

# Content

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## **Introduction**

This evaluation was undertaken in two Phases. The First Phase was completed in February 2013 and the Second Phase was completed in September 2013. The initial Phase was intended to provide Portal Training with early evidence that they could use to inform their thinking prior to refining the SWEET material in the form of a second edition. The final Phase took a wider and more reflective approach at a point when the teachers involved had seen their first full cohort completing the work and in many cases, moving on into the world of work or further education.

This evaluation was undertaken across five settings in which SWEET has been piloted over the previous two years. The settings within which that evaluation took place catered for a wide range of ages, as well as a diverse of learning and behavioural needs of the pupils engaging with the resource. Hence, the evaluation draws attention to the particular challenges confronting teachers and other adults when delivering the material across these settings.

# **Phase 1**

## **Introduction**

Semi-structured interviews were held with key adults responsible for the delivery of SWEET within the five institutions involved. Similarly, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with a representative sample of the learners within each setting. In each case, these were selected by the key adult and their agreement to participate sought and secured. Each interview was tape-recorded and later transcribed. Despite the fact that some of the participants learn and work within relatively small settings, they were all assured that the material gathered would be treated in a way that would secure their anonymity as far as is possible.

Following transcription, the material was analysed with the help of a matrix so that issues raised and views shared could be clustered according to emerging themes and subsequently considered in terms of positive and negative views expressed about the resource, ways in which the existing material might usefully be refined and developed to better meet the demands of staff and the needs of learners.

## **Observations**

It is interesting that despite being interviewed separately, adults and learners raised many similar issues regarding the quality and value of the resource as well as about its limitations and possible refinements that could be made to enhance the value of the material further.

Similarly, both learners and adults were primarily positive about SWEET and spoke highly about its impact and potential. They were also able to identify ways in which the resource could be made even more relevant. It is hoped that these views will be of some assistance to *Portal Learning* as it refines the product.

## **Positive observations**

### **A resource that is compact and contained in one document:**

Irrespective of the setting where SWEET was being delivered, the key adults welcomed the fact that it represented a resource that was at once comprehensive and contained in one document.

For those working in alternative settings [i.e. outside a mainstream environment], this was particularly important and a major consideration:

*'The fact that everything you need is in one place – in one book, so because I work outreach, having everything in one place is ideal - meaning that I wouldn't need to go elsewhere for other print-outs any additional resource. It literally is the case that you read one page and your answers are written on another. So, everything that's contained in one book and the size of it, for me, is ideal. So I do like that part about it.'*

*'What I very much like about it as a provider who's working very much in an alternative curriculum environment, it's great for me because it's all packaged up and I can do all my lesson planning around the criteria, around all the resources that are already in the book – and all I do to that then is the work that I do within the lesson – so, the brainstorming; the getting the kids to engage and then it's easy for me to then build on that. So, the majority is done and everything else then is just added on to it and building it up and engaging the kids.'*

*'For me, working in the environment I am, to be able to pick SWEET off the shelf, for me, is just brilliant. I've got all the foundation there and I just need to work off that.'*

### **Flexibility to meet complex delivery patterns:**

The way that alternative provision operates means that for some, young people are referred and arrive at and leaving at different time. This can naturally pose additional challenges for those working in such settings. The way that SWEET is structured and

the compact nature of the book was seen as very helpful when working in such circumstances:

*'We do have a roll on and roll off as well so with regards to the young people coming in, I've had some since July and they have now gone on to level 1 and there are two newcomers as of this week. So, they're not all at the same position on the book. Being at different stages is fine because all I'll need will be in the book. It's not like you've got to print out several pages of paper to keep going.'*

This is not to suggest that these providers elected to adopt SWEET as an 'easy option'. On the contrary, they regarded the resource as foundation material that could be built upon and added to. This was something that was stressed by several of the interviewees:

*'It's meaty; it's interesting and it's not dry. You can tailor make it to the needs of the kids and still hit the criteria. To me, it's everything in a book.'*

*'Every lesson I deliver is fully planned – and I then do extra worksheets to go with it as well. And the learners that I've got appreciate those extra stimuli. They appreciate not just to see it in the book.'*

*'We've had loads of additional material, which is obviously a large part of this. You can't just do the book and close it and think that's it. It's all the additional stuff that has to be done to meet all the criteria.'*

*'Some of them [learners] are quite limited in their reading skills, so they need that extra input in order to grasp certain concepts. But it's such a good foundation to build on – and that's what I love about it.'*

Outreach workers and those who work in several different environments during the course of a week, as well as those working in alternative settings also found the portability of the resource an additional bonus:

*'The size of it as well, this might sound funny but it's very portable. If they want to take it home and have a look at it in the night and things like that. It is very small and compact. It is easy to take around places. It is a pretty good tool if I'm honest.'*

*'The size of the book reminds me of a diary. It's something you could pick up; you could put it into your coat pocket and take wherever you need. I do like the size, to be honest. I haven't really had an issue with boys saying 'Oh, there isn't enough room for me to write here'. From my point of view, I do like the size.'*

*'The size is good – it fits into our folders. I prefer this size to the bigger books.'*

*'It's not so big (to carry around).'*

*'I just think it's the right size book, myself.'*

The compact nature of the resource was equally appreciated by some of the young people interviewed:

*'It's handy; you can quite easily put it in a bag.'*

For those working in an environment that may not be as well-equipped as most mainstream settings, some of the resources drawn upon by SWEET may pose something of a challenge for the adults responsible for running the programme. Where this was the case, those interviewed drew attention to the way that modern technology can be used to effect in overcoming some of these challenges. Many of the young people working in these environments have ready access to smart phones that can (depending on access to Wi-Fi) be used to advantage:

*'It was extracts from a Plan B and they ask you to listen to a Lady GaGa song, so one of the boys downloaded it on to his mobile phone and it was a case of passing it around and just listening to it.'*

### **Engagement:**

Both adults and learns without exception drew attention to the appearance of the resource. This was seen as exciting and distinguished it from other school-based books that they had previously encountered. This helped draw them to it from the outset and helped sustain their interest in it engaging with its content:

*'Very colourful, it stands out.'*

*'And the colours are nice. They do like the colours.'*

*'I think that if I was the students, I would be keen to see what's in there. This really does motivate them – and the use of colour is essential, I think.'*

Some explained that its interactive nature, together with its attractive appearance, was an important factor in enhancing the likelihood of getting young (and often under-motivated or disaffected) learners to engage.

*'It's colourful, it's interactive as well. In terms of answering questions and things as well, so I did like that aspect of it as well. Things like that.'*

Many of the young people also found this to be a feature of the resource that they appreciated:

*'It's very bright and colourful. If it was black and white your go, 'Oh, here we go again' like. It's going to be like a long worded, boring book. As it's more colourful, it's like more up-to-date and more modern which makes children of my age want to go and read it. It's like, appealing to us.'*

*'First instinct is the book is colourful, it stands out. It catches your eye dun it....when you first look at it.'*

*'It's really, really colourful and looks nice too and that's good.'*

*'It's really colourful. I like the colours in it.'*

*'The presentation is ok. It's quite a nice look to it. It's good it's not just one colour.'*

*'When Mr Smith come in and said we are doing SWEET programmes I thought 'Oh I don't really like books. I'm not the sort of person to be sat there writing and reading from books'. When you first look at it you think it's quite good, it's colourful. Or you look through the different units, the ones that stand out to you most. That's basically what I did.'*

*'It's colourful and that's nice.'*

*'The appearance is good and it's appropriate for us.'*



The appearance (and subsequently, the nature of the content) was also seen by adults to be an important factor in drawing more disengaged young people to using it regularly:

*'What is good is that we have one pupil on a reduced timetable for a number of reasons – but he's not in school today. He's quite a naughty boy inside and outside of school, but when he saw this and he's worked with this, he's found it useful and helpful. He enjoys it because of the colour and the way that it's set out. I know that the DVD we've seen of it showed somebody turning their life around and I would hope that for him, this is something that will help him find the way forward.'*

Similarly, as far as the young people who use the material are concerned, it is important that whilst it is challenging for them, it does not make unrealistic demands. This was something noted by respondents:

*'It's not too hard, it's relatively easy. I enjoyed doing the book.'*

*'It looks complicated at first. It looks like a college book but then you open it up and then it's alright.'*

*'It really challenges you and really makes you think. It's not going to improve you if it's too easy. If it was a normal book, we could complete it in about an hour but as it challenges you, it really makes you think. I know that lots of people in the class have learnt words we didn't understand before.'*

The way in which a book of this nature is structured is important and plays a key part in ensuring whether the interest and motivation of those who use it will be sustained over a period of time. This was confirmed by some of the young people questioned who felt that the balance used for SWEET did indeed appeal to them and helped them remain enthusiastic about what it could offer them.

*'Obviously, if it was just plain and boring, you wouldn't want to like sit there for an hour and just fill it out. So obviously, the way it's set out where you use tick boxes to save you writing it all out. It's easy to understand as well. It looks good too.'*

The use of colour-coding to differentiate between the various units within the book was raised as a useful feature by some. This enabled them to navigate the resource with ease and prevented any frustrations developing when looking for specific sections:

*'I would say it is easily structured as well 'cause it has got all the units you need... obviously you look at the book and you think what units do I want to look at and you go straight to the colour 'cause it is colour co-ordinated.'*

Indeed, the fact that the resource is coded in this way drew attention to the fact that it could be managed by addressing one part at the time, rather than perceiving it as one large volume that had to be worked through. For some of the participants, this was an important consideration and helped them sustain engagement with the material:

*'It's good as well, how they have split the sections. If it was one long book it wouldn't be so good. But since they've split it into sections and colour coordinated it, it's easier to read.'*

*'I think it's good because it stands out because of the different colours and the layout of the actual book is good because it's got all different sections to the book and you can tell. And it's like, in order. It's not like 'motivation' and then you have it mixed into one. It's like, separated. And it's not boring like just straight pages of writing. It's like they've got drawing and things which makes it like, more appealing to me.'*

### **Relevance:**

Attention was drawn to the fact that learners tended to readily engage with the SWEET resource and cited various reasons as to why this was the case. Both adults and learners suggested that the relevance of the content of the book resonated with young people. Teachers stated that:

*'Yes, I do think the topics are relevant. The 'Motivation' is really relevant but it's one of the ones that they find hardest to do.'*

*'They love the brainstorming activities 'Why drink' questions – they love that kind of thing.'*

*'I do think it engages them, to a certain extent.'*

In addition, it was felt that the tasks set for the young people to complete were also realistic and designed not to alienate learners experiencing difficulty with written tasks, whilst at the same time, providing ample opportunity for more able learners to engage with at their own level. Others confirmed that these tasks and challenges were also relevant to their experiences and age appropriate:

*'.... some of the things are quite relevant. And the quotes are as well.'*

*'It is compact and for what units you complete, there doesn't seem to be too much asked of the candidates. And I think that's another good point. It is useful.'*

*'Whilst it requires that they engage with writing tasks, it doesn't seem a lot. The first page on Motivation was picking out idles and people that inspired them for the qualities they possess and things like that. Because of the size of it, it doesn't seem like a lot of writing and you've achieved a unit. That's entirely different to requiring them to complete a 200 or 300 word essay.'*

Interviewees referred to the fact that much of the content within the SWEET resource was 'inspirational' – a factor that attracted them to the material initially but also helped sustain their interest thereafter:

*'The book is really compelling as well. It makes you want to keep reading. Once you finish one section, you want to read the next section. It's really a good book. Whilst working on it there is a lot of discussion in the class – which is good, too.'*

Adult also used the term 'inspirational' when discussing the content of the material and pointed to specific examples where this was felt to have been the case:

*'One really good one was 'Plan B'. That was really inspirational. What I did, was I played .... I didn't know who he was. I knew the song but I just didn't know who he was – but it's on YouTube. They knew very little about him and they were quite shocked when they then read the comprehension. We then looked at other rappers and they've all got a story. So that brought it into them as well.'*

*'Plan B was spot on. It really was spot on - very relevant to them and to today's society. 'Cos when they looked at overcoming barriers, what barriers have they overcome? For some, it's been family bereavement, it's been family breakdown – you know, everything is relevant to today's society.'*

The following views shared by the learners that were interviewed, confirmed the adults' opinions on its suitability to adolescents and its relevance to their perceived needs. They stated that they could readily engage with SWEET because its content and associated tasks could be seen as relevant and appropriate:

*'It's good because it's focused around us and our age group.'*

*'So when this was suggested to us and we were told all about it, we were kind of enthusiastic about reading it and doing the tasks that are in the book.'*

### **Positive role models:**

Some of the tasks undertaken stood out in the memories of some as particularly significant. In particular, attention was drawn to the task of identifying positive role models. For some, this had been an enjoyable task as had been the process of then identifying the qualities they associated with the selected individuals:

*'Obviously a lot of them use people in their family but because it was the Olympics, others used Jessica Ennis and other who had inspired them during the Olympics. We were then able to talk about a previous pupil who will probably be in Rio in the Paralympics for 2015. He had Cerebral Palsy and he was discovered on one of our sports days by somebody from the squad, so we were able to talk about that and how he wasn't an academic student but he's now found his forte.'*

One of the adults interviewed however, had found that some of the young learners in that particular setting had found this task particularly challenging and due to circumstances were unable to identify a positive role model in her life:

*'Mary has finished the unit but she still hasn't found people who motivate her. A lot of them don't have positive role models at all.'*

In sharp contrast, others who had also found this task challenging – had been able to approach it in a way that had made it rewarding and constructive:

*'One of the interesting ones was 'Who are the people you admire and respect the most?' one boy who particularly spoke about a role model who was very negative and happened to be his brother. He said 'I want to be more positive' and was able to speak to the class about taking a different life path. So that was a really good one as well.'*

## Adolescents learning about themselves:

Many reported that the way that the Sweet material had been structured had helped them in learning a lot about themselves and the way they related to others both in and out of the formal learning context. Whilst this is a challenging task for any adolescent to confront, it remains a fundamental requirement if they are to progress successfully into young adults and to succeed beyond.

