Building belonging: The impact and value of one-to-one support on young people's wellbeing and school attendance

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PRO BONO ECONOMICS

Pro Bono Economics uses economics to empower the social sector and to increase wellbeing across the UK. We combine project work for individual charities and social enterprises with policy research that can drive systemic change. Working with over 600 volunteer economists, we have supported over 600 charities since our inception in 2009.

Power2 is a children and young people's charity. It believes that every child and young person deserves the opportunity to thrive, even when things get tougher.

With support, children and young people improve their wellbeing, re-engage with school and learning, build networks, and access opportunities.

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Summary

Levels of low wellbeing among children and young people in the UK are worryingly high and getting worse over time. Too many of them are not flourishing and are missing out on an overall good quality of day-to-day living. Wellbeing of our young people has declined to an unacceptable level that leaves the UK 71st out of 74 countries for the average wellbeing of its 15-year-olds.

Many drivers of low wellbeing have been identified. But there is growing evidence of a tangled web of relationships between low wellbeing, a poor sense of school belonging, and school attendance. While one in four (25%) 15-year-olds in the UK struggle with low wellbeing, this number is more than one in three (34%) among those that admit to skipping classes and more than four in 10 (42%) for those who do not feel a sense of belonging at school.

While the evidence does not point to obvious causality one way or the other, it is reasonable to suppose that low wellbeing, school belonging, and attendance might all influence each other. This complex interaction is something that is picked up in the growing discussion of Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), which is thought to affect a significant number of children, potentially contributing to the doubling of persistent absence since the pandemic.

Left alone, this web of low wellbeing, belonging, and attendance has a dramatic potential impact on young people's quality of life in the here and now. And it could harm later educational and employment outcomes too.

Given this worrying trend of low wellbeing among young people, and the potential damage that comes with it, it is essential we ask: how can we disentangle the low wellbeing, belonging, and attendance web and successfully help young people to be resilient and thrive? Building evidence of what works and what does not will be critical.

Power2, a charity that works to boost children and young people's wellbeing and engagement with school and learning, provides an example for policymakers, schools, and commissioners to learn from.

The Power2 Rediscover programme provides one-to-one support for children struggling with low wellbeing, isolation, and poor school engagement. Many of the young people they support struggle with both low attendance and face social, emotional, and mental health needs. The Power2 Rediscover programme has worked with over 500 young people in London and the North West, across 87 schools. It is a 10-week course, where facilitators support young people aged eight to 18, with a particular focus on their wellbeing, confidence, communication, and engagement at school.

This report aims to provide a value for money assessment of the Power2 Rediscover programme. It draws on a 2024 evaluation by the #BeeWell team at the University of Manchester that suggests Power2 Rediscover could be improving wellbeing by the equivalent of 1.2 life satisfaction points. While there are noticeable limitations to the data that warrant caution in interpreting these findings, they could potentially represent a significant change – around twice the size of the impact measured for adults getting a job after being unemployed. We apply HM Treasury's methodology to put a monetary value on this increase in wellbeing.

Pro Bono Economics' analysis suggests that it's likely the Power2 Rediscover programme offers good value for money based on its wellbeing benefits alone. If the effect identified in the University of Manchester evaluation lasted for just five weeks, then the wellbeing benefits of the programme would outweigh the £1,200 cost per young person of the programme. However, if the effect lasted for 10 weeks, then the programme would have delivered £2,600 of wellbeing benefits per young person in 2023/24, or around £2 in benefits for every £1 spent. And, if the effect lasted for six months then the programme would have delivered £6,900 of wellbeing benefits per young person in 2023/24, or more than £5 in benefits for every £1 spent.

These initial findings showing the Power2 Rediscover programme's effectiveness add further evidence to the existing body that suggests engaging young people on a one-to-one basis can help give them the tools they need to thrive. It is vital that local and central government continues building systems that ensure support for struggling children from organisations best placed to understand and engage them.

