



Case Study

St. Nicholas Church of England Primary School and Nursery



St. Nicholas Church of England Primary School and Nursery is an ‘Outstanding’ school in Stevenage. The 208-pupil school has a diverse learner population, with 43% being English as an Additional Language (EAL) children spanning 23 languages, the most recent arrivals coming from Brazil and France. The effective teaching of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education is therefore vitally important and a strategic priority for the school.

When Headteacher Sarah Stevens joined the school in January 2015 she introduced a commitment to values education within the Anglican expression of the Christian faith. “In our school we realise the importance of developing the whole child and ensuring that they have education for life as well as for exams,” Sarah explained. “PSHE is a crucial component of that. However, prior to engaging the 1decision programme, we were working with dated PSHE field materials which told children what to think rather than providing the space for them to make their own decisions. The resources give us an opportunity to open up pupils to dangerous situations in a virtual world, enabling them to make choices in a safe environment and being able to make mistakes on the way.”

Around 120 Key Stage 1 children have benefitted from 1decision to date, utilising all the available topics, and vulnerable pupils in Key Stage 2 have also used the interactive video clips and booklets which provide a series of alternative endings. “This is the first generation of children who are very rarely on their own and, as well as the diversity of our own learner population, there is also a growing number of children with additional needs who need extra support,” Sarah said. “Often it is not until this generation goes to secondary school that they will cross the road on their own and the 1decision programme allows them to explore issues such as this, dealing with strangers and dialling 999. In being able to select an option – A/B/C – on what they would do in a particular situation, we can help children to take responsibility for their actions and understand the consequences.”

Learners at St. Nicholas have “undoubtedly become more aware of their surroundings” as a result of the programme, Sarah revealed. “We measure pupil voice before and after the programme, drawing on our safeguarding governor, and have definitely seen a correlation. For example, we’ve had ongoing building work at the school for the past 18 months, and whereas previously children would talk to any of the contractors on site now they ask teachers if they can talk to people and whether it is safe to do. We are also able to measure the programme’s effectiveness by ensuring that we follow the start/end goals of a topic, provided by 1decision. The resources are incredibly easy to assess, even if you are running PSHE in a Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) slot, and are also very engaging. The children absolutely love the main character in the resources, Deedee, who makes the topics less personal for pupils and oozes tolerance, respect, friendship, cooperation and thankfulness.”



Parents have also engaged in the programme. “We’ve been able to share the resources with parents, highlighting these at open evenings and through learning journals, and they can see that we are helping to shape and build their children’s characters in a positive way,” Sarah said. “PSHE may not have the funding that subjects such as Maths and Science receive, but it is a subject that we should support and which we need to provide resources such as 1decision for teachers to teach effectively, whether it is as a statutory subject or not. We are thrilled with the contribution of 1decision to our school. The impact is clear. What price can you possibly put on keeping any child safe?”

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