*'When we listened to the lyrics [Lady GaGa] it sort of made us proud of who we are. Then we had to answer some questions in the book. They had a list and we had to choose what we think we are. Then we had to see the different opinions – what our friends thought about us and what we thought about ourselves. Some people think down about themselves others think a bit more about themselves so it was nice to learn where you really are about yourself. On our tables, we were allowed to discuss if they thought that we were active or funny or charming, like. We learnt a lot about ourselves.'*

*'Yes, it definitely will have some impact on me as a person because – it just bring out the 'you' from inside, really. When you realise what other people have done and what other people have achieved, and that. That means you can as well.'*

*'Thinking about the negative things about myself were more helpful to me than the positive things. When you sit down and realise that my punctuality really does need to be improved and you've really got to do something about it. If it's coming from myself, then I obviously not a judgement about you – it's you realising it for yourself. It's a skill as well, isn't it to realise your positives and negatives.'*

In the process, some who were spoken to identified that such an engagement had helped them develop their own self-confidence:

*'I speak to new people, take new challenges. It teaches you to take risks.'*

*'It has however, helped me build my own self esteem – how I look at myself.'*

## **Modified behaviour and outlooks:**

Importantly, engaging with SWEET has meant that many young learners - of whom several can be described as 'reluctant learners' - reported that what they have been learning about themselves and the way they have subsequently modified their own behaviour and outlooks with clear implications for the way they function and operate outside the learning environment in the home and wider community:

*'At home I've got quite a good life – I'm not in a bad home. But I think that for people who perhaps have got a hard life it can help them make the right decisions. 'Plan B' for example didn't spend much time with his parents – that's why he went on drugs and smoking and drinking. But I think that if people read the story and realise that if they spent more time with their family, it could really help them.'*

*'I know that since reading this book, I want to go out – I use to just want to go home, jump in the bath like and just relax. Now, I want to go out there and try new things. Like every Saturday, I go to dance for five hours. I've been doing that for ten years, but now I realise that if I really push myself, I could be a dance teacher as well. That's what I want to do in my spare time. So it pushes me a bit more outside school as well.'*

*'At the beginning we had to write down who we admire and respect. I said some of my family. Normally I wouldn't recognise how much they do for me and how much they do to help me. But after putting it all down, I put down things like, 'my mum's always there' and I've realised how much she is for me. I like my dad, my sister and whilst I haven't made a drastic change, it has made a bit of a change – like helped me to realise and not to be like, horrible – or not to just take it for granted.'*

Some of the tasks clearly require young learners to seriously consider and reflect upon difficult things that will confront them in real-life

*'One of its strong points is that it gets you to think about important things like drugs and alcohol and makes me think that I don't want to do it 'cos I've learnt about the effect they can have.'*

*'It's good. It shows different aspects to personalities.'*

*'I like the fact that you get facts about things as well.'*

*'It also motivates me because it goes on about life and stuff – about drugs and alcohol. It's like the good things and the bad things. I learn a lot from that.'*

### **Focus on the future needs of young people**

Allied to this, the resource encourages young people to focus on their future and links present activity with future aspirations.

*'Makes you think why you want to do or go on a stable job and to be happy.'*

*'It has made me look at what I have got, it makes me think, just be aware of what I could have been and if I hadn't have done this what would I have done, what would I have turned out like. I look at that (the stats) and I think I don't want to be that person, you turn over a new leaf, type of thing.'*

*'Gives you an insight into why for what you want to do when you're older.'*

*'It helps develop skills that will be useful later and out of school settings. It helps me to think about life and how to achieve.'*

*'When you get to our age, we're like at the end of our compulsory education; we're obviously at a stage when we've got to consider what we want to do, where we want to be. This [SWEET] didn't really encourage our idea 'cos we already had an idea of what we wanted to do. But it gave us like, a simple plan, if you know what I mean. Like ..... we already, like .... knew but it helped us think about what steps we need to take. If you've got a plan you then know where you're going.'*

Importantly, participants were able to value working with SWEET to establish what they described as 'a life plan' to structure their thinking about the future and to establish a pathway to achieving their ambitions:

*'It also encourages you to have, like, a life plan. So it like made you think what you want and what you don't want, so, like if you wanted a house and then you didn't not want not to have a house, or you want a family or don't want a family – and stuff like that. So you had to make a list of where you want to live on*

*one side and where you don't want to live on the other side. Like a flat or what you didn't want. So it encouraged you to have a plan.'*

Many of these young people reported that it demanded that they set clear, positive aims for themselves in order to be more successful:

*'I think that the 10 characteristics of unsuccessful people – it helps you like, see what you want to be (like you want to be confident, successful, strong) and you've got to have aims. And it then shows what you don't want to be – so that if you do the wrong thing like then you'll do all the wrong things like you'll be weak, you haven't got any aims. And I think it shows you not to take the wrong path and you've got to like stick to your aims.'*

*'It's made me feel a bit more confident – because like, because you like, have to think about what you want to do and you had to write down what you're good at and it made me feel that I was good at something. And you had to think about three things that you're really good at and are passionate about. Like, I said I like sport, history and maths. And since it was my own opinion, I must, I must be good at it because normally, I don't think I'm good at stuff. Making you think about what you are good at makes you realise that you can actually be good at something. It's made me feel positive. It makes me realise I can be good at something.'*

By requiring learners to identify their strengths and weaknesses, some of those interviewed suggested that this process also supported them in activities such as interviews that they needed to participate in imminently:

*'We've both applied for collage now. My interview is tomorrow to do 'Travel and Tourism'. If they ask me at my college interview what my strengths are and things like that I've worked the out when doing SWEET. So it's helped prepare me for the interview.'*

### **Support in informing and guiding career choice:**

A focus on the young person's aims and aspirations for the future, together with support in informing and guiding career choice, proved to be an important and influential factor for many:



*'SWEET' was good. It makes you think because it asks you about your future and that – about jobs. It made you think about your goals and what you need to do to get there, to achieve the goals.'*

*'And it's relevant to our future. Whereas so much of what you learn in school is not, like, we'll probably never need to know about the planets ever again, we'll probably never use the planets in our future at all whereas this [SWEET] is really relevant to our future.'*

*'I don't know how to put it but it figures out what you want to do in life and how to plan for that, do you know what I mean. It helps you a lot to work out what you want to achieve.'*

However, some respondents identified the real challenge that some young people experience in considering their choices for future employment resulting from a limited perspective of what is available to them. In its present form, the SWEET material was seen to pay limited attention to this aspect of awareness amongst some people who would be likely to use it:

*'I think it would have been difficult though if you didn't have an idea of what you wanted to do. Like, if you had completely no idea. It would have been really, really difficult.'*

*'People just go for well-known jobs. Like, for boys it's like, mechanic or electrician. I don't think people know what jobs are available. There are so many that we don't know about.'*

A young person proposed a way in which a revised edition of the SWEET material could be extended to incorporate – or to be accompanied with – additional information designed to address this area of need:

*'With this, if you had a separate little booklet with information about different jobs, what is available and what you need to do to get them. I think that would be useful as well'*

### **Helps to structure their thinking:**

This level of engagement was enhanced as a consequence of the way that the resource helped to structure their thinking about the kind of employment that they might like to aim for and what they might need to do to get there. For many, this was

a new experience as they had not previously considered the importance of the necessary stages involved in order to achieve a desired end goal:

*'We'd thought about what we wanted to do before – but not about how we're going to get there. We always knew what we wanted to do but it made us think about what we needed to do. It made us think about what qualifications and GCSEs we need to get and what we predict we're going to get and it made us realise that we do need to get a few to be able to do what we want to do. So it did help us with our career choices.'*

Adults interviewed also felt that this approach of structuring young people's thinking about the future and how it relates to their present circumstances was a useful way to reinforce the significance and importance of the task:

*'When we were looking at choosing a future, they loved it and I was really pleasantly surprised how much they enjoyed planning their future on paper. Not just sitting down in front of the telly with their mum and dad to have a chat – but actually physically putting things on paper 'This is how my future is going to look'. And they got a lot out of that, I think. SWEET takes you through that step by step. It's not just 'What are you going to do in the future?' It's more, 'Now what have you learnt?'; 'Let's review what you've learnt'; 'now set your goals'. I think that's really important.'*

*'For most learners who have completed the 'New Habits' unit, they say that what it's done for them is that it's made them focus on what's going to happen when they leave school. Rather than be rushing around doing things that they have to do – going to revision clubs, getting their coursework in, for once they could sit down and focus on what they want to do; focus on what outcomes they want from their lives. They're not often given that opportunity.'*

*'The only thing they are having problems with at the moment is the long-term goals. I think if they were in KS4, they would be thinking about passing their GCSEs, so what we talked about today was looking at levels. So the aim of the school is to have more level 6 so that's what we looked at in terms of long-term goals. They didn't realise that for long-term goals you need to have short-term goals in between. This was really useful. It's pages 34 and 35. We use flow charts within the classroom and within planning and that's where we're at the moment.'*

This was not a feature missed by the young people using the material. They too appreciated the way that the resource had helped them structure their thinking in a way that would help them identify and then explore the direction they wished their future to take:

*'It was like a timeline. Like the first question was 'What do you want to do?' and then it was like 'What do you need to get there?'; and then like 'In 10 years, what would you need? It was like ..... a timeline. In a year's time, what are you going to do; in two years' time and 10 years... Like, where are you going to go with your career? So it does make you think that it's not like a dead-end job, that you need to improve on your career.'*

### **'Wake-up call'**

Whilst for others, involvement in SWEET was seen as a 'wake-up call' and resulted in a realisation that they need to take an active part in planning and preparing for their future:

*'It's growing up as well. Like, when you grow up, things get serious. It makes you wake up and 'smell the coffee' - the fact that it's only you that can do it. If I'm late and she's on time, it's my fault, it's nobody else's.'*

*'It's about being realistic. Before that we really didn't think that we really do need to get these qualifications. I really do need to get my GCSEs.'*

*'When you realise that you've only got about 4 months left in school and after that we're not going to have someone constantly nagging at us and saying 'You need to do this', 'You need to do that' ..... that it's down to us that you really need to do it'*

The 'Reality Check' which forms an integral part of the resource is something that can be seen to support this 'wake-up call' referred to by the learner above. This takes the form of a set of facts relating to the possible consequences of pursuing a life-path based on the 'NEET' [Not in Education, Employment or Training] experience. Some of those interviewed explained that this had a real impact on the way that they viewed the future and now prepare for it:

*'There's a Reality Check at the back of the book that you can go through that just puts it into a little bit of a perspective on things like how many NEETS there are nationally; what their future will be if they tend to stick to that way of life- it was a real reality check for some. It's not a lot of boys who would need that reality check, but we did it regardless and we all took it on board. The statistics were quite alarming. 'Cos people see (particularly in this area) there's a lot of crime, lots of drugs and things like that, and what most of them do is really within this area and they don't really see a way out. It will help them to look past that and to see that the world is a bigger place than just the estate – you don't have to stay here. There are other places you can go. So it was helpful in that respect. Just maybe give them that little push 'Well, I just may go out and get a job and make a better life for myself.'*

*'It certainly did give a bit of a boost and a bit of a motivational help up, if you like.'*

*'I really like the bit at the back as well, the Reality Check. And the language maps are also really good. I really do like the 'Language map's and the 'Sentence Help'.'*

*'I look at these [the statistics at the back of the book] and I think I don't want to be one of those people that have less chance of gaining employment. I would say more on this subject, the 'Reality Check'....., all the statistics of how many people don't gain employment and things like that. I think that would have a big impact, a big wake-up call for some people.'*