Power2 Rediscover could be improving wellbeing by the equivalent of

1.2 life satisfaction points

on a 1-10 scale

25%

of 15-year-olds report low levels of wellbeing

The programme likely delivers value for money if this wellbeing impact lasts just

5 weeks

If the effects of the programme lasted six months then it would deliver

£5 of wellbeing benefits for every £1 spent

Introduction

Everyone wants children to grow up happy, thriving, and fulfilled. But what if this cannot be taken for granted? Existing wellbeing evidence suggests that is the case for many of our young people today. International data shows that one in four (25%) 15-year-olds in the UK reported suffering from low wellbeing in 2022 – ranking the UK 71st out of 74 countries across the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development).[1] And domestic data suggests that the situation has been getting worse in recent years, with a 6-percentage point increase in the proportion of 10 to 15-year-olds reporting low levels of overall wellbeing in the period from 2009 to 2021.[2]

The early years of secondary school prove challenging for young people's wellbeing. Young people generally experience a drop in their wellbeing during this time – a fact that holds true when cut across different genders and backgrounds.[3] But the rise in low wellbeing that has been recorded over the last decade suggests that these well-established age effects are being compounded by specific cohort effects. In other words, we need to ask: what is driving this increase in low wellbeing among today's young people? And, most importantly, how do we reverse this trend?

Low wellbeing is associated with a wide range of different factors, with previous Pro Bono Economics (PBE) work highlighting the importance of mind, body, and connection.[4] Among young people, there is clearly a very important interaction with the school experience too.[5] In particular, there is growing evidence of an intricate web of relationships between low wellbeing, school belonging, and school attendance. While overall a quarter (25%) of 15-year-olds report low wellbeing, this rises to more than a third (34%) among those who admit to skipping classes in the past two weeks. And for those who do not feel a sense of belonging at school this

[1] PBE, Charting a happier course for England's children: the case for universal wellbeing measurement, September 2024.
[2] The Children's Society, The Good Childhood Report, September 2023.
[3] Although the magnitude of the drop may differ by characteristics, see: J Stafford, Young people's wellbeing falls sharply after starting secondary school, November 2022.
[4] PBE, Mind, body and connection: Low wellbeing in the UK 2024, November 2024.
[5] PBE, Charting a happier course for England's children: the case for universal wellbeing measurement, September 2024.

number is more than four in 10 (42%).[6] Moreover, in recent times, evidence has suggested a connection between increasing school absences and a growing prevalence of wellbeing challenges.[7]

While the link between low wellbeing and a difficult school experience is clear however, the direction of causality is not. It would seem reasonable, nevertheless, to assume that it flows both ways. That is, young people suffering from lower wellbeing are less likely to attend school and feel belonging there, and those who have a less good school experience are more likely to suffer from low wellbeing.

This complex interaction is something that is picked up in the growing discussion of Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). This issue has become a significant concern for schools, parents, and policymakers alike, as a decline in school attendance highlights the urgent need to address the underlying challenges impacting children and young people's wellbeing.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

EBSA is a term used to describe children and young people who consistently fail to attend school due to underlying emotional and mental health issues.[8] EBSA affects an estimated 1% to 5% of the overall school population while an even larger group of children experience emotional distress and reluctance towards school but continue to attend.[9]

There has been increased focus on EBSA in the UK, particularly in the aftermath of Covid. It is widely believed that the prevalence of EBSA has risen sharply, contributing to a rise in absence rates that saw overall absence rates in schools reach 7.4% in 2022/23, approximately double pre-pandemic levels.

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[6] Based on PBE analysis of OECD: PISA 2022 Database, 2022. Someone is defined as engaged at school if they either agree or strongly agree with the statement "I feel I belong at school" or they never "skip any classes".

[7] NHS Digital, Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2023 - wave 4 follow up to the 2017 survey - NHS England Digital

[8] West Sussex Educational Psychology Service, Emotionally based school avoidance, 2018.NULL

[9] J G Elliott & M Place, Practitioner review: school refusal: developments in conceptualisation and treatment since 2000, Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, *60*(1), 4-15, January 2019.

This tangled web of low wellbeing, belonging, and attendance has a dramatic potential impact on long-term prospects of the young people affected. Absence from school has been linked to lower educational and academic attainment. For example, only 50% of students with persistent absenteeism (attendance below 90%) meet the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths at Key Stage 2, compared to 71% of those with near-perfect attendance.[10] Reduced school attendance is also associated with a higher risk of mental health issues, fewer social connections, and bleak future employment opportunities.[11]

But even before we get to those longer term effects, the wellbeing crisis matters in the here and now. Efforts to tackle it might therefore have important near- and longer-term benefits.

Finding effective ways of untangling the web of relationships between wellbeing, belonging at school, and attendance could play a critical role in solving the UK's children wellbeing crisis. In this report, we contribute to this mission by focusing on the near-term wellbeing gains associated with the Power2 Rediscover programme.

