



Be Her Lead – Barnhill Community High School

Student feedback/testimonials?

- 1. I like be her lead because it is a comfortable space where you can speak to each other as a group and share your ideas and experiences or offer each other help and advice. It is a good community to be part of because it could help you build your confidence and feel as if you're not alone in whatever it is you're going through.*
- 2. I think the sessions are great and it seems like a safe place with other females and a good community but if we had more Sessions I feel like I could Improve a lot more as we have only had a few*
- 3. Be Her Lead is very good and helps me a lot and I think it would be great for the community because it helps girls/women have a safe place to talk and be themselves.*
- 4. The Be Her Lead programme was inspiring and empowering. It helped to increase our understanding on issues such as body image and healthy relationships. I liked the fact that we could share our ideas and feelings without feeling judged or pressured; everyone was free to share their opinions. Although we did not spend much time together, the sessions that we did were successful in making me feel supported by my fellow Be Her Lead participants and the teachers.*

What have been the key benefits of the BHL program e.g. trips, meetings, discussions?

To celebrate the commencement of the programme, the girls attended an opening ceremony in February at Chiswick School where they got to take part in workshops on gender inequality and hear from incredible and inspirational women in various fields – including those in schools.

They also took part in a fantasy creative writing workshop led by author Alexandra Sheppard, where they each produced a short folk tale aimed to encapsulate their personal identity. Barnhill's Be Her Lead cohort were praised on the day for their willingness to get involved in discussions and share ideas openly in front of students from over 50 schools from all around the UK. Owing to this, the girls have been invited to visit the Salesforce city offices in London during the next academic year to speak to some of the leading females within their corporation.

The workshops we were able to carry out in person are as follows:

- 1) Introduction & Building Resilience** - Discussion: 'Who is your role model?'; freeze frame activity - before and after dealing with a challenge in a non-resilient and then resilient way
- 2) Body Image** - Mindfulness activity / YouTube meditation clip; pair discussion and giving one another a compliment about ourselves; choosing something about our bodies that we liked that is not aesthetic

- 3) **Healthy Relationships** - Brainstorming what are the key things to a healthy relationship; freeze frame activity on how we could promote healthy relationships in our lives

How has BHL adapted to the school closure?

We have set up a BHL Teams group where we share podcasts, documentaries, readings, opportunities etc. surrounding the topics we have been discussing in sessions (e.g. self-care, healthy relationships, body image, development of skill sets). BHL staff have been very flexible with what the forum is used for. We asked the girls what they want to get out of this group during such a peculiar time; they responded with live calls for general check-ins and discussions.

In response to this, we have organised online meetings to see how the team is getting along in lockdown. The girls have been very honest in sharing the difficulties of the present situation. Some of the girls have been involved in BHL 'Zine' competition where they will be submitting creative work in the theme of 'girls in lockdown' with hopes of being published in the official BHL magazine.

Having re-launched BHL virtually, we have received so much appreciation. One Year 9 mentioned: 'I'm glad we're still doing this, BeHerLead was the best part of Monday!'

What next for BHL? (A September start?)

We are looking to complete sessions and trips with our current cohort (which was interrupted due to COVID situation) and begin selecting for our next group of Be Her Lead girls due to start in Autumn Term 2. We are looking to involve some younger students from Year 8, also. We would like to create a system in which the girls who 'graduate' from the programme act as mentors to the new cohort.