Others appreciated the frankness with which the material has been prepared and the way that it avoids patronising the reader:

*'It's like a book that tells you it straight! It just tells you straight up. It's going to be hard, and stuff like that.'*

### **Working with others:**

It is interesting that young people identified the value in working with others on some of the tasks that they addressed whilst working through SWEET. They articulated this as helpful to themselves but also in helping them work collaboratively as they could appreciate the value in such an approach:

*'Working together on it has also been useful. Because we are quite close friends and go to the same school, we're quite opinionated. And say, if we were trying to say, 'What do you think my positives are and what my negatives are', we'd be truthful with each other. Because obviously there are things we don't notice about ourselves and if you don't know it you're not going to be able to adjust to reality. So working together on it worked for us.'*

*'What was good too was putting them into pairs and they were looking at where they learn best. Someone might say, 'Well, I learn best because of the way the teacher explains it'. Somebody else might say, 'Well, actually, you might understand that but I don't'. So we're then able to feed back to staff as well. This was mentioned today, have you ensured that everybody understands - because they're sharing their experiences within the classroom as well.'*

*'You can do it on your own but it makes it better when we do it together because everyone has their own opinion.'*

*'Useful to work together on the tasks 'cos when you got stuck the other day, I helped you out. Yes, and when you got stuck I help you out 'cos we help each other. It encourages cooperation.'*

### **Motivation:**

Several learners and adults raised the issue of motivation as significant to the people using SWEET and that in many respects it was felt to have been helpful in addressing this:

*'Motivation is the biggest key for me, not just for the sport that I do, you need to be motivated for everything, to succeed in life... to motivate myself would help to gain employment, help me to gain qualifications to gain employment. It has played a big part on me trying to gain employment, trying to better myself. It has motivated me 100%, I really did enjoy it.'*

*'I think it's quite motivational – it shows how some famous people have fallen in popularity but can get up and achieve again later. They try to make their lives go back. As we're so young, we can learn from these people – as role models we can look up to.'*

*'It gets you more motivated.'*

*'I like it [SWEET] because it shows you what your actual goals are and it makes you motivated.'*

*'And if like, you need to get motivated, you can just read some of the statements in here and then it makes you motivated. In some of them, you don't realise until you write it down and then, just writing it down just helps you realise what it is you want to achieve and how you are going to achieve it, I think.'*

*'I know that a lot of people in my class all they want to do is to work in MacDonalld's and things and don't want to achieve anything - but there are people in the book who are now massive world-wide stars. So I really think it shows that if you believe in it, you can really achieve. 'Cos I want to be an actress when I'm older so now I know that if I push myself hard enough I could actually get to that. It's given me that push so that I can actually do it. So now I am taking drama at GCSE – before, I wouldn't have been taking drama because I would have thought that it would never happen and that I would never be an actress – that would be too big. But now, I feel that if I tried my hardest, I would get there some day. So now I am taking the GCSE for it.'*

Some of the older learners drew attention to the way that SWEET had helped them to gain motivation and to present a more positive image of themselves, recognising the potential significance of this for gaining subsequent employment:

*'The part I've done will help me get a job later because like, if you're not motivated and you don't think about it, I think that if I hadn't done the SWEET course I wouldn't have begun to put it into perspective. I wouldn't be thinking about what I want to do. It helps me to achieve and do the things I want to do when I am older. So I do think that it will help me when I leave school – with jobs and things like that. It'll help me get motivated.'*

*'I play football and one of my bogies is getting up in the morning, get myself motivated and things like that...certain quotations that people said, like what famous people have said.. I written them on my bedroom wall, every time I wake up in the morning I wake up about 6 o'clock to go for a run and I*

*look at that and I think that's what you got to strive for... quotations like that in certain parts of the book.'*

*'I was overweight and I motivated myself to get out for a run in the morning. Getting up at 9-10 in the morning to come down here, to motivate yourself to get up and come down to gain employment, gain qualifications is sort of interlinked.'*

*'Body language, it teaches you how to use positive body language, how it makes a good impression.'*

*'It'll also definitely help my chance of gaining employment later.'*

There were those however, whose circumstances were felt to be such that they did not find the emphasis on 'motivation' as necessary, believing that for them, this was not an issue that they believed they needed to spend time on:

#### **Accredited award:**

An important, and for many adults and young people a key feature of the resource was the fact that upon successful completion of three units (namely 'New Habits', 'Physical Well-being' and 'Relationships') and subject to external scrutiny and validation, the learner achieves an accredited award in the form of a BTEC Level 1 in Personal Development. In the main, this is seen as an important aspect of the resource by adults and young people alike. For some of the adults, this is viewed as the prime motivator for undertaking the programme:

*'In terms of motivation, they do it because they're going to get a qualification'*

*'There's quite a bit of research for them to do. In a school, I think it would be ten times easier to deliver 'cos you'd have the same class each time and almost at the same place. But a lot of these are – they haven't been in school for two years, some of them, so doing quite a lot of writing ..... I have one boy who has finishes each of the assessed units and his level of writing and reading is low but he's doing better than the more high ability boys who just don't want to engage. But they do it mainly because they are going to get a qualification.'*

*'They love it when they complete one of the accredited units – they can think that that's a part of a qualification in the bag. They go home really chuffed when they can do that because it's*

*about them – totally about them. As long as they like it. There's never a dry day with SWEET because I can obviously tweak it and turn it to relate it to them.'*

*'It is nice that they can get a qualification from doing something that's relatively simple. They don't get too frustrated with it because it's easily accessible. So, in terms of that, I like it.'*

For others, particularly where they need to convince mainstream schools that their intervention with the young people is positive and where they need to demonstrate a tangible output for their investment, the ability to demonstrate the qualification accrued is seen as particularly valued – and possibly the main reason for engaging with SWEET:

*'So the schools will look at it as useful because they get a qualification from it rather than doing Social and Emotional Literacy where they don't get a qualification. So, I think this is definitely positive.'*

*'Because the schools that my learners come from demand that I demonstrate results. The schools are banging on my door saying 'I want performance points'. So I only use the units that will create the results – the units that are accredited. I only want the results! They don't care what it is they are doing as long as they get the results.'*

*'To be honest, I wouldn't even look at it if it wasn't accredited. I haven't got the time and the schools [from which my learners come] are not prepared for me to do 'nice things'. They just want the outcomes. The fact that I can do nice things as a part of that is a bonus.'*

Many of the young people also expressed their enthusiasm about the fact that they could be awarded a recognised qualification through completing the necessary three units:

*'Qualifications are important in my eyes. The more qualification you got the more chances you got for employment and everything at the end of the day.'*

*'I feel much better about myself to be honest with you. Obviously I have met new people, meet new friends, you are motivated to come down and see your mates, all aspects, its brilliant its really good, it's a good qualification to gain.'*



*'The fact that it leads to a qualification is a good thing and makes a difference – it will give me one more GCSEs in the future. It also gives me a better chance of gaining employment later because of the fact that I have more qualifications and I will also have learnt skills relating to myself.'*

*'The qualification is a big bonus because it's not like boring old exams. And it can be quite fun to do because you're not just doing the same old stuff because you've got to work on different stuff. It's good to get a qualification when you like, are enjoying something. So I think that getting a qualification after completing the SWEET course is really good.'*

*'The qualification is another motivator because we enjoy doing it and we get a qualification at the end of it.'*

*'The fact that I'll get a qualification is also a good thing. It's better than doing something and not getting anything out of it.'*

*'That's important. If it didn't have that there would be no point in doing it, is there.'*

Some interviewees however, were keen to emphasise that despite the importance they placed on the ability to generate a recognised award on completion, they also believed that were accreditation not available, SWEET was an excellent resource to use:

*'But apart from that, it's an excellent resource. It really, really is.'*

A few of the learners, whilst appreciating the opportunity to gain a qualification, did not regard this as a prime importance since other assets accrued through participation with SWEET were seen as more significant to them:

*'The fact that we get a qualification out of it doesn't really like, make a difference – it's just that it's made us consider our future.'*

*'It's more about what you've got to do to get that qualification really. Then when you tell somebody that you've got the SWEET qualification, they'll know that you've considered everything before you've decided what job or career you want to do.'*

When viewed collectively, the factors identified above serve to explain the pride that most of the young people interviewed seemed to take in the way they treated the resource and the care taken to ensure that it presented positively when sent for validation. Adults working with the learners were keen to draw attention to this and offered examples of how they treated the resource:

*'And they take a great deal of pride in their book. All the kids keep them in their folders and they are immaculate. There's no graphite on them. I've had to go out and buy Tipex because if they make a mistake they've got to change it. It's all that pride 'Look what I've got' and 'Look what I can take away'. And that's really, really important.'*

*'The kids I've got really value it – I've told them how expensive it is – and also, they've got folders they can tuck it inside. It's not just chucked on top of a unit or a shelf or anything.'*

### **Training for delivery:**

The adults interviewed were asked to reflect and comment on the training they had received when first introduced to SWEET. This took the form of a one day input and was, without exception, appreciated by those who undertook it. They were particularly appreciative of the receptive approach taken by the trainers and welcomed the interactive approach deployed in the delivery of the training:

*'I enjoyed it. We had a lot of material given to us. We went through the book and we were given individual units which we were asked to evaluate, so to speak. Went through a lot on the projector – it was very interactive. It was all led by us. We were given input and if we wanted to criticise or to point out any errors, we were given those opportunities. It was like 'If there are any problems, don't be afraid to let us know', sort of thing. It was very much we were given the reins so to speak, it was like, this is what you're going to be delivering, have a look through it and I want you to then go out and deliver it.'*

*'They were happy to help. They've always been in touch. I'm constantly emailing Xxxxxx myself, so he's always asking me how it's getting on. He's also asked me to speak with other tutors in ACT just to share ideas. So even though I'm very much on my own, so to speak, I'm always in contact with Xxxxxx, so the support is definitely sound. I can't fault Xxxxxx at all.'*

*'It did set me up with a really good background.to deliver it. But I had been used to delivering Social and Emotional Literacy for years, so they are very much the same sort of themes, really. So it was no problem at all to do.'*

*'I definitely thought the training was helpful. It was really good.'*

### **Limitations and potential refinement:**

#### **Spelling errors/typographical errors:**

Some respondents (adults and learners) were quick to draw attention at the spelling errors/typos in the material and felt that this was both distracting and unprofessional within teaching/learning contexts.

*'In terms of the DVD that comes with it, I'd use the DVD but there are so many spelling mistakes on it that you can't access any of it unless I read and write it for them.'*

*'There as some spelling mistakes too – but other than that, it's a good book.'*

*'The spelling in it is crap. It makes me think they don't care and are stupid enough to do it, why should I do it?'*

*'Make all the spelling corrections'*

A similar issue was raised in terms of the need to be consistent and accurate in the use of terminology across the various parts of the materials:

*'But it's not consistent with the DVD in terms of, you've got 'formal' and 'informal' here and on the DVD it's got 'Formal' and 'Formal' and because they get easily distracted!!!! It's just spelling mistakes.'*

#### **Language:**

Others drew attention to what is considered as 'bad language' in some of the quotations used in the book. They argue that whilst some might see this as adding a degree of realism to the material it is not something that should be condoned and

certainly not where the aim of the work is to explore the merits of 'good models', again within a teaching/learning environment.

*'The only one criticism that I've got – and the SMT doesn't agree with me – it's just something that I picked up on is that there is a quote in here that I feel is not needed because it uses the work 'piss' 'Somebody has pissed you off today' (page 164). It's not that I'm a prude or anything else, my take on it is that there's enough poor language and swearing. They don't need to see it written down in front of them. It is an American quote but I just think that there could be a more appropriate one without the swearing.'*

Portal Training would be well advised to address these issues at the earliest opportunity so that it does not reflect negatively on what is clearly a good and well received product.