The Power2 Rediscover programme

The Power2 Rediscover programme offers intensive, one-to-one sessions designed to boost the mental wellbeing of young people and children and improve their engagement with school and learning. It provides tailored wellbeing support for young people, delivered by trained facilitators through face-to-face sessions. Over 500 children and young people in London and the North West have been supported by the Power2 Rediscover programme since it began in 2020.[12] While mainly delivered across 87 schools to date, some one-to-one meetings have taken place in the young people's homes, the Power2 office, and cafes in cases where young people are struggling with school avoidance.

[10] FFT, Absence and attainment in primary schools in 2023, September 2023.
[11] G A Melvin et al., The Kids and Teens at School (KiTeS) framework: An inclusive bioecological systems approach to understanding school absenteeism and school attendance problems, Frontiers in Education 4, 61, June 2019.
[12] 662 young people engaged in the programme between 2020/21 and 2023/24; of these, 522 completed the programme. At the time of writing, an additional 53 young people have completed the programme, bringing the total number of young people completing the course up to 575.

The 10-session programme aims to enhance self-confidence, communication skills, and school engagement while reducing anxiety and building resilience. It seeks to empower young people to set and achieve goals, develop healthier routines, and navigate challenges with optimism. By fostering positive relationships with facilitators, the programme helps participants articulate their concerns and strengthen their mental health and emotional wellbeing at school. The Power2 Rediscover programme specifically addresses the challenges that contribute to EBSA including social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs. Power2 notes that many of the young people that they support have both low attendance and SEMH needs. It works with young people at risk of disengaging from school, offering tailored support to help them reintegrate. By focusing on these core issues, the programme helps vulnerable young people overcome the barriers that prevent them from attending school, providing them with the support needed to re-engage with education and improve their overall wellbeing. Programme participants are aged eight to 18 and include shy, withdrawn, or disruptive individuals and those receiving the Pupil Premium.[13]

How we can learn from Power2

Targeted interventions like the Power2 Rediscover programme are crucial because mental health and wellbeing challenges vary significantly across different individuals, and a one-size-fits-all approach often fails to address unique needs. By focusing on personalised support, these programmes can cater to the specific circumstances and experiences of each participant, providing a tailored path towards improved wellbeing.

Such interventions not only have the potential to offer more meaningful and lasting outcomes but also help maximise the impact of limited resources in a sector where demand for support is consistently high. The importance of evaluating these initiatives lies in understanding their impact and hence the question: "Do these personalised one-to-one sessions lead to meaningful improvements in wellbeing?"

[13] Power2 notes that the typical age range of the young people they work with is 12-15.

Lucy's story

Lucy, 13, from Manchester, struggled with severe anxiety after the Covid lockdowns, leading to poor school attendance. She was referred to the Power2 Rediscover programme but was too anxious to attend sessions at school.

To support her, the Power2 team arranged meetings in a quiet office space. Initially shy and avoiding eye contact, Lucy gradually opened up. She learnt to challenge negative thoughts, use positive self-talk, and set achievable goals.

During one session, Lucy felt down about an exam. Her Programme Lead encouraged her to focus on preparing for the next one instead of dwelling on past struggles. Over time, her confidence grew.

By the end of the programme, Lucy was back in school, attending regularly, and feeling happier. Her mother said, "Power2 went out of their way to help Lucy. Her confidence has really built up."

Lucy's story highlights how tailored support can help young people regain confidence and overcome school-related anxiety.

Impact of the Power2 Rediscover programme on wellbeing

There is growing evidence that young people participating in the Power2 Rediscover programme experience significant improvements in mental wellbeing. Data captured by Power2 shows that, over the course of the programme, the average young person experiences a 2.7 point improvement on the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS, scored between 7 and 35).

It can be difficult to know whether this improvement was directly caused by the programme or results from other factors going on in the young people's lives. However, a recent evaluation by the #BeeWell team at the University of Manchester provides further reassurance that the programme is likely to be having a positive impact. This evaluation compared the wellbeing scores for participants after completing the programme to a matched comparison group of young people with similar demographic characteristics from the #BeeWell dataset. They identify a positive and

