

Living with Covid: Out and About in Half Term, October 2020:

As the Autumn leaves fall and the weather gets colder, we've ventured out through our estates, parks and open spaces. We asked young people their feelings about 'Living With Covid'. What are their hopes, fears or wishes? Is there anything going well? What perhaps could be better? Here are the snapshots from the last week of term and the holidays...

- We have visited Lindley, Salendine Nook, Longwood, Golcar, Cowersley, Honley, Holmfirth, Lepton, Deighton, Birkby, Ravensknowle Park and Greenhead Park. We saw 46 young people. 35 spoke with us.
- Twilight outreach helped us engage with younger children and 'tweens'. A third of the young people we spoke with were year 7's who had navigated the transition to high school during covid. They felt safe and happy at their new school. Some thought the 'bubble' approach, meaning they stayed in one class or area had helped them settle; school didn't feel as big or scary. There was a sense of loss at not being able to say 'goodbye' to friends who had moved onto different provisions. The expansive nature of some of our outlying areas meant the children couldn't meet up outdoors, on their own terms to do this. Although young people showed maturity and acceptance at the reasoning, this did seem to feel 'unfinished' for them.
- Changes in routines and 'covid safe expectations' are starting to feel less scary and a little more 'normal' for the young people we spoke with. They felt these were 'as it is' and said they would just get on with it.
- Most of the young people were fully aware of 'face, hands, space', the reasoning for mask wearing. They were also attempting to remain compliant with the 'rule of 6'. Conversations and observations saw them apply the guidance; aside from distancing. This appears to be because they 'lose track of themselves' whilst having fun or choose not to. This is because they feel that given the close contact they have with one another on the school bus, corridor and canteen-it seems pointless.
- There is still a desire to have park equipment, like swings, reinstated.
- The light was not working at the Holmfirth Skate Park, the young people wondered if this was purposeful to prevent gathering or if it was broken?
- We didn't meet any year 11 students this time. We are unsure if this is because of the time, weather or because they are staying home.
- The change to 'Tier 2 Restrictions' had allowed some young people to see Friends, Extended Family and Grandparents in gardens. Yay!
- Three young people spoke of being in 'collapsed bubbles' with two missing two weeks of school, one missing 3 days.



Mood was better!

It was hard to tell if this was because young people are adapting to change, or if it's due to the holidays...

"I think I'll be mostly staying in and playing PS4 this week. We're having a Halloween party at home".

"Going up to High School during covid has been ok. I get to stay with my class all the time. Only the older ones move around".

"We will stay out until we can't take the cold anymore. Even if it's dark. Having somewhere warm to go and hang around with our friends would be really good.."

We saw less children and young people this half-term. This could be because the weather was poor, it is dark earlier or because they are staying home.