

Our CEO and Schools' Proprietor, Thomas Keaney, has a personal vision that sees our schools as inclusive, thriving, socially and emotionally healthy communities - a vision driven by his deeply held belief that human beings thrive in positive environments. Thomas says, "To enable this to happen, TCES Group staff and pupils must be supported to own and deliver the community values of our schools and services."

These community values are:

- very high expectations
- hard work
- mutual respect and tolerance
- authentic 'real' inclusion
- genuine pupil, parent and staff voice and participation
- a 'we never give up' philosophy for our pupils and staff.

In February 2017, after grading North West London Independent School (NWLIS) as outstanding in every area, the Ofsted Inspector stated in the Ofsted Inspection Report, *"The School's Proprietor is inspirational. His vision to provide a uniquely outstanding education for pupils with complex needs is shared by all leaders and staff."*

The risk in the work we do is that all too often we can over identify with our pupils' past experiences and miss what is the essential ingredient in their treatment; their own capacity for healing themselves through their strengths, resilience and extraordinary talents.

"Teachers are the foundation of our success,"
– Laquain,
Student Council
President at
Group Process
Meeting,
chaired by
Kheron.



Student Council - the beginnings of group work

'Big journeys begin with small steps' and our journey starts in the development of the healthy functioning of our pupils in groups, starting with our Student Council.

We believe intrinsically in the transformative power of a Student Council: here real, and not symbolic, opportunities are offered to pupils who struggle to have a voice, to join a democratic Student Council where their voices are both heard and acted upon. The Student Council is where our small group work begins and where pupils who would not normally be seen as positive influences across our school are transformed by being given an opportunity to join. They have a real say and, as importantly, are seen by peers as champions of other pupils' wishes and feelings around the running of a successful and democratically empowering school.

Motivational and Inspirational Speaker and Group Assemblies

A key activity that has been extremely successful in helping our pupils to see themselves as talented young leaders is the weekly school visit by a motivational speaker and mentor. One of the UK's leading Black History and Culture Specialists, Andrew Muhammad, aka Papa G, has been visiting NWLIS since 2014 and ELIS since the beginning of this academic year. Andrew Muhammad began this transformation with the delivery of inspirational assemblies which were all about our pupils' leadership potential and drawing these talents out. Following this, he set up specific leadership curriculum lessons where our pupils began to learn about leadership qualities and success was seen in pupils extolling each other's leadership qualities.

Andrew Muhammad's sessions are designed to be motivational and to inspire pupils to see their futures in a more positive light, however difficult their past might have been. A powerful example of his achievement with young people can be seen in Kheron, who occasionally joins him at school for sessions to talk to pupils about how his life has been turned around, so much so that he is now a motivational speaker himself! Kheron recounts his moving personal experience of growing up dealing with family trauma, dropping out of school and later finding a pathway to success. He talks about how changing your attitude can change your world, and encourages pupils to simply be polite, adopt a positive attitude and disregard distractions.

NWLIS sessions of fixed term exclusions

2016/17	Autumn 1st half term	Autumn 2nd half term	Difference %	Spring 1st half term	Difference %
Total sessions of fixed term exclusion	45	22	-51.2%	12	-45.5%
Sessions of fixed term exclusion for pupils in crisis or new pupils	25	22	-12.0%	7	-68.2%

Group Process

The NWLIS inclusion team's group process sessions provide a unique experience for all attendees. ASC and SEMH pupils are educated together, sitting with all of our staff in the hall, both pupil groups showing respect for one another and fully participating. Equally impressive is the way that everyone in the room feels able to openly share their experiences. Sessions have grown since 2014, progressing from Student Council to small tutor groups to what is now (since September) a whole school group process. Local Authority Officers have also described this whole school group approach as unique and a model of excellence and we now sustainably deliver this model through several staff who are undertaking formal training in group work.

"On a weekly basis, pupils learn, debate and listen to one another in a therapeutic 'group process' session. Pupils and staff alike told the Inspector they look forward to this. In an observed session, all pupils in the school engaged in complex, philosophical discussion about gender equality. For pupils with such complex needs to have developed the ability to listen, empathise, take turns and manage disagreements in this way is excellent, and prepares them very well for their next steps." Ofsted, 2017

Outstanding outcomes

The results that this blend of motivation, empowerment and inspiration have achieved at NWLIS have been astounding. Staff report a substantial change in ethos and relationships among pupils, an increase in respect for others, and say that pupils have gained hugely in the confidence to speak out. As a consequence, NWLIS has something of a family feel which is invaluable, especially for pupils who may lack this at home.

"Staff and Pupils alike describe the school as a family. The sense of community is exceptional." Ofsted, 2017

These incredible gains are borne out by a significant decrease in incidents, fixed term exclusions and an increase in attendance and engagement. TCES Group is proud of the fact that no pupil has ever been permanently excluded.

Overall, since September 2016 there has been a decrease of 72% in the number of fixed term exclusions for those pupils in crisis or who are new, and a decrease of 73% in the number of fixed term exclusions across the whole school.

"The truly inclusive ethos and very high standards ensure that no pupil is given up on. Against the odds, leaders and staff do whatever is necessary to facilitate outstanding outcomes for all pupils." Ofsted, 2017

Equally, attendance has risen from an average figure of 45% for pupils prior to joining NWLIS, to a current average figure of 85%, thus almost doubling their school attendance.

"The rapid improvement in pupils' rates of attendance reflects the focused care and attention staff provide." Ofsted, 2017

This table shows a comparison over the last three years, up to the end of Spring first half term in each year:

Prior Attendance %	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
43.7	81.2	86.4	88.8