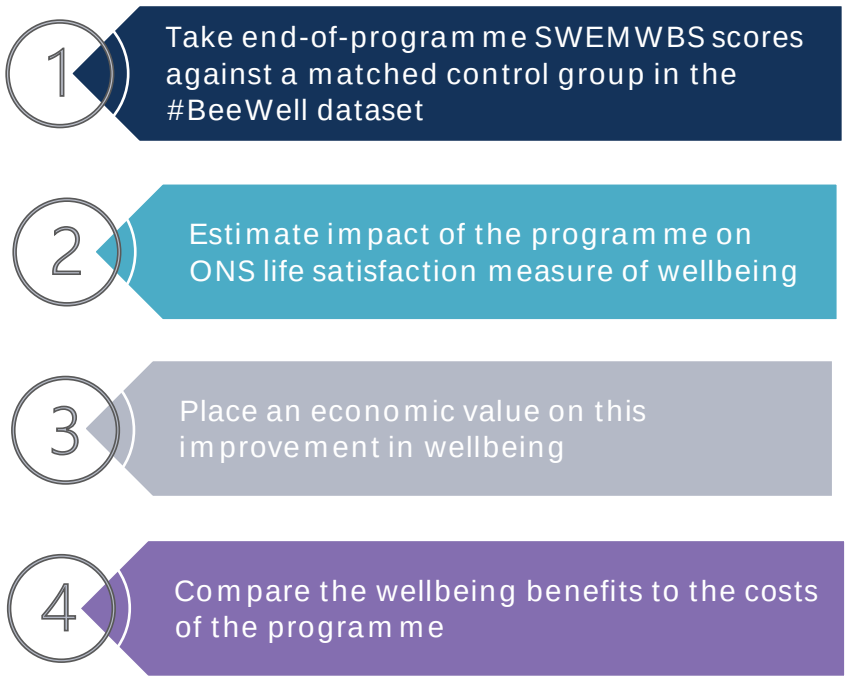
statistically significant difference in wellbeing scores. There are limitations in this approach as it was not possible to directly compare *changes* in wellbeing over time for those receiving support and those in the comparison group. However, it provides further evidence that the Power2 Rediscover programme is having a positive impact on the wellbeing of young people.

Approach

This report uses the University of Manchester evaluation and the latest HM Treasury (HMT) guidance for valuing wellbeing to put a monetary value to the wellbeing outcomes delivered by the Power2 Rediscover programme. In summary, the following methodology (visualised in Figure 1) has been followed to arrive at this report's main findings of Power2 Rediscover's value for money.

Figure 1. Four key steps to estimating the economic value of wellbeing improvements delivered by the Power2 Rediscover programme

A process diagram of the methodology



The steps are outlined in more detail below:

1. **Take end-of-programme SWEMWBS scores against a matched control group in the #BeeWell dataset:** The impact of the Power2 Rediscover programme on participants' wellbeing was measured by comparing changes in SWEMWBS scores with those of a similar group of young people from the #BeeWell dataset.[14] This group was

[14] The SWEMWBS questionnaire, which assesses mental wellbeing, is administered to young people aged 13 and above. Therefore, we note that the data we have from the Power2 Rediscover programme are of those 13-18 years of age.

selected to closely match the characteristics of the Power2 Rediscover programme participants. When contrasted against the comparison group, participants of the Power2 Rediscover programme see a relative increase in their average SWEMWBS score of 4.56 points.

2. **Estimate impact of the programme on the Office for National** Statistics' (ONS) life satisfaction measure of wellbeing: HMT guidance provides a methodology for estimating the economic value of wellbeing improvements using the ONS life satisfaction measure.[15] The 4.56-point difference in SWEMWBS for Power2 Rediscover participants from the University of Manchester evaluation translates to a 1.15-point improvement in ONS life satisfaction. This is a potentially quite large increase – about two times more than what UK adults experience when they go from being unemployed to employed. It is important to note that the improvement in life satisfaction point observed among Power2 Rediscover participants cannot be entirely attributed to the Power2 Rediscover programme. It cannot be established with certainty that the estimated impacts found in the Power2 Rediscover sample are representative of the true effects of the programme. However, it is worth highlighting that the analysis controlled for several important participant characteristics that might impact wellbeing and was compared to a similar group of young people from the #BeeWell dataset.

3. **Place an economic value on this improvement in wellbeing**: According to HMT guidance, a central value on a 1-point improvement in life satisfaction that persists for one year has a value of £13,000 in 2019 prices. This is adjusted to £15,338 in 2023 prices using the methodology outlined in the guidance.

[15] The ONS life satisfaction measure of wellbeing is one of the four standardised personal wellbeing questions used by the ONS. Individuals are asked, "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?" with responses provided on a 0-10 scale where 0 is "not satisfied at all" and 10 is "completely satisfied". For more detail, please see the ONS website.

The wellbeing impact, measured in life satisfaction points from Step 1, is then multiplied by this adjusted value (£15,338) to estimate the value of the average wellbeing improvement (if sustained for a year) experienced by a Power2 Rediscover programme participant – giving an economic value of £17,639.[16]

To determine the programme's value for money, additional information is needed about the per-participant cost and the average WELLBY gains.

