing their technique.
Reviewing	Film Crew 4U realised in session 1 that they needed to give the young people a little more freedom, to not be so regimentally structured. By session 3 all the young people were determined to improve on their previous take until they were happy with it. By session 5 the young people were more confident in vocalising their ideas and reviewing their previous takes.

Potential Interest and Career Paths

- All the young people have been equipped with the knowledge they need to complete their own stop motion filming projects in the future.
- MC has an interest in videos and has used this opportunity to develop his techniques for this personal interest.
- BL took to stop frame very well and could advance on these skills.
- KJ really took to being behind the camera and helping to direct/set up. He has discovered an enjoyment in filming.
- KB has really loved these sessions and is keen to take up a career in the film industry. Work experience with Film Crew 4U is being arranged.

Testimonies from the young people taking part

“In the Drop the Mask project I really enjoyed doing the recordings and special effects for the videos. We all really enjoyed it and it was a very nice seven weeks.” KE

“I enjoyed the effects and I also enjoyed watching the videos and how it was made.” MC

“I enjoyed making the videos with Drop the Mask. It was really fun. What do you want to say K?” “I enjoyed having Billy here doing the camera for us. Yea.” JB & KJ

“I love working with Drop the Mask video. I learnt so much about green screen and how it works. It is just an amazing thing that I love how it works, because like I didn't know about editing before but I know more about editing now and, yea, I found it really interesting to see how it works.” LF

“I enjoyed talking about the Lion King. I also liked being filmed. High Ten!” IW

Feedback from Great Oaks College

Great Oaks College have been incredibly fortunate to have worked with Drop The Mask Productions and Film Crew 4U over the last seven weeks. Billy, Kate and Debbie immediately fitted in with the group of 16–19-year-olds at our SEN college. The team were 100% involved from the start – planning sessions with the students, listening to and developing students’ ideas and offering encouragement every step of the way. Nothing was ever too much to ask! Students became totally absorbed in these weekly sessions and looked forward to Monday afternoons immensely, taking the initiative to work on their projects in their free time both in college and at home.

It has been an incredible journey for the students (and staff) and a wonderful opportunity for them to not only gain confidence in their creative abilities but to use skills such as problem solving, effective communication, teamwork and leadership skills in a fun, dynamic and age respectful workshop.

Comments from some parents

“OMG THIS IS AMAZING. Thank You very much for This. That's what K was talking about over the last few weeks. They're ALL Great.” Parent of KJ

“Oh wow this is great 👍 well done to everyone” AL parent

“Fantastic 😊😊😊 Thank you!” KB parent

“This is AMAZING 🎉 we’ve all just sat and watched it and all beamed with pride at how incredible the videos are. Wowee, I’m blown away!” IW mum.

Appendix: Links to Films

Behind the scenes

<https://youtu.be/MaI90CovojA>

AL's playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDk_APFLyWr7vMTakkIXGU8h

KE's playlist

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDm63Jt0wIMelHCJA0tIR9Vk>

JB's playlist

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDkFDAvkOAja9XsvgUbfjHx>

KJ's playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDkEbALkgKRq0_gjZ2JE_zKD

IW's playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDnMT2Kh1I3ES1fFyBNT_rJC

MC's playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDnbc4zBxIIX-1Tf_KPuO8Sd

BL's playlist

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDmeS6A7W0vPE0tEOPdsSo70>

NC's playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDk6D4S_IA4h4rgmiDdJsfyd

LF's playlist

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDkYm7vVTGh80kC-ug9jXTbL>

SL's playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDka_P-tgAOdrAu7NnIGOAdW

KB's playlist

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDIUwnZKzBtffdhxKI-GeUF6>

Southampton Likes

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPb1UzVj3wA&list=PLN4Lt8VD0mDk6D4S_IA4h4rgmiDdJsfyd&index=7