### **Repetition:**

Attention was also drawn to the need to reduce the number of reflective exercises that learners are asked to complete:

*'Also, take out so many reflection exercises.'*

*'It is actually a really good book. But it's a lot of the same thing over and over again.'*

*'And these are just stupid – I don't know why they put reflection exercises at the end of every single section. They do it all the time and it gets repetitive and boring. There's no point in doing that again when you've already done it earlier. If it was something that had to be done every now and then, it wouldn't be so bad. But not at the end of every single one!'*

*'Sometimes, you do feel that you're repeating yourself though. They ask you a question on one subject and then you turn over a few pages and again they sort of ask you the same question again.'*

*'It is a bit repetitive at times. If it was to keep more to the point, then that would improve it.'*

*'Even the girls find it quite repetitive – because you've got reflection on every section. I know they're trying to keep it*

*consistent throughout but they've all got reflection at the back. They tend to get bored doing similar things all the time.'*

*'I think it is very repetitive. Here you're going over the key elements – and then you're writing them down again here. In the same unit, you're repeating yourself - and they get annoyed with that actually.'*

Despite these concerns, it was not something that was universally held and several informants were quick to point to the value that they had accrued from working their way through the reflective exercises:

*'If someone is down in the dumps ....I'm not motivated, I haven't got the right skills.....well hang on you got that right in front of you, have a look at that it does help you, it has helped me and if it can help me it can help anyone.'*

*'You should always look back and reflect on things. Even if you complete the book and one day you want to go back and have a look through, rather than go through the whole book you can go to those pages and see what did I learn there, it is a lot quicker to go back to (the end of chapter reflections).'*

Whilst the majority of those who were interviewed were generally positive and enthusiastic about the extent to which the tasks relating to SWEET, some felt that in addition to the repetitive nature of some exercises, others were seen as in need of truncating:

*'I would say that the least interesting part so far is where we had to answer questions about what we heard. We had to listen to Plan B story and then we had to write questions about it. .... There were quite a lot of questions in that section and it would have been better if it were like, less sections in the 'Plan B' bit. It was quite a short story so to write loads of questions about it meant that it was quite hard to find the information .[The story was too short].'*

For some adults, the nature of the groups that they worked with and the attendance patterns which operate in these settings can make it seem repetitive and drawn out. It was recognised however, that this may have more to do with the pattern of delivery that has to be adopted due to constraints that other patterns of delivery might be unlikely to experience:

*'I find it sort of long winded – but that could be because I don't have the same group. They've been doing 'Physical Wellbeing' for the last month – because I've got learners and starters as well, so you've got to start them off on that.'*

### **Quotations:**

Whilst the quotations used within the book were seen as extremely helpful and served to make strong points, several adults offered the observation that young people did not readily relate to the sources of some of the quotations and others were unfamiliar with the examples provided for positive role-models.

*'The people selected for the quotes could do with some further refinement – for someone more current for the quotes. For example, there was a lady in the Paralympics who had lost her legs in the 7/7 bombing and she was to me, one of the most inspirational people. I would suggest that they modify those to make them more relevant.'*

*'Another thing was changing the sentences - they found that really motivating as well. 'The best revenge is to succeed where you have been told you won't' – and they were able to talk about that. They like making their own quotes as well.'*

Depending on the nature and physical location of the learning settings in which SWEET was delivered, accessing electronic support to help identify and build on the meaning and messages being conveyed through the quotations was seen as challenging by some if access to computers was limited or non-existent. The use of alternative modern technology such as smart phones, for example was being used by some to compensate for limited resources.

*'Not really – although there was one section where we were working on 'Motivation' and looking at quotes from famous people. What we ended up doing was Googling the quotes on one of the boy's mobile phones – just to find answers, which is easy enough to do if you've got a computer in front of you and things like that. But because we are outreach – we do have a laptop and a dongle but it is quite temperamental. But we got around that by using one of the boy's phones but other than that there haven't been many implications. I suppose that's more to do with my situation than anything else. Some of the quotes weren't familiar to all the learners but it was easy enough to search for - but it wasn't at our fingertips, so to speak.'*

This is something that *Portal Training* may care to revise when producing the next edition of the material.

### **Relevance:**

Indeed, the issue of relevance was one that emerged in other contexts as well as in terms of the quotations used. It would seem that young people are more likely to relate to incidents and examples with which they are familiar and resonate with their lived experiences:

*'Also, put in more stories about what's happened recently. Like, teenagers do like to go out and party and stuff like that.'*

*'It's all about what's going to happen in the future, but it also needs to consider what's going to happen in the present – what is actually going on.'*

### **Increased attention to developing positive attitudes:**

Several of the young people interviewed were of the view that engaging with SWEET in its present format had helped them in developing a positive attitude to their work and their lives:

*'It's good; it shows more positive reactions to things and not to be peer pressured.'*

*'It makes you realise that you have got positives as well as negatives. And you know it's not like a test and it's not worth lying when you do say truthfully 'I do need to improve on .....'. Like, punctuality was one of my weaknesses.'*

One adult raised the possibility of considering ways in which the material could pay an increased attention to how young people using it might consider the more positive aspects of behaviour, rather than dwelling on the negative aspects:

*'Looking more at 'Making negatives positives' has been very useful. Looking for solutions rather than problems ....that has been something that's come out as helpful. As in things like, why are we negative - is it the way we feel? Is it because we haven't eaten?'*

## **Further support in managing stress:**

Young people felt that a more 'personalised' approach to some aspects of SWEET would be beneficial. For example, opportunities to consider how participants can secure support after they have confronted demanding or challenging situations would be welcomed. At present, the focus seems to be more on the consequence of behaviour whilst young people would also welcome advice on how to secure support:

*'I think they could write um... more personal things. 'Cos I know that it's like, all about you but I think they could write like, say if something has happened in the past and you're having trouble getting over something. Then maybe they could have a section where they can see how you can just get over it. Things like, who will be there to help you – and all stuff like that. '*

*'Things like if someone lets you down, in here [the book] it leads up to that – it doesn't tell you anything about what to do after that. Things like, what happens if you don't achieve what you want to achieve. And maybe it could have things about like, to keep on going and a section like that.'*

*'A section in the book about 'After Disappointment'. About what you do if you don't achieve what you want to achieve like, carry on and start again.'*

*'Maybe looking at consequences because we realise that we are really teenagers and we maybe shouldn't be doing stuff that adults do.'*

## **Sensitive issues:**

Personalising the work also brings its own additional challenges that might be addressed more directly in a revised edition. Attention was drawn to some of the sensitive issues that parts of the resource forces young people to address. Some of these were seen as potentially painful and the SWEET resources could help if addressed:

*'A lot of the issues in the book are very personal and people will have had difficulty with some of these like, relationships, alcohol, drugs and things or may be going through it at the time. They need a bit at the start is to find out how they feel about it and if people are ok with it. And if you want to do it, then do it but if you don't, don't. When I did it, I found it a bit too personal.'*



*Asking questions like why do you use this drug or that? and things. They should just give you the book and say this is what we're going to do and are you happy to do it? Not to assume that everyone is ok with it.'*

### **Revised introduction to the material:**

One learner felt that the introduction in its present state could do with modifying as it failed to immediately appeal to and engage young people:

*'The beginning needs changing however. When I first started reading it out to the class they said, 'Stop! That's so cheesy.'*

### **Additional supporting resources:**

Several adults who were invited to comment on the potential of developing the SWEET resource suggested that there was ample opportunity to develop additional supporting resources to enrich and extend both individual learning opportunities and for working in groups:

*'There might be a lot of scope for developing the resources to go alongside it. There is so much there that in order to do it justice, I think there's a lot of scope to produce additional worksheets; additional research; additional comprehension exercises etc. to address the criteria they have to meet.'*

*'I do make some additional sheets of additional things to put into mix it up a bit and get it a bit more interactive – 'cos a lot of this stuff is done individually. So I do add bits in the try to get them to work together because there isn't that much working together. I do do a bit more of that 'cos at the end of the day it's all about social literacy, I think.'*

*'It could be usefully developed by increasing the additional material - worksheets and resources. If you take the 'Wellbeing' unit, the pages that cover that don't meet the criteria enough. It's got the basics and it's a great foundation but I think that there's so much more in there that you could bring out. It would be a shame to waste the opportunity. So, if they want it as a stand-alone package, I would say that the additional worksheets, the additional stimuli would be the way to take it forward.'*

Adults spoken to were keen to evidence and demonstrate examples of extension exercises and resources that they had produced and used with individuals and groups. It would be useful were *Portal Training* to consider hosting a workshop in which those who now had experience of using the resource could share their ideas and help develop supportive materials. These could be used in subsequent editions of the material.

### **Further refinement to the appearance of the resource:**

As noted above, almost all adults and young people interviewed mentioned the extent to which the colourful and attractive appearance of the SWEET material had attracted them. This, together with its portability had been an important part of its initial appeal for many. Several however, also identified ways in which its appearance and format could be further improved.

### **A5 or A4 format:**

Many commented favourably on the use of an A5 format as noted above. Others however focused on the challenges that this presented to young people generally but in particular, to the less able and/or less coordinated. The limited space provided for inserting written comments is a concern and some proposed the use of an A4 format to address this:

*'The A5 format is difficult if they don't have neat writing. On some of these units, I've had to photocopy some of the sheets, blow them up to A4 then get them to write it in. Some really do find it difficult. Mary's got really neat writing and she finds it hard to fit it into the small gaps.'*

*'The boxes could be a bit bigger, give you a bit more to write.'*

*'I think if it was in A4 it would be a lot better.'*

*'I do like the book, but I'd like it in A4 version. That's my biggest criticism of it. The learners I've got have sometimes got very difficult hand writing and they find it very difficult to fit it in the spaces provided. Even the brighter learners, who have lovely neat writing, often have big handwriting. So it just frustrates them because they can't fit all the information in. The more able kids want to put in more information and the less able struggle because of their handwriting.'*

*'When we first got together before we got the book in, one of the things we were concerned about was the amount of space*

*available to write in the books. But there is because it's not threatening at the moment, - what you will find is that the person who will only write one sentence in English will only write once sentence there too. The person who will write three paragraphs will fill it. But what you find is that what's in that paragraph is enough to cover everything. We were going to suggest having some extra space at the back of the book for extra work, but I'm not sure whether we need it or not really.'*

*'The boxes are too small and that makes your work look messy. We want to keep it neat and nice for when it gets sent off.'*

### **Binding:**

Another concern that was raised by many adults, irrespective of the nature of the setting in which they worked, was the way the present version is bound together.

*'Also, a really small thing, but the binding rings – their arms gets stuck in it – whether they are left of right handed. They do get around it. I tell them to close the book and fold it over.'*

Many had found difficulty in ensuring that it remained together over the period of its use. Examples were presented where the binding had failed to retain the pages in one piece, and this was felt to be of particular concern where the material needs to be presented for external validation in order to qualify for the award.

*'The book broke quite quickly – that's happened to several of us but not all and it's hard to put it together again [spiral binding] and when I did, it broke again. Better quality would help.'*

*'A couple of the books we've had have fallen apart'.*

*'We've found that a lot of them have come apart with use.'  
'But it does break really easily I only dropped it once and it broke.'*

One participant had found that using individual folders for each learner had made a big difference to securing the material and preventing further damage as a result of its construction:

*'I'd also like it to be in a clip-folder because then all the additional information and worksheets I generate with the students can then be put in the clip and I don't have to find another folder to put it in – which is messy when it goes to*

*moderation and I have to send two folders in and the books are too heavy to go into a Polypocket.'*

### **Front cover:**

Whilst there was unreserved credit given to the striking and attractive design and colour of the cover of the SWEET book, one adult did draw attention to the fact that this could be enhanced were there some space provided into which the learners could insert their names. Not only would this personalise the material for the learner but would make re-distribution of the books much easier for adults where the books are stored at the end of each teaching day:

*'The one think I would like regarding the presentation – it would be a lot easier for staff if the names were on the front. What I've done is to give them all a sticker – because by the time you've looked inside each one and you have 35 in a class, and also, if the whole thing was spiral bound rather than this protective cover, because it does come off quite easily.'*

### **Differentiated versions:**

The general appreciation and enthusiasm of the SWEET programme might be further extended were differentiated versions of the resource to be introduced. This would enable it to be used with audiences of varying abilities and hence, engage a wider range of learners. Adults too would find this helpful when working with groups of widely ranging abilities:

*'I think if there were different versions it would help. Because I do differentiate it and this is only a Level 1, isn't it?'*

*'I've just taken on a KS3 group from a local Cardiff school and the first thing that came into my mind was 'I can use SWEET' – because again, they want results – and again, SWEET is a whole package but it's too advanced for them. It would be really good if they could take it up to entry level so that I could deliver it to KS3 kids who have low ability.'*

Several teachers and other adults were able to identify ways in which the SWEET material could usefully be used to complement other aspects of the curriculum and were already making the maximum use of this. They also expressed a wish that future revisions of the resource might increase the extent to which the resource could be drawn upon in a cross-curricular fashion:

*'There's then a lot of literacy and numeracy that can be brought in. I'm very keen on anything that can also improve the numeracy and literacy element of it.'*

*'It might be interesting if there was something like that related to 'Health' incorporated within it [the SWEET programme].'*

*'It might be interesting if it could be worked with the school, collectively as a part of the wider PSHE programme that encompass things that do affect them in their everyday live. To include other aspects such as 'Bereavement'*

### **Recommend SWEET to other teachers:**

When asked whether they would recommend SWEET to other teachers and schools, the adults' response was overwhelmingly positive. The reason given included its immediate appeal to young people due to its striking cover colours; the compact nature of the material – particularly where the work is undertaken outside a mainstream school;

*'I would recommend it to other teachers because – even like, small things, like the colour – it is eye catching, it is modern, it is pocket size. Other than e-learning, it's how I see learning going somewhere in the future. Having all the units 'under one roof' if you like ... and everything you need for the qualification in front of you. It will be a hell of a lot easier for teachers and tutors preparing for lessons and the such, because there isn't really a lot of resources asked of me. But, yes, I'd recommend it, definitely, especially for people like me not working in a mainstream setting. I go into communities and things, so a lot of things like printing; I'd have to do in my office before I leave. Whereas if I was teaching SWEET, all I'd need in front of me is the book, so it would save a hell of a lot of preparation and time planning and things like that. So, in that respect, I couldn't fault it. I think it's a good tool.'*

*'I definitely think this is useful to a school.'*

Staff members interviewed in a large mainstream school were so enthusiastic about its potential that they were hoping to persuade the senior management team to introduce it across the entire year group as opposed to offering it to a targeted population:

*'We'd like to take it to the whole year group next year as well.'*

Not only was it felt that it could be used with an entire age group but managed appropriately, the resource could be enhanced so as to be taught over a far longer time period. In one instance it was suggested by teachers interviewed that they would like to develop the work and use it over a two year period. Hence, enabling learning opportunities that would further enrich the development of the learners.