4. **Compare the wellbeing benefits to the costs of the programme:** For the year 2023/24, Power2 spent £181,770, of which £142,788 was on direct costs, such as facilitator salaries, travel expenses, and contributions to graduation ceremonies. The remaining £38,982 was allocated to costs such as administrative support, safeguarding requirements (IT and mobile phones), training, management, and overhead recovery. When split across the 146 programme participants in 2023/24, this comprises of an average delivery cost of £1,245 per participant.

This report compares the wellbeing benefits of the Power2 Rediscover programme to its costs using a benefit-cost ratio (BCR). The BCR is calculated by dividing the total benefits by the total costs, showing the benefits generated for every £1 spent. The costs are compared to the benefits to understand a) the break-even point and b) the BCR under different persistence scenarios. A ratio greater than one indicates that the benefits outweigh the costs, providing an indication of the programme's value for money.

The BCRs were calculated under three different scenarios to explore how the duration of the wellbeing effects impacts the value for money of the Power2 Rediscover programme. It was assumed that there is no linear increase or decrease in wellbeing scores during the programme, and that any improvements occur only after the 10 weeks when the programme ends.

[16] £15,338 * 1.15 = £17,639

Key assumptions

There are a few important assumptions that contribute to the analysis, and must be reflected in the presentation of the results:

- This methodology provides a starting place for understanding the impact that the programme should have, but there are likely to be a range of economic benefits beyond the wellbeing improvements analysed in this report. For example, it is likely the programme supports increased future earnings for participants that perform more strongly in their academic exams. Relatedly, it should also be highlighted that the results do not account for the potential economic benefits that may arise in the future from an improvement in childhood wellbeing-related outcomes like EBSA.

- Power2 collects SWEMWBS data at the beginning and end of the 10-week programme. However, the #BeeWell data is collected over a longer period of one year. Because of this, the changes in wellbeing over time of the Power2 Rediscover programme cannot be directly compared with the #BeeWell data. Instead, the evaluation by the University of Manchester compared the end wellbeing scores from the programme against a group of young people from the #BeeWell dataset, who have similar characteristics to those in the Power2 Rediscover programme. This is not as robust as either a matched comparison of changes over time or a purposely designed randomised control group. As a result, while this provides an indication of the likely impact of the programme, it cannot prove a cause-and-effect relationship. However, we test the robustness of our findings by checking the results when we change the size of the estimated impact on wellbeing in Sensitivity Tests 1a and 1b.[17]

- It is assumed that any improvement in wellbeing occurs only after the completion of the programme and is sustained for a period thereafter. This assumption is made to maintain simplicity in the analysis and ensure that the results are conservative. A number of scenarios measuring persistence of the programme effects are explored in Sensitivity Tests 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d.

[17] The sensitivity analyses use the two confidence interval values of the impact estimate from the University of Manchester's analysis.

- While the programme runs for 10 weeks, Power2 advises that there is often a 12-week interval between the start and end of the programme due to school holidays. Therefore, we model a couple of scenarios in Sensitivity Tests 3e and 3f to look at the value for money if we change the assumed time span (and fade out of impact) of the programme course.

- At present there is no evidence on how long the effects of the Power2 Rediscover programme last. A range of assumptions is used in our analysis to reflect this uncertainty.

- The impact of using the high or low monetary values for improvements in wellbeing is explored in Sensitivity Tests 4a and 4b.

