



Artwork by Cameron Macphail, Growing2gether Youth Advisory Board member

CASE STUDIES SERIES

Andrew

Andrew is a 14-year old boy who attends the local Academy in S3. He is very outspoken in his dealings with adults and staff at the school and has often been sent out of classes, been given detentions and a couple of exclusions for saying what he thinks. In our group discussions he often tried to monopolise the conversations. Andrew regularly talked about the fights he has been in and police involvement in the past. He looked for the reassurance from his peers all the time.

When he first joined the group, he was wary of whether he had made the right decision. He was very keen to voice his opinion and often came up with stories to see if he could shock us and how we would react. Three others of the group had gone through Primary School with him and he knew them well and felt secure in the group. He tried to take over the conversations at times, but he learnt to listen to the others too.



He attended the same nursery and Primary School, we are partnered with. When we entered the nursery in week 2 he appeared slightly nervous, but this disappeared quite soon. He became very calm and sat himself on the floor amongst the children. Very quickly he made connections with them. He asked to mentor a young boy who struggled at times to cope when things didn't go his way, when he had to share with others, or given an instruction.

Andrew got to know this boy well over the following weeks. He showed a tremendous amount of patience, teaching him to cope with frustration and disappointments and regulating his emotions. He had to set boundaries and stick to them. He worked mainly on his own and even if the activities were monotonous and repetitive he stuck with it. We didn't see the boy who needed to be in charge, talk back and take over, at all.

Half way through the programme Andrew started talking about his time at Primary School. He mentioned he 'ran' the school. Him and his 2 friends were the bullies in P7 who were continuously in trouble. I strongly believe that getting very positive feedback from both the Head teacher and the nursery staff on a regular basis gave him a chance to give something back to the school now. He thrived on the respect he was shown, people accepting that there has been a change in him.

In school the guidance teacher has seen a massive change in him. He is less confrontational and more interested in his learning. And, he has been heavily involved in organising the junior dance, a massive achievement!

"It has been so much fun here at nursery with the little ones. I have learned so much and it has been a blast."