*'I do think it could last the two years. It generates so much discussion – that's what the best thing about it is. It's the generating of group and paired work, whole class discussion, student-led discussion. It's just a really good resource.'*

Mention was also made of its likely value to those students who whilst continuing to attend mainstream school, might be classed as 'disengaged' or 'reluctant learners'. Adults spoke of the likelihood that SWEET would appeal to them and might also help them achieve a recognised award:

*'I think that in school where pupils are not engaging with mainstream education, I think this is a really good thing for them to do and it will engage them and at least they will get a qualification from that.'*

Irrespective of the nature of the setting, several members of staff were of the view that SWEET was helpful in supporting important aspects of the wider curriculum. Particular mention was made about its potential value in helping young people develop the key skills of literacy:

*'Also, another positive is that literacy is a huge initiative and focus in all schools at the moment and the sentence help, the sentence starters – they all help in what we are trying to do across the school as well. So, it all helps with transferrable skills as well.'*

*'Also, another positive is that literacy is a huge initiative and focus in all schools at the moment and the sentence help, the sentence starters – they all help in what we are trying to do across the school as well. So, it all helps with transferrable skills as well.'*

Whilst others drew attention to the way that SWEET helps young children in the development of wider life-skills

*'In terms of skills, yes it does help. I think it improves their skills – life-skills, thinking about different skills.'*

An incidental but useful value factor identified by one teacher was the way that SWEET could be readily taken up in the event of a teacher being replaced by supply cover:

*'Another positive is that when I've been away, cover supervisors find it very easy to use with the classes and they have a prepared resource and I don't have to prepare additional work. So it's a win-win really.'*

Several of the young people also expressed an opinion that they would advise other learners to work with SWEET since they too would probably benefit from this:

*'If some was.....I can't be bothered to do this, I could probably relate to that and say listen just read through this, it will help you.'*

*'It should be given to every Year 11 pupil in the country - even if it was a shorter book of the three main units for the qualification.'*

*'If anyone has an option to do SWEET, they should do it because it's really useful and you get a qualification from doing it.'*

*'I know that it has challenged me and I know that I have developed and I know that a lot of my classmates have developed but it really gives you a challenge and motivation to really want to get on with the book. So, it's really a good book.'*

*'But I enjoyed doing this. I'm not just saying that because you're sat here because I really did enjoy it.'*

*'Overall, it's a good book. I really did enjoy it.'*

*'It's helpful – but it's complicated. I'd give it an 8 or a 9. It has opened up my mind a lot.'*

*'Out of 5 stars, I'd defiantly give it 4 – if not 5.'*

# Phase 2

## Introduction

For the second phase of the evaluation, interviews were conducted with teachers operating in three different settings and a questionnaire was completed by 56 learners in three different settings and hence, responses were received from mainstream and alternative provision. The aim of this part of the enquiry was to establish how SWEET was viewed by users after engaging with it over a period of a complete academic year. Secondly, this part of the exercise was designed to enable users in quite different contexts to reflect on its merits and limitations over a full academic year and in many cases, as young people entered the phase of life that took them into work or further education. Collectively, both parts of the evaluation gives a clear insight into its value across mainstream and alternative provision whilst also identifying some limitations as well as generating data that may help *Portal Training* further refine and extend the resource..

In this Phase, specific attention was given to teachers' perspective on the impact of SWEET on:

- the pupils' attitude towards work;
- their aspirations to continue their education
- whether SWEET focused the pupils more on their future lives generally and in what way
- any attitudinal changes of the pupils who have taken part in SWEET
- which elements of SWEET have had the biggest and least impact on the pupils
- whether SWEET had any particular impacted on the more challenging and/or disaffected pupils - if so how and why (Attitude, Behaviour, Attendance)
- whether pupils have benefited and enjoyed the SWEET experience and why
- what is different about SWEET to other PSE/Motivational programmes

This part of the evaluation also attempted to explore, from a teaching/delivery perspective:

- how easy or difficult had SWEET been to deliver
- what parts of the programme had particular limitations – and why
- whether they had to supplement some aspects of SEET and if so, how
- whether they had enjoyed the experience of delivering SWEET
- whether they had any observations of how to improve SWEET that haven't already been fed back to Portal and
- how any impact from SWEET can be sustained following completion of the programme

The evaluation also explored the quality and quantity of support provided for teachers in using SWEET with their learners. Please see Appendix B for the issues raised with teachers for this part of the evaluation.

In addition, the views of learners was sought regarding their reflections on using SWEET as a learning tool and any impact it might have made on them. A total of 56



learners returned completed or partially completed questionnaires (a copy of the questionnaire circulated to the learners can be found in Appendix C).

### **Motivating in structure and presentation**

As was the case with Phase 1 of the evaluation, adults were quick to draw attention to the motivational value of using SWEET with their learners.

Specific aspects of the programme which were singled out as of particular significance were its structure; presentation and its motivational content. Collectively, these factors are significant in ensuring its appeal to students:

‘Definitely it’s attractive it brings the students to the resource rather than the resource to the students’.

‘What SWEET has allowed us to do is..... It’s that carrot, I suppose. It enables me to say to the learners, ‘Look. This is important that you do this or that – and I know it’s important because it says so in here.’ ‘This is the qualification and it’s important – it says so in there that it’s important. So, it’s not just me that is saying it – they say it’s important.’ It reinforces all the things that are important in their lives.’

‘It lends itself to everything we do anyway. It’s what we do anyway, but the way it is presented, just the book in itself ... not ... ‘Oh my God, I got PSHE.’ When they are coming in they are saying...‘We are doing SWEET Miss, aren’t we?’ So you have got that mind-set.’

The way that SWEET is structured and its use of colour and pictures was seen by one respondent as particularly valuable for working with students whose first language was not English. In an increasingly multi-cultural context, this can be seen as an additional strength that is a part of the presentation of these materials:

‘With the colour and illustrations, we have a lot of EAL students and they haven’t found it difficult,’ cause obviously pictures help with language anyway”.

There were some aspects of the presentation of material that raised suggestions for future amendment. These again, were similar to some of the points that emerged during the earlier phase of the evaluation process. Comments were raised about the extent to which repeating reflective exercises did not appeal to the young people and could negatively impact on their experience of using SWEET.

‘There’s also quite a bit of repetition thought out the whole book, which the learners are fine with when they first see it in the form of revision or review. But there are quite a few units that are very, very similar and the learners picked up on that right away. They don’t see the point in that. They don’t enjoy the review and evaluation at the end of each section because they can’t see the value in it’.

‘Once they’ve done it once, they’ve done it – and they don’t want to do it again. It might be better if there was a review and evaluation at the end of SWEET, rather than after each unit’.

For some young people, any documentation of significant volume will prove challenging and in some cases, threatening. This can often be the case for those who have significant behavioural, social and emotional difficulties (SEBD). Whilst this was an observation that was made by some who specialise in working within such challenging settings, they were also able to appreciate that this potential limitation was mitigated by design and presentation features of the material:

‘If you are looking at someone in a workplace learning environment who have been out of education for some time and haven’t written anything for a long time and who want to be a builder or whatever, but actually, here’s a book we want you to look at. They’re going to go ‘it’s a lot of writing!’ For someone who hasn’t written anything for the last 9 or 10 months.... With us, we are just about able to get them to do that. It’s the most writing that they have to do for any qualification with us.’

‘Whilst visually it’s wonderful, when you give that to a BSED kid, they see a book this big, that has to be completed – and that’s a lot of work as far as they are concerned. So we have to take that apart and digest it bit by bit. .... [Moderated by the structure of and design of the material] I think it works by the colour-coordinated units. It helps them digest it compared to seeing the book as a whole.’

Quality of the presentation was also important from a student perspective with 90% expressing satisfaction with its layout and presentation:

- The questions were well laid out
- It’s simple and practical
- It’s easy to follow along and read
- It’s simple to read

- Easy to follow
- It's well laid out and easy to read
- It was formal instead of slang
- It was colourful, laid out well and the language was easy to follow
- It's laid out really well
- It was basic to follow
- It was understandable
- It is simple English and no big words that I don't know
- Easy layout and words
- It was well set out

As for Phase 1 of this evaluation, the colours used for the material continues to be a positive feature and helps in terms of its attraction for its users:

- Colourful & interesting
- It was colourful
- It has different colours for different sections
- It was colourful, eye-catching
- It was colourful and was easy to understand
- Colourful
- Because it's eye-catching and colourful
- Because of the colours
- It's colourful and fun

### **Motivational and flexible content – young people could relate to it:**

There is little doubt that the content and focus of the material that makes up SWEET is seen as relevant and meaningful to the majority of young people who are using it. Students reported that an important reason that they had enjoyed working with SWEET was that they had found it relevant to them and was motivational, inspiring them to greater things:

- I have enjoyed studying SWEET because it's more about me as a person than right and wrong answers
- I think it was motivational
- Because it helps/gives me motivation to keep myself more positive.
- It helps us see different points of view and it motivates us
- Because it makes you think if a person like that can do it, it makes you think you can do it as well
- Motivationally
- Because it motivates us
- Because it allows me to be more motivated

- Because it's realistic and shows personal experiences
- Different topics that are important in life
- Find it relevant to people my age
- More motivated
- Learnt more motivation skills
- Motivated me
- Made me more confident and gave me motivation
- The motivation chapter
- Taught me to always be motivated about anything in life
- I am more motivated
- Helped to motivate me to train
- Gave me motivation
- Made me become more motivated

Teachers reported that:

'The first thing they said was the fact that it was colourful and personal. It was covering topics that they knew, that they were comfortable with as well.'

'It was really motivational, everything they did, even talking to one another, the discussions that it generated as well. Everything about it was positive.'

'The fact that they were asking problem questions, key questions, they weren't being silly, they were more switched on.'

'I actually had them talking about things that have affected them, you know ...., when they were doing plan B, why he changed his life around, one boy in particular who, I don't think he will be NEET, but the potential was there, and speaking in front of his peers as well. .I can change, all the role models in my life have been negative.'

'.... it is not as boring as doing classwork'.

'And the pupils have asked if they can take the (SWEET) books home. .... 'How many 14 year olds would ask to take their books home?'

Some respondents were able to identify specific units that were seen as particular relevant by users.

'They particularly liked the 'Motivation'.

'Relationships'.  
'Peer Pressure' was a really good one.'

Interestingly, the fact that SWEET requires its learners to confront issues that are particularly pertinent to young people can bring with it its own challenges. This again is especially true for some more vulnerable young people.

One student stated that she had found it:

- Too personal

This was view that some teachers had also detected and reported when interviewed:

'For some of the girls, it's a little bit too personal – but that's with our particular type of learners. In different setting it could be completely different. With the girls in particular (but also with the boys too), it's a bit too personal. They have struggled with that aspect of it. It raised a lot of heated discussion between them.'

'Even as adults there are a lot of us who don't want to start looking back because when you start looking back – as with any counselling process, I suppose, it's going to get worse before it gets better – and it's that sort of thing as to why they don't want to find out why and what those sort of issues are. That was certainly an issue [with some].'

This may be less of an issue for those teachers who have developed a close working relationship with their students and have grown to know them well. The challenge for them is to make professional decisions as to how specific parts of SWEET can best be delivered, depending on their knowledge about the maturity and sensitivities of their learners. Where it was felt that the students would feel vulnerable and threatened to explore some issues e.g. relating to substance use or of a sexual nature, it might be more appropriate to involve them in exploring such issues through a reflective diary, as opposed to group discussion.

'I think that when you do it in a group setting, it's a lot of information that you are discussing about your personal life in front of other people. I suppose when you are exploring some of the reason for your confidence issues and reasons for your lack of self-esteem, then as an adult, that takes a lot of trust in the person that you are divulging this information to and the right environment to be able to do that'.