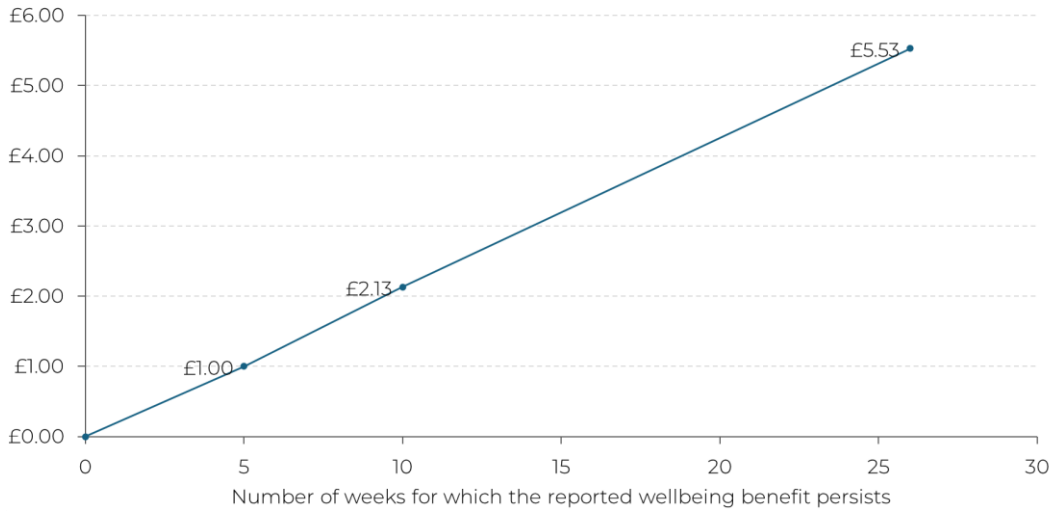
Results of the analysis

The University of Manchester evaluation suggests the Power2 Rediscover programme could be improving wellbeing by the equivalent of 1.2 life satisfaction points. This is a large change – around twice the size of the impact measured for adults getting a job after being unemployed. However, evidence is not available on how long that effect lasts for or whether it tends to 'fade out' after the programme has finished. By applying the HMT methodology to monetising wellbeing benefits we can explore how these benefits compare to the costs of the programme.

The results suggest that it's likely the Power2 Rediscover programme offers good value for money based on its wellbeing benefits alone. The results are summarised for a range of scenarios in Figure 2.

Figure 2. The Power2 Rediscover programme is likely to deliver value for money under even conservative assumptions

Representative benefits generated for every £1 spent on the programme by the number of weeks for which the positive effects persist



Notes: This figure illustrates the estimated value of benefits that are returned for every £1 spent on the Power2 Rediscover programme under differing assumed durations of benefit persistence. Breakeven occurs when the benefits last for five weeks; that is, the £1 spend returns £1 of benefit. Beyond this point, the benefits always outweigh the costs, growing linearly with each additional weeks' worth of persistence.

Source: PBE cost-benefit analysis using matching analysis by Neil Humphrey and Qiqi Cheng (University of Manchester) of #BeeWell data, and data from Power2 Rediscover, 2023/24.

If the effect identified in the University of Manchester evaluation lasted for just five weeks, then the wellbeing benefits of the programme would outweigh the £1,200 cost per young person of the programme. In other

words, the programme would generate value for money as long as young people felt the improved quality of life benefit for at least five weeks.

The evidence on the persistence of wellbeing effects on time-limited programmes for young people is mixed and still evolving.[18] As a result there is significant uncertainty. However, our scenarios suggest that the Power2 Rediscover programme delivers value for money even under relatively cautious assumptions.

The programme is therefore likely to generate value for money under even cautious scenarios. If the effect lasted for 10 weeks, then the programme would have delivered £2,600 of wellbeing benefits per young person in 2023/24 or around £2 in benefits for every £1 spent.

Power2 aims to give young people tools and strategies to thrive in the long term. If the effect lasted for much longer, therefore, the economic benefits could be significant. For example, if the effect lasted for six months, then the programme would have delivered £6,900 of wellbeing benefits per young person in 2023/24 or more than £5 in benefits for every £1 spent.

However, as mentioned earlier, these figures do not account for the potential economic benefits that may arise in the future from a reduction in wellbeing or wellbeing-related experiences such as EBSA. For example, absence from school is linked to attainment, which is in turn linked to employment outcomes. While it may be reasonable to suppose that this could be an impact of this programme, we cannot at this time quantify these impacts with the evidence available. It is therefore possible that the economic benefits of this programme are actually greater than what we have been able to estimate here.

Sensitivity analysis

The core conclusions of this report – that the Power2 Rediscover programme is likely to deliver good value for money – remain robust to a range of alternative assumptions. A set of sensitivity analyses are explored to ascertain the impacts, and these are outlined in detail in Annex B. For all

[18] See, for example: C Donaldson, G Moore & J Hawkins, A Systematic Review of School Transition Interventions to Improve Mental Health and Wellbeing Outcomes in Children and Young People, School Mental Health 15, 19–35, September 2022.; A E Clark et al., The Origins of Happiness: The Science of Well-Being over the Life Course, Princeton University Press, 2018, JSTOR, accessed 10 December 2024.

the scenarios considered, the benefits per £1 spent fall in the range of £0.92 to £11.06, suggesting that wellbeing benefits are likely to outweigh the costs of the programme.

