

Review of Citywise Education, 2023.



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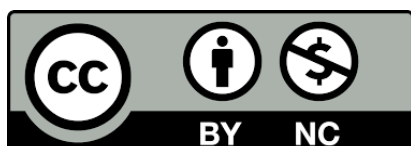
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1.0 Executive Summary

Citywise Education, located in Jobstown, West Tallaght, has been providing educational supports to children and young people from the surrounding areas for over two decades. Established with the objective of improving communities through youth education by using a whole-person approach focused on academic support and personal development of young people. It has been effective in increasing school participation and educational attainment, including third level education. A recent study by Galway university of the Fast Track Academy programme within Citywise concluded that for every euro of investment there was 12.6 times as much social value created for participants (Kovacic et al, 2022).

This review of the afterschool and leadership programmes within Citywise, and building on the Galway research, took a mixed methods approach which included focus group discussions, one-to-one interviews and surveys. These were informed by a desk review of internal documents, local and national socioeconomic data, and research relating to implementation and replication.

A specific objective of the research was to identify the key elements of the Citywise model and develop a replication framework to inform next steps.

The key aspects of the model which were identified as critical to the efficacy of the Citywise approach are:

- Being located in a disadvantaged community, from which both participants and volunteers are primarily drawn
- Having a programme of activities which includes academic, formal study supports alongside those characterised by social and creative outlets
- A learner-led and needs-based approach to educational programmes, whereby the focus is less on alignment to the formal curriculum but rather on maintaining interest, motivation to learn and engagement
- Visible and established pathways for young people to progress through the service with increasing levels of responsibility.

Citywise has developed considerable resources which will support replication including:

- Formal documentation regarding the Leadership Programme, such as the recruitment processes, the progression pathways and induction and training content
- A Volunteer Handbook and induction programme
- An established Youth Advisory Group which informs organisational developments
- A suite of promotional materials including posters, fliers and so on, which can be readily adapted for new locations.

Key areas which require attention in order to progress replication have been identified as follows:

- Identifying organisations located in disadvantaged communities which have the capacity to either directly, or in partnership, engage with children and young people across the Citywise age range. This will be facilitated by the development of key engagement criteria at both a community and organisational level
- Documenting the individualised approach to supporting learners and developing standardised training in its delivery

- Comprehensive documentation of the established programme content and required resources (e.g. physical space, equipment, knowledge and skills)
- Development of monitoring and evaluation processes which capture fidelity to the model (ie delivery as intended) and the achievement of anticipated outcomes for individual children and young people.

Whilst a great deal is in place to enable the replication of the Citywise model, there are number of activities which need to be undertaken in order that this process is comprehensive and effective. Taking an implementation science framework, this report sets out a proposed sequence of activities and required resources to progress this.

2.0 Introduction

Following a competitive tender process, CDI was commissioned by *Rethink Ireland* to undertake a review of *Citywise Education* to evaluate the efficacy of its programmes, assess any positive impact they may have and create a framework for replication. Funded by *Rethink Ireland*, this review is intended to inform further phases of support and investment, particularly in relation to the potential for replicating the *Citywise Education* approach in other disadvantaged communities.

Citywise Education was established in 1997 to improve communities through youth education, a vision which is supported by a theory of change approach, connecting the current situation with activities, outcomes and long term, community-wide impact. A summary of the current programmes delivered by Citywise is included in Appendix I.

Building on previous work undertaken by Galway University (Kovačić et al, 2021), extensive consultation was undertaken with the spectrum of Citywise stakeholders. A mixed methods approach was employed, using primarily semi-structured focus groups, supported by surveys and interviews. This approach enabled the collation of sociodemographic data, patterns of engagement and qualitative findings in relation to perceptions of the organisation, the services it provides and their benefits. A concise literature review was also conducted to establish key characteristics regarding the context in which the service operates, and to identify evidence regarding replication models.

The next section provides an overview of the socioeconomic characteristics of the community within which Citywise is based, and from which it largely draws its participants. Section 4 summarises the methodology utilised, while Section 5 provides an overview of the feedback from the various respondents, whether through focus groups, surveys or interviews. The recurring themes in this feedback are collated in Section 6, whilst Section 7 considers best practice in relation to replication and scaling. The final section of the report provides focused recommendations.