‘Perhaps this would be better dealt with in the form of a reflective diary rather than as a point of public discussion or in a group set-up. It would be nice if there was something that they could sometimes do by themselves – if there was a section in the book that was just for them. They would have ownership over it then – but you’ll always get some who simply will not want to go there. They just don’t want to explore.

‘And we have learnt that some of our learners have backgrounds that you and I can’t dream of really. They don’t want to bring that up at the start of a programme and until they have built up a relationship with a member of staff. I think that those bridges have had to be built first – and then you begin to start looking at that element of it, rather than the other way round.’

Several students however, drew attention to the fact that they very much appreciated the opportunities SWEET offered for them to work in groups and to share opinions and perspectives and hence, this is a quality that any revision of the SWEET programme should not automatically ignore or dismiss:

- Because we can work as a class, in groups
- Because we can work with it together, in groups and have discussions
- We could work in groups in class and learn to discuss
- It has been an interesting book to study because we go to off into groups and work ourselves
- Because it has generated lots of discussion

By using their professional skills and through developing a good relationship with pupils through which they can be sensitive to particular needs and circumstances, the flexibility that is built into SWEET can be particularly helpful and enables the teacher to maximise its potential. One respondent drew attention to this and stressed how the way that SWEET was structured offered considerable advantages over some alternatives:

‘Sometimes you can say to the students what would you like to do next, you can flit (they choose the next chapter). So and so is having a bad day, let’s do self-esteem, so it’s flexible unlike the old PSHE where we all followed the same thing week after week, this is more flexible, teachers and students can choose. If the pupils (and staff) didn’t want to do it you got nothing out of it’.

Others too, offered examples where the inbuilt flexibility of the resource had proven particularly helpful over the school year and how this had enabled them to tailor the work to the specific needs of individuals at critical times:

'We had one mainstream student who had huge issues, he came to us from another school where he had had a bad experience. He was very withdrawn and reluctant to speak. I am not saying it was just the SWEET programme, but to see him develop as a young man when everyone is taking part he has enjoyed it as well. Because when it said have you ever been bullied he shared his experiences with others. And then you get... I didn't realise that would upset somebody. So again we had a debate on bullying'.

'We have students who may be on a reduced timetable for various reasons, usually behaviour and they come to SWEET, again three times a week and they get an hour on SWEET every day and have been able to share their experiences with other people around the table. So there is no sort of I don't want to join in'.

### **Accessing the resource**

The vast majority of learners responding to the questionnaire had found the resource had been produced in a form that was not too challenging to read with 92.5% stating that the reading material was appropriate for their reading ability. They added that it was appropriate and accessible for a number of reasons including its currency and appropriateness of its content to young people of that age:

- Because it was quite easy to understand
- Because it was kind of easy to understand
- I found it easy to read because the layout was good
- Easy to follow the layout
- The language was very simple
- Simple vocabulary
- Quite easy to understand and in a simple context
- Easy to read
- Quotes are easy to read and explain
- It was easy
- It uses short sentences
- It was easy for all learners in my mixed ability class
- Easy questions
- Because it's easy to understand
- Questions were easy

Others stressed that the fact that the resource addressed and used issues and characters that were not too dated was an appealing feature for young people:

- It wasn't out of date
- Wasn't out of date
- It's quite modern
- Because it is appropriate for kids our age

It is clear that the structure and accessibility were all important to other users and went a long way to keeping them engaged with the work:

- You know what topic you are doing.
- It is clear what the topic is
- Because it helped you to know what chapter you're in and was easy to work with. Helped to inform the next chapter
- 'Cause it made sense
- It's on different subjects in different areas
- It was easy to understand and not too much reading
- 'Cause it has a good layout
- It's easy to find what you want
- Many keywords
- Easy to find specific pages
- Separated, easy to read
- Because it was easy to understand
- Put together, not corporate
- It was colourful and was easy to understand
- Easy & simple
- It was all organised into chapters with more information about the subjects
- It is good because it is in sections so it is better to understand

Please see Case Study A in Appendix C for further evidence of ease of accessibility of the resource.

### **Preparation for work experience and the future**

For young people who are at risk of disengaging with education and training and who may find it difficult to secure subsequent employment, opportunity to develop appropriate skills that can best support them to that end can be seen as especially important. Several respondents drew attention to the fact that SWEET contains many elements that will help in this respect.



'... it was preparing them more for work experience next year in year 10 and then for KS5 and whichever path they took then'.

'Again we were looking at interview skills there, ready for them so if you go to an employer'.

By addressing related skills and heightening awareness of the importance of appropriate behaviours to match different circumstances, teachers had found SWEET to be a powerful tool that had enabled them to help prepare students present positively to adults in authority.

'It definitely raises the question (especially with 'New Habits') of what are their goals - where are you going [in life]? It's the one unit that raises that question and actually gets them discussing, gets them talking. This gets fed back to me and the pastoral coordinator and we can then decide on the next step. So it definitely gets them to think about where they are going and what they need to do to get there.'

'Looking at body language we would do that standing up making faces at our partners, mannerisms...how the way we look informs someone of how we are feeling or how they approach us?'

'For me it's talking to them about hygiene, can be brought into the physical wellbeing. Emotions – bereavement, they are skills for life knowing how to cope with them. Bullying, because bullying happens in the workplace. The self-esteem, the peer pressure, relationships and so on'.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of the young people reported that they had become significantly more aware of what they needed to do to ensure that they would succeed and prosper in the future and that SWEET had helped provide them with the necessary skills to achieve this:

- It's made me realise what I want to do in my later years
- It hasn't changed how I think about my future. I know my ambitions and plans. I think we should focus on how to aid it than change it
- How to live your life
- It made me think of what I can do in the future – what I want to be
- What I can do when I leave school

- It made me think about choosing my future career – and not being afraid to pursue it
- To think about my future
- Because I realised I need many skills to progress in my adult life
- It makes me realise it's about work not partying
- I am more focused with doing well
- Opened more choices and learned more skills
- Made me want to make more for myself
- Gave me a lot of skills
- I want to be able to get a job and feel I have the social skills and confidence to get a part-time job
- I know how to start a business
- Helped me find out what I want in life and what I don't want
- About jobs and stuff
- Some of the stuff I did in SWEET made me think that there's more
- Job and training
- That I mustn't give up
- What I want to do
- It made me think about what I want in life
- Made me think that I need to set goals to achieve something
- I don't want a NEET future

Fifty percent (50%) of the students reported that they had found the work (chapters) on 'Motivation' and on 'Self-esteem' to have been the most useful when working with SWEET. Conversely, nearly sixty five percent (65%) had found the units on 'New Habits' and 'Relationships' as the least useful. No reasons were offered as to why this was the case and hence, it is difficult to speculate why this particular pattern emerged.

**Structured so that it can be delivered by non-specialists:**

Recent reports by Estyn and by the Welsh Audit Office (WAO) has highlighted the increasing number of lessons being covered by supply agencies, [Pupil Progress in Wales Hampered by Teacher Absence 17/09/2013

[http://www.wao.gov.uk/news/pressreleases\\_5311.asp](http://www.wao.gov.uk/news/pressreleases_5311.asp) (accessed 18 09/2013).

Consequently, the need to employ supply cover is clearly an issue of significance in many schools. Several of the teachers interviewed for this evaluation exercise raised the point that the way that SWEET has been designed enable it to be readily accessed and delivered at times when the usual teacher is absent or is unable to be available and his/her work needs to be covered by supply staff or by others who may not be familiar with the group or the curriculum they are following:

‘... it was self-explanatory for someone coming in, non-specialist, it could be an outside agency, but it is usually a cover supervisor and they enjoy teaching it as well, so it has works for all stakeholders.’

‘.....and if I haven’t been in, the cover supervisors will say ... the kids said ‘are we still doing SWEET’. I think it’s because they actually talk about what is in it. They have discussions, they are not off-task they are on task.’

‘It’s the full package really. It’s like a PSHE full package. It’s kind of there, in a book. You don’t need to spend hours looking for resources if you didn’t want to because it’s there’.

‘As a teacher, you could literally deliver it by just having the book. It’s just there. You could hand that to a teacher in any school and they could develop it. It’s there for them.’

This is clearly of considerable advantage to those charged to work with a group of young people at minimum notice. It is also reassuring to the absent teacher to know that the work his/her students are engaging in is relevant and a continuation of that which they would be engaged in were circumstances to be different.

### **Formal qualification**

Much was made in the Phase 1 evaluation of the value teachers placed on SWEET providing access to a formal qualification upon completion of three dedicated units. Attention was also drawn to the importance placed on this by the learners themselves. This aspect of SWEET was again regarded as particularly important by most of the teachers interviewed.

However, some were keen to point out the potential inherent dangers that could emanate from the use of SWEET as a means of gaining a qualification. In particular, the temptation to teach to the three mandatory elements required to gain the award at the expense of ensuring engagement with the more substantive focus of the programme and the benefits that can accrue from it.

‘Since I started, the main task has been to get the three mandatory units done – because they are struggling with completing the book’.

‘It’s literally been the case since March, we’ve been doing ‘New Habits’, ‘Relationships’ and ‘Personal Wellbeing’. We’ve got learners now who have been brought in from a school who

are really just skimming really, rightly or wrongly, but they have to finish that qualification and they're there with a member of staff and 'Right, there's this and this and this.... And we've got to get this done to get that qualification' and to sign that off because they're going soon' [largely due to part-time attendance at a special unit].

Nevertheless, and encouragingly, whilst demonstrating awareness of this potential danger, most teachers expressed a real intent to ensure that the more substantive learning experiences should be experienced by their learners.

'At the end of the day, that's what the schools want – the outcomes and the qualifications that go along with it – and not necessarily concerned with the experiences and the process that goes along with it. The first question from any school we deal with is 'What's it worth?' And any literature that we put together about SWEET must emphasise that aspect. .... That unfortunately is a product of the education system that exists now and which we have to work within. Whilst schools are measured by outcomes, we will be the same. .... Which is why we are looking more at it as an evidence-based programme as from September – something that they can go back to and reflect on. We want to use it to develop that social well-being of it, rather than looking at it as an academic book.'

'You need to be encouraging the people who use SWEET to go through the learning process. It would be too easy for us to just hand them out and say 'OK kids, we've got two hours, just go and fill them in'. It would be too easy'.

### **Potential for use with wider range of subject areas and qualifications**

The content of SWEET is such that teachers were quick to draw attention to its appropriateness for work in far wider curriculum contexts and in particular, how it can readily dovetail with numeracy and literacy.

'It's fed into our school improvement plan for literacy and numeracy ... next year the big push is the literacy and numeracy framework. They are looking at numeracy and literacy being identified in all lessons.'

'It re-enforces everything we do in other subject with writing frames etc.'

Others pointed out that they were keen to draw on SWEET when working towards additional and different qualifications:

‘We have taken on the Welsh BAC and there have been discussion about taking elements of this into that, if we looked at where it (SWEET) could be accredited it could be linked in to that.’

## **Learner enjoyment**

‘Enjoyment’ is an often undervalued quality in teaching and learning resources. Yet, it is well recognised that this is essential if the imagination and attention of young people is to be secured. Where those young people are in danger of becoming disengaged with the formal learning and teaching process, this becomes an even more critical factor.