However, the results are sensitive to assumptions about the impact of the Power2 Rediscover programme on wellbeing. Using the low end of the range of results estimated by the University of Manchester suggests that wellbeing benefits could be lower than the core scenario, with £1.54 in benefits for every £1 spent. However, the upper end of the range suggests that it is possible that the likely benefits could be much higher than the core scenario, with £2.72 in benefits for every £1 spent. The results are also sensitive to one of the persistence effects of the programme. Assuming that there is a linear increase one month after the 10-week period suggests that the wellbeing benefits could be lower than the costs. However, assuming that there is a linear increase one year after the 10-week period suggests that it could be equally possible that the benefits could be much higher than the core scenario, with £11.06 in benefits for every £1 spent.

Further analysis with a larger sample of data from the Power2 Rediscover programme and with follow-ups after the 10-week programme has been completed will increase the confidence of this assumption over periods and reduce uncertainty in the analysis. The results across the scenarios modelled suggest that the Power2 Rediscover programme is likely to offer good value for money. Even under conservative assumptions, the BCRs indicate that the benefits outweigh the costs, whether improvements are sustained for shorter periods or for longer durations. These findings suggest the Power2 Rediscover programme is a valuable investment in the wellbeing of young people.

Conclusion

It is critical that the UK finds cost effective and well evidenced solutions to tackle the children's wellbeing crisis. A key part of that will be finding ways to support young people to untangle the web of issues linking low wellbeing, social isolation, and school engagement.

There is a lot to be learnt from the Power2 Rediscover programme. Initial evidence suggests that by offering one-to-one support that helps young people to build skills and resilience it can make a difference to their wellbeing. Inevitably this requires an investment, but based on HMT's own valuation methodology it's likely the programme delivers value for money, based on its wellbeing benefits alone.

The cautious findings of this report can be strengthened in the future by further building the evidence around the Power2 Rediscover programme. Gathering more data to understand how the wellbeing effects of the programme persist over a longer period of time is critical. In addition, other positive effects such as children's later lifetime outcomes, or outcomes of their friends and families, are not measured and quantified yet. And given how the risk of experiencing low wellbeing is higher for some children over others, additional evaluation is crucial to understand if the effectiveness of intensive intervention remains consistent for children despite their backgrounds, needs, and characteristics. There may also be other costs to the partner schools in the form of time taken by school staff to refer children and liaise with Power2 to facilitate the programme that should be better understood.

And yet, these initial findings add further evidence to the existing body that suggests engaging young people on a one-to-one basis can help give them the tools they need to thrive. It is vital that the UK continues to build systems that ensure those children that are struggling get the support they need from organisations that are best positioned to engage and understand them.

Annex A – Methodology for translating SWEMWBS to life satisfaction

Qiqi Cheng from the University of Manchester team responsible for analysing the #BeeWell data estimated the relationship between SWEMWBS and life satisfaction measures of wellbeing. The #BeeWell data is distinctively positioned to estimate this relationship as it captures both measures at two points in time for a large sample of children.

According to the approach widely used in health economic mapping studies, the University of Manchester used standardised methods to construct and identify the appropriate predictive regression models linking SWEMWBS scores to ONS life satisfaction scores. The analysis included using an average treatment effect (ATE) to capture the treatment effect in the matched comparison group. The ATE model is analysed using with and without covariates. The marginal effects of the Power2 Rediscover programme on the matched comparison group were calculated using a method known as g-computation and implemented using the marginal effects package for the statistical software called R.[19]

The ATE analysis reveals that the effect of the Power2 Rediscover programme on the treated is about 4.56 SWEMWBS. There is an increase in the SWEMWBS score from 20.44 to 25.00 in the matched comparison group. This corresponds to an increase in life satisfaction points from 5.96 to 7.11. If this improvement could be maintained over a year, this effect could be considered as 1.15 WELLBY points. As per HMT's Green Book guidance on wellbeing, the value of 1.15 WELLBY would be approximately £14,945.76 using the standard valuation.

[19] J M Snowden, S Rose & K M Mortimer, Implementation of G-computation on a Simulated Data Set: Demonstration of a Causal Inference Technique, American Journal of Epidemiology, 173(7), 731-738, 2011.