There is little doubt that learners enjoyed working with SWEET with the vast majority of respondents (over 89%) stating that this was the case (please see Appendix C for additional case study evidence). The responses provided by the young people who responded to the questionnaire demonstrates that engaging with SWEET has had a significant impact on their behaviour in a wide range of ways. Many of the students had found engaging with SWEET had been informative, enjoyable and engaging, reporting that they had learnt a lot from the experience:

- It was interesting and fun
- Enjoyed SWEET as I found it interesting
- Because it was fun, interactive and it got us learning about how we can lead a better life
- I like SWEET because we got to look at many things like our idols, peer-pressure etc. and we talked about things in detail
- Because it’s challenging and interesting
- It is interesting and engaging
- Instructive, Realistic, Relevant
- It was fun and I learnt new things
- It was enjoyable
- Because of the interesting facts in it
- Because it was colourful, easy to follow and it was fun to look at different subjects in the book
- Because it was fun
- It was nice and colourful
- Because of the layout
- Because I like it
- Because it has so much information that is interesting to read
- Because tells us about people’s lives

- Educational
- I liked it
- It's interesting
- Because it tells people what we like and dislike
- I have enjoyed it because it has an insight on other opinions
- Nice to express opinions
- Read more stuff for the future
- It's just a good thing to study.
- Because I enjoyed the statistics about young people
- Because it's bright and it's telling us about life situations
- It has different topics
- It gives out good facts
- I have learnt lots of things like motivation
- Because it was interesting to choose the way we did here
- Because of the amount we contribute into the lessons
- It was Okay. It had quite a wide range of variety in the topic we studies
- Because it gets you to think
- Because it was good
- Lessons were fun
- Because it's cool
- Interesting topics/content

### **Self-awareness**

Some of these students made specific reference to how their new learning had been framed within a personal context and hence, had supported them in gaining greater insight into their own and others' functioning:

- It allows me to learn more about myself
- It makes us think about our own problems and helps us with them
- I like it because it helps us with everyday problems and we discuss them afterwards
- I like it because it tells us about how to solve problems
- It allows me to learn more about myself
- Quotes that give answers to my questions
- I know what others like and dislike
- To know about feelings like depression
- SWEET has been an interesting book to follow because it explains people's stories and also it makes me want to learn more about myself.
- Made me notice I have potential in life
- Realise who you are
- I am able to identify my strengths and weaknesses

- Being able to see what my strengths are and what can help me
- Knowing what I can do
- Finding out what I'm good at

(See Appendix C for case study evidence of enhanced self-perception and understanding as a result of working with SWEET)

Across both Phases of this evaluation, several students mentioned that the inclusion of examples of positive role models within the text had been a helpful feature and a key aspect of they had found helpful:

- Working and learning about role models
- Because of all the different modules in life
- Because it told us some stories about people and how they achieved what they did

Others identified the fact that it had supported them in developing new life-skills and several felt that it had been helpful in changing their perceptions and behaviour:

- Told us how to turn our lives around for the better
- Because it showed us how to turn our lives around
- Because it showed us how to lead a good life
- It gave useful information to lead a good life
- It has good information to lead us to a good life
- Showed us how to turn our lives around for the better
- Shows opportunities and gives us some important life lessons
- Because it helped me
- Different aspects of life skills
- I like SWEET because I think you could get a lot of life skills from it and learn how to gain confidence.
- It showed us different things and made us think about our confidence and other things.
- Learnt new skills to help be successful
- Helps build your confidence as well
- It shows how to behave as a young adult
- We've gained more personal/lifestyle knowledge to help us in real life
- Because it teaches us about things which are good and bad
- Has useful quotes and advice
- Cause I learnt more about social life, about bullying and how to deal with it
- Understand things about people I didn't before
- Gave me life quotes so I have a positive approach
- Because it helps us out with our real life

- It taught me new things in life
- Gave me skills for life
- To help me develop new habits and keep positive

## **Self-confidence**

Possibly, as a result of development in self-awareness and understanding, many respondents reported that engaging with the material had supported them in gaining greater self-confidence:

- We got to look at peer-pressure, idols, confidence etc.
- Gained more knowledge and have more self-confidence
- Helps build your confidence as well
- Gained more knowledge and have more self-confidence
- SWEET is good for everybody to people to build their confidence
- I have enjoyed it because it has built up my confidence and it has put in perspective who is there for me and who does so much for me
- It's built my confidence and it was really interesting to learn about it
- Because I have been a bit more confident
- Because it helps build your confidence
- It makes me understand that I can make my own decisions
- It's made me think about why I'm being so shy but now around new people I'm confident
- Showed me how I can build confidence and help out others with their confidence
- It taught me not to be afraid of what people think – you are who you are and you shouldn't change for anyone
- Made me more confident
- Feel more confident
- More confident in myself after reading and doing SWEET
- You can do anything if you put your mind to it
- It made me think about my confidence and built it up and now I'm more confident around new people
- Showed me how I can be a more confident person
- Made me more confident
- It made me confident and brighter
- It made me feel more confident about myself
- Self-esteem
- I feel good about myself for having completed the book
- It showed how to gain back your reputation and turn your life back round



- Because we like physical well-being. Shows how to eat healthily
- I have found out about what I want to do in life
- It has let me know the best way to succeed in life and not give up
- Showed me how to be more confident
- Be more confident
- Showed me that I can unleash my full potential and I can achieve anything I set my mind to

It is interesting however, that despite all that learners had to say about the way that working with SWEET had helped them develop confidence, only 65% were of the view that SWEET had helped them feel better about themselves.

Importantly, several reported that as a consequence of completing the SWEET programme, they had developed greater resilience and were able to manage bullying by others:

- It helped me with many things such as peer-pressure
- To learn about bullying and to prevent it
- Because comfortable with body language

Despite all the positive messages that young people who have worked with SWEET had to convey, when asked whether they believed that SWEET had helped them outside the school or training environment, only 38% responded positively. Of those, several pointed to the fact that they had been able to grow more confident in social settings and had developed new social skills that aided in this:

- I think it helped me become more social with friends (that's a big achievement)
- Socially with others
- I am more sociable with others
- I am more polite
- More confident with mum and socialising
- I am able to speak to my netball team

## Potential developments

As was the case with the Phase 1 evaluation, several useful suggestions were made for further refinements and developments to the existing documentation.

### Potential for extending the age range of students using SWEET

The value of working on an extended version of SWEET so that younger and older young people could engage with it was seen by some as very desirable.

‘Personally I would like to see something from Year 7 rolling through (to Year 9 at least).’

This was another feature that was identified at the completion of Phase 1 of the evaluation process and it is understood that *Portal Training* has already been addressing this in order to develop a more recent version that is designed specifically for older students.

### More visual aids

A common factor that came from both interviews and questionnaires, from teachers and learners alike, was the desirability to extend the range of illustrative supporting material for the themes covered.

‘Visual aids. That’s why I went in to YouTube to use certain things’.

Students were particularly vocal about the desirability of providing additional resources, mainly of a visual nature:

- More visual aids
- More visual aids to go with it
- Pictures
- More pictures
- Images
- Maybe with more visual effects

Perhaps not surprisingly, particular interest was expressed in the development and provision of more support for topics in the form of video recordings:

- More videos to go with each topic
- More movie clips to show us how SWEET works

- Use videos that go with the topic
- Motivation videos like the Olympics as a motivation video
- More videos
- We could do more activities like watching videos, doing more booklets and more visual aids
- More visual aids and motivational clips.
- More visual clips to go with the topics
- Also, they could have more inspirational videos
- Maybe more videos to go with the topics
- Films/videos

### **Use of more recent role models**

Teachers interviewed mentioned the importance of using recent motivational material that young people can relate to. Many fail to engage with lessons based on inspirational examples from history and who are outside their experiences. By maximising models such as those who were successful in recent sporting situations, it is likely that greater engagement can be secured:

‘The only thing, with the Olympics and last year being such a successful year, is that we used more and different role models then... they didn’t know who Roger Bannister was, that was the only down side. Because we teach mixed ability classes you have to tweak it.’

‘Some of the quotes used are from people before our time... you can use Mo Farrah, Jessica Ennis ...more relevant people.’

The same point was identified as of significance by several of the students:

- SWEET could have been made more interesting by putting more modern people in there
- Make it more modern
- It had more about celebrities
- Have more known role models

Others made some very interesting observations as to how SWEET might be further enhanced were there greater opportunity for learners to draw directly on their own experiences and produce examples of their own coping strategies

- Writing the way you would react to things yourself.
- Talk about your own experiences
- SWEET could be more interesting if we could speak about real-life problems, feelings, teen problems too, to get what’s worrying them for life ahead.

One respondent observed that in its present form there was a perceived gender bias that could usefully be redressed in subsequent editions:

- SWEET could maybe include more topics that would appeal to a wider range of teenagers. Videos, more visual aids, more about women. I feel this book was more surrounding men than women

Some learners suggested that the programme would benefit from a greater inclusion of a range of activities that they could engage with:

- To do exercises out in the yard
- Maybe a game at each section
- By making us do practical tasks
- I think it should have a little more activity
- Add more practical elements

Interestingly, this was not a feature that any of the adults interviewed made reference to.

### **Incorporate use of technology & alternative forms of presentation**

The rapid escalation in the use of new technology has impacted on many aspects of every-day living. Education is no exception. It is therefore not surprising that some of the people interviewed identified this as an area that SWEET could employ for future development.

‘What about more ICT? - It would be nice if there were interactive activities cause we all have interactive whiteboards,’

‘If SWEET was all on a PowerPoint that would be even more fantastic,’

‘We also use a lot of the iPad. If there was an iPad version of it, that would be brilliant. If there was an electronic version of it then you could get information across to them in different ways using video.’

‘Perhaps you could have an App that they could write or upload their evidence in it.’

‘You’ve got to embrace new technology – and if they are out there with their mobile ‘phones, there’s nothing to say they can’t use it to evidence what they’ve done. And it becomes

then an ongoing process which they can evidence at whatever point.'

Particular mention was made to the adaptation of new technology as an aid to gathering evidence whilst working on aspects of the SWEET exercises. Those working with young people who experience difficulty with literacy skills might find this especially helpful.

'Somewhere to put in additionalities would be great too – evidence you could just slot in there. Their reading and writing levels are quite poor. We've got some with levels of just 5 or 6, so they really struggle with the writing. It would be really nice if there were some element where we could record something so that we could slot something in like a CD or some sort of sound-bites as additional form of records of evidence. Some other forms of recording evidence other than though writing.'

'We could link some of that [different media] into SWEET to improve their literacy and improve their understanding on certain themes and topics. They do a lot of Rapping about kind of in-depth things, very personal things – that's their kind of outlet. So, if you could collect evidence in other formats like these Raps they are creating about their feelings and personal wellbeing. You could demonstrate that this is where they were at the start point and this is where they are at the end point. But at the moment, it's such a prescriptive set out. What I think would be useful if each of those units could be taken apart and kept in some kind of folder with evidence slotted in'.

Attention was drawn to the potential of adopting existing technology to assist in the assessment and moderation processes which is central to the qualification that working with SWEET can result in.

'A programme called 'Bright Sparks' that's being used across the schools has good and bad things about it. One of the good things about it is that it has a tool that enables you to assess on-line and if you were working on the BTEC qualification, you could upload all the units there. So if a learner were doing the unit 'Working with Others', you could go out and when you come back at the end of the day, you could log onto the system and you could say 'Ok, today I've done this' – type in what they've done and it would recognise what these units would match up against. So if you could

have something similar with SWEET where you have units like 'New Habits' or 'Relationships' and you could go at the end of the day, 'OK, we've had a discussion on such-and-such and here's a picture of what we did to evidence that', or 'Here's a video of this' or 'Here's a picture of that' or 'Here's a recording of....' An assessor can then go online and assess the evidence against the criteria. It's not asking them to write anything and it's got to be cheaper as well.'

### **Enhanced focus on particular elements of the programme - career advice and drug awareness:**

Several teachers had identified particular aspects of the SWEET programme that they felt were of special value to their students and would appreciate it some of these were further extended and developed.

Mention has already been made in the substantive part of this report to the value attributed to engaging with aspects of SWEET that relate to career choice and progression towards future life. This was again an aspect that some of those interviewed identified that could be extended in future versions of the programme.

'What there could be there is careers advice and decision making and scenarios you know for careers. Interviews, interview each other, and role play. Asking for a de-brief if unsuccessful, what you did well rather than I didn't want the job anyway type of attitude. I'll know next time what to do.'

An important aspect of any such development however, is that it is produced at an appropriate and detailed level and in relevant detail so that those engaging with the resource are motivated by its authentic nature.

- [when used with very challenging learners] It would be good to have more units that could develop PSHE type things. More units on things like Drug Awareness.... There's something on alcohol, isn't there? But I find it very watered down. These kids they come in every day and they are around drugs every single day. They look at it and they go 'Oh, this is easy.... What's a stimulant, what's a depressant?' Well, they know about that. I think it needs to be a little bit more meaningful'.

Crime is always a good one and also the consequences of their action, more side-effects. For us, it needs to be hard hitting and realistic'.

'They are more savvy to the drug culture than we will ever be. And that's the one unit that always raises an awful lot of debate actually... and we have to look at the long-term consequences. Drug use is a huge problem'.

'It has to be hard hitting, realistic and engaging for them. The one unit they really engage in [although I wasn't there but have been told hundreds of times] is 'Plan B'. Apparently, they all loved it. I think there was something about it that they could relate to and it created a lot of discussion. It then kind of loses that relevance'.

### **Additional features identified by young people**

Some of the young people responding to the questionnaire raised a range of additional features that they felt could usefully be added to the SWEET programme and which they believed would further enrich the experience of engaging with it. Some of these suggestions related to additional material on topics and themes already included in the material:

- More on motivation
- More lessons on healthy living
- More role-models
- More statistics about young people
- To give out more interesting facts to entertain children
- more fun activities

Others requested access to inspirational speakers who could be invited to speak at the school – including the author(s) of the SWEET material itself:

- Different people come in and talk to us
- Maybe people who have already studied SWEET could come in and talk to us
- People who wrote it could come in and tell us what they think about the questions

Not surprisingly perhaps, some respondents (especially from alternative provision) identified aspects of the material that could be reduced or taken out. These included:

- Less writing
- It would be better if the SWEET book was shorter
- Not so much of the same thing
- Easier
- Better spelling

- Don't repeat things
- Easier questions, more understandable questions

### **Use of A4 format**

As was the case with Phase 1 of this evaluation, the difficulty that some of the learners experience with writing in the limited space possible within a document produced in A5 format was identified as something that should be given greater attention when considering producing a further version of the resource:

'It would be improved through the use of bigger writing. It should be an A4 rather than A5 because a lot of the learners have big handwriting and because it is on coloured paper and needs to be assessed, there's not a lot of room for negotiation.'

### **Making a difference**

As was the case in Phase 1, respondents again (both adults and learners) indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the resource in its present form. These respondents wanted to acknowledge its effectiveness and were finding it difficult to identify any way that improvement could be made to SWEET:

'It has been used [in this setting] since September it is effective, it has made a difference.'

- I'm not really sure how they could make it more interesting.
- None
- It was colourful and out-going.
- It was fun to read

Any additional amendments in the form identified in Appendix D can only serve to enhance the appeal of SWEET to both teachers and learners in a wide range of settings that cater for mainstream students and those in alternative provision. It is equally evident that the potential for SWEET is particularly attractive when used with young people who are at risk of disengaging with education, employment and training.



## **Appendix A**

### **Case Studies related to the piloting of SWEET (2012-2013)**

#### **SWEET Case Study A**

2 students from different backgrounds are used in the study.

1 Male DOB: November 1998

1 Female DOB: September 10 1998

Both students come from different backgrounds. The male previously lived in America before settling in Cardiff with his family. He is blind in his right eye and has suffered from low self-esteem due to some students being particularly unkind about his disability. This year he has grown in self-confidence and associates this with the Motivational and Peer Pressure chapters within the SWEET booklet.

He says that he now feels confident when speaking in groups and in front of his peers in class. In a recent WRE lesson he was able to engage with an outside speaker who had come in to speak about success in business by asking leading and challenging questions about becoming a young entrepreneur.

The female was born and raised in Cardiff by her mother and stepfather. She has had EWO issues related to bereavement of both maternal and paternal grandparents within four months of each other as well as an uncle who was involved in a serious crime which landed him in prison. Her opinion of SWEET is that it helped her with relationships inside and outside of school and gave her a better understanding of students with similar issues. She says that SWEET helped as it used various strategies to engage students and was an easy course to follow as the presentation and colour coding helped less able students gain confidence and improved their literacy skills

#### **SWEET Case Study B**

Mary was removed from traditional education due to her behaviour. When she started at her present establishment she would not even speak to most of the staff members.

Mary initially showed interest in SWEET purely because of the design of the book. Once we started the work the questions and activities challenged and engaged her.

Mary took a lot from the book, most noticeably she learned how to set herself targets and break them down into more achievable steps. She has applied this to her future career plans.

Mary came out of her shell while at her present education setting and I believe part of this was down to the SWEET qualification.

Mary has decided on a long-term goal for herself and is currently completing a business administration apprenticeship.

### **Sweet Case study C**

One of our year 11 learners Jane F joined us in September 2012 after being removed from the traditional school setting due to disruptive and rude behaviour. Jane was totally disengaged and unmotivated with learning and her future.

During the relationships module of Sweet, I started to see changes in her attitude towards people and herself. Jane started to act more positively and calmly to situations and applied the assertive techniques that the sweet book demonstrated, rather than her usual aggressive actions.

Jane started to see her Sweet lessons as an opportunity to express herself in a grown up manner and was able to make choices that didn't cause upset to herself or others. She started to push herself and started to value her opinions and others. Jane also enjoyed the informal and formal section of the book and applied the skills learnt in her interview with ACT.

Her interview was successful and is now undertaking an engagement course with ACT before starting her Childcare course.

When I see Jane around the building she is a confident and pleasant person. I believe the Sweet qualification has made a major contribution to Sarah's new upbeat attitude to life.

### **SWEET Case Study D**

Diana was placed on Positive Outlook for one day a week due to problems with bullying in school, her lack of confidence and her low literacy and numeracy skills. She was severely lacking in confidence and did not know what to do at the end of Year 11.

I started SWEET with Diana at the beginning of Year 11. She immediately loved it and was very keen to complete everything that was set. The New Habits section allowed her to focus on what she wanted to do at the end of the year and set her goals in order for her to achieve her ambitions. Both the Relationships chapter and the Healthy Living chapter allowed her to look closely at how she was living her life and how she could improve on it.

I feel SWEET allowed Diana to develop her literacy and numeracy skills while allowing her to focus on herself and her educational needs. The one thing that really impressed me was that her participation in class discussions really improved. I

believe this is because the qualification centres on the student's needs and personal development.

### **SWEET Case Study E**

Terry was referred to Positive Outlook due to the fact that his behaviour had led him to be placed on a full alternative curriculum timetable. His behaviour was very disruptive. He constantly tried to wind other students up and would not be quiet whilst I was delivering a lesson. He did not know where he was going in life and he didn't seem to care! He was very lucky to survive the first year with me.

At the start of Year 11 I introduced SWEET. Terry immediately liked the concept of focussing on himself. He was vocal in SWEET lessons but not in such a disruptive way. He enjoyed talking about himself and sharing his stories with the group. He also liked writing about himself!

Through SWEET Terry has managed to achieve so much. SWEET is only part of his qualification haul but I feel it was key to the rest of his success. Tim began as the most likely student to fail but has actually turned out to be my most successful student. Through SWEET Terry has been able to look at himself, his life and his ambitions.

### **SWEET Case Study F**

Morgan was taken out of school several days a week to take part in ACT's motivation and engagement programme. He was bullied at school and had serious anger management issues which led to fighting.

Morgan was initially resistant to SWEET, but once he realised the course was relevant to his life he engaged.

Morgan started exercising more because of the book and learned a lot about nutrition. He also got a lot from the relationships chapter by learning about rational thinking. This helped him control his anger.

Morgan did experience some bullying during the year and managed to deal with it in an adult and appropriate manner. I believe this progression is partly down to the SWEET course.

## **Appendix B**

### **Teachers' perspective on the impact of SWEET on the pupils**

#### **Interview Prompts**

1. What impact (if any) has SWEET had on pupils' attitude towards work this year?
2. Has it had an impact on their aspirations to continue their education?
3. Has SWEET focused the pupils more on their future lives generally and in what way?
  - a. employment or training
  - b. relationships with peers/parents and other adults,
  - c. their personal well-being
4. Have the teachers seen any attitudinal changes of the pupils who have taken part in SWEET
5. In your opinion, which elements of SWEET have had the biggest and least impact on the pupils?
6. Has SWEET had any particular impact on the more challenging and/or disaffected pupils - if so how and why? (Attitude, Behaviour, Attendance)
7. Do you think that pupils have benefited and enjoyed the SWEET experience and why?
8. What is different about SWEET to other PSE/Motivational programmes?

#### **From a teaching/delivery perspective**

1. How easy/difficult has SWEET been to deliver?
2. What parts of the programme did you feel had particular limitations – and why?
3. Have you had to supplement some aspects of SWEET and if so, how?
4. Have you and other teachers enjoyed the experience of delivering SWEET?
5. Any key observations of how to improve SWEET that haven't already been fed back to Portal?

6. From a teachers perspective what are the USP's (Unique Selling Points) of SWEET?
7. How do you think that the impact of SWEET can be sustained following completion of the programme?

### **Customer Service**

1. Do you feel that you have been supported enough by Portal? (We want to know this as going forward on a larger scale we need to really support schools in any way possible.)

## Appendix C

### Pupil Questionnaire

1 Have you liked/enjoyed studying Sweet?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

2 Why?

3 Has SWEET been an interesting book to follow/study?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

4 Why?

5 In what way could SWEET be made more interesting?

6 Which chapters has helped you the most?

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Motivation               |  |
| New habits               |  |
| Skills                   |  |
| Physical wellbeing       |  |
| Self-esteem              |  |
| Peer pressure            |  |
| Relationships            |  |
| Taking<br>Responsibility |  |
| Values & principles      |  |

7 Which chapter has been the least helpful?

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Motivation         |  |
| New habits         |  |
| Skills             |  |
| Physical wellbeing |  |
| Self-esteem        |  |
| Peer pressure      |  |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Relationships         |  |
| Taking Responsibility |  |
| Values & principles   |  |

8 Did you find it Ok reading the material in the SWEET book?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

9 Why?

10 Did you like to layout of the SWEET Work Book?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

11 Why?

12 Has doing SWEET made you feel better about yourself?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

13 If Yes, what way has doing SWEET made you feel better about yourself?

14 Has doing SWEET helped you build your confidence?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

15 If yes, in what way has doing SWEET helped you build your confidence?

16 Do you think that SWEET has helped you outside of the training/school?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

17 If Yes, in what way do you think SWEET has helped you outside of the training programme or school – for example, socially with friends, family or the general public?

18 Has SWEET made you think differently about the future?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|     |    |

19 If YES, in what way has SWEET made you think differently about the future?



## Appendix D

### Key Issues arising from both Phases of the evaluation:

Summary list of the key issues to emerge from the evaluation:

#### Positive features – Adults' views:

- Adults value having everything in one place/one pack
- Motivating
- Colourful and attractive resource
- Its interactive nature
- Readily engages students
- Some inspirational content
- Useful strategies for outreach work
- The compact size of resource
- The tasks set for learners to complete are realistic
- Relevant to both present interest and future aspirations
- Use of Reality Check to motivate change
- Identifying positive role models
- Personal examples can be identified as role models
- Quality of the one-day training
- Learners' motivation enhanced due to qualifications
- Potential for use with alternative/additional qualifications
- Potential for use with other curriculum areas
- Resource complements other key curriculum areas
- Paired activity to explore issues such as learning styles
- Broader whole-class potential
- Helps develop life skills
- Good for use as class cover material in teacher absence
- Happily recommend it to other teachers
- Helpful with EAL students
- Can be delivered by supply teachers and/or other adults

#### Positive features – Learners' views:

- Motivating
- Content and presentation relevant to adolescent learners
- Relates to future needs
- Realistic – 'Tells it as it is'
- Provides a 'wake-up call'
- Challenging

- Manageable
- Think about what one needs to do to achieve in the future
- Learnt a lot about oneself
- Helps you set positive aims
- Helps develop positive attitudes
- Focuses the on positives
- Impact on life outside school
- Learn useful things
- Instantly appealing
- Quite modern
- Appropriate for kids our age
- Enjoyable
- Helps develop self-confidence
- Helps develop self-awareness

### **Employment and transferable skills**

- Teaches useful employment skills (e.g. body language)
- Motivates and supports learners to succeed
- Helps prepare for interviews
- Encourages learners to consider a 'life-plan'
- Develops confidence/self-esteem
- Helps develop skills to cooperate
- Encourages learners to think about the future
- Promotes skills to motivate and encourage others
- Value the qualification
- Helps address skills to prevent bullying
- Develops greater pupil **resilience**

### **Quality of materials**

- Appearance, structure and size of resource
- Age suitability of materials
- Accessible
- Challenging
- Value use of group work to share perspectives
- Value of reflective exercises at end of units
- Would recommendation to other learners

### **Limitations – Adults' views:**

- Structure, timing and pace of delivery when working in outreach settings and/or due to referral procedures
- Repetitive nature of some tasks
- Additional writing incurred due to repartition

- Spelling errors on resource
- Some learners find identifying positive role models difficult
- Resource format (A5)
- Quality of binding

#### **Limitations – Learners’ views:**

- Timing and pacing
- Some parts need truncating
- Quality of binding
- Size – limited writing space
- A lot of the same thing – repartition
- Spelling errors
- Some aspects less relevant than others
- Requires some idea of what you want to do in the future
- Too many reflective exercises
- Some aspects too personal for use in group activity

#### **Abstract/Delete - Adults**

- Modify introduction
- Pacing of SWEET sessions
- Some using bad language

#### **Inserts - Adults**

- More emphasis on changing negatives to positives
- Increase size of spaces available for writing
- More recent quotations in text
- Design of front cover with space to include student name
- Develop differentiated versions [differentiated]
- Develop differentiated versions [accreditation levels]
- Use of A4 format
- Use of alternative binding – storage
- Need to insert additional material to adapt the resource to group-work context
- Develop additional resources for extension work
- Produce in electronic format
- Generate a SWEET Application
- Amend lesson plans to meet own circumstances
- Develop and extend literacy and numeracy aspects of the work
- Increased material to complement PSHE curriculum
- Increased focus on career advice
- More material on drug awareness

### **Inserts – Learners**

- More emphasis on 'reality check' and statistical evidence
- More pictures
- More recent incidents as examples
- Explore consequences
- Consider the present as well as the future
- Spelling corrections
- Amend the introduction of sensitive issues to support learners with issues
- Additional information regarding different jobs and careers
- Bigger boxes to write in