Annex B – Sensitivity analysis

Sensitivity tests are conducted to analyse the impact of key assumptions on the core conclusions of this report. The sensitivity tests conducted are as follows:

- **Uncertainty over the impact of the Power2 Rediscover programme on the wellbeing of young people who are at risk of exclusion:** Sensitivity Tests 1a and 1b explore the impact of changing the estimated impact of the Power2 Rediscover programme on the wellbeing of young people who are at risk of exclusion. This is done using the 95% confidence interval from the analysis originally done by the University of Manchester, giving a range of wellbeing impacts from 0.83 to 1.47 life satisfaction points.
- **Incorporating costs only for those who completed the Power2 Rediscover programme:** Power2 collects data on total number of beneficiaries who start and complete the 10-week Rediscover programme. Sensitivity Test 2 explores whether the results are sensitive to programme costs that account for only those beneficiaries who complete the programme.
- **Persistence of wellbeing impacts:** In the mainline scenario it is assumed that the beneficiaries of the Power2 Rediscover programme see a linear improvement over 10 weeks and then a linear decrease back to 0 after another 10 weeks. Sensitivity Test 3a assumes that there is a linear increase over 10 weeks and then the impact is back to 0. Sensitivity Test 3b assumes that there is an impact sustained for one month after the 10-week programme. Sensitivity Test 3c assumes that there is an impact six months after the 10-week programme. Sensitivity Test 3d assumes that there is an impact one year after the 10-week programme. Given how Power2 advises that, often, the 10-week programme actually spans over 12 weeks with a break in the middle (due to school holidays), Sensitivity Tests 3e and 3f look at what the results would be if we changed the persistence assumptions accordingly. Sensitivity Test 3e assumes a linear increase over 12 weeks and then impact immediately down to 0. And Sensitivity Test 3f assumes an impact at the end of the programme, sustained for 12 weeks afterwards.
- **Alternative monetary values for wellbeing:** HMT guidance provides a range of values for wellbeing around the central estimate, from £11,733 to £18,773 (in 2023 prices). Sensitivity Tests 4a and 4b show the impact of using these varying wellbeing valuations.

Table A1. Summary of results from key sensitivity tests

	Benefit per beneficiary	Total benefits	Benefits per £1 spent
Core scenario	£2,649	£386,706	£2.13
Sensitivity 1a – apply lower confidence interval from University of Manchester study	£1,917	£279,853	£1.54
Sensitivity 1b – apply upper confidence interval from University of Manchester study	£3,386	£ 494,407	£2.72
Sensitivity 2 – no costs for those who do not complete the programme	£2,649	£386,706	£2.72
Sensitivity 3a – assume linear increase over 10 weeks and then impact back to 0	£1,324	£193,353	£1.06
Sensitivity 3b – assume increase lasts one month after programme	£1,148	£167,573	£0.92
Sensitivity 3c – assume increase lasts six months after programme	£6,887	£1,005,436	£5.53
Sensitivity 3d – assume increase lasts one year after programme	£13,773	£2,010,872	£11.06
Sensitivity 3e – assume linear increase over 12 weeks and then impact back to 0	£1,589	£232,024	£1.28
Sensitivity 3f – assume increase lasts 12 weeks after programme	£3,178	£464,047	£2.55
Sensitivity 4a – low HMT value for wellbeing	£2,037	£297,466	£1.64
Sensitivity 4b – high HMT value for wellbeing	£3,260	£475,946	£2.62

Annex C – The approach

The economic benefits of the wellbeing improvements delivered by the Power2 Rediscover programme are estimated in the following ways:

1. Estimate impact of the programme on the ONS life satisfaction measure of wellbeing: HMT guidance provides a methodology for assigning an economic value on improvements in wellbeing using the ONS life satisfaction measure of wellbeing. The effect of the Power2 Rediscover programme on the SWEMWBS scores is positive at about 4.6 points. The estimated impact of the programme on the SWEMWBS measure of mental wellbeing is translated into life satisfaction impacts assuming that a 1-point improvement in SWEMWBS equates to a 1.15-point improvement in life satisfaction.

2. Place an economic value on this improvement in wellbeing: HMT guidance places a central value on a 1-point improvement in life satisfaction that persists for one year of £13,000 as per 2019 prices. This is uprated to a value of £15,253 in 2023 prices using the methodology outlined in the HMT guidance. The wellbeing impact in life satisfaction points from (1) is multiplied by the value of £13,000 to estimate the average wellbeing improvement experienced by a Power2 beneficiary. This gives an economic value of £14,945.[20]

3. Compare the wellbeing benefits to the costs of the programme: Power2 provided details of the costs of delivering the programme. In 2023/24, Power2 spent £181,770 in allocated costs pertaining to the programme. At the start of the programme, Power2 had 146 young people enrolled which translates to a cost of £1,245 per student. This report compares the wellbeing benefits of the Power2 Rediscover programme to the costs using a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) which is calculated by dividing total benefits by total costs. This provides the benefits generated per £1 spent and is an indication of the value for money of the programme – a value greater than one suggests that benefits are greater than the costs.

[20] £13,000 * 1.15 = £14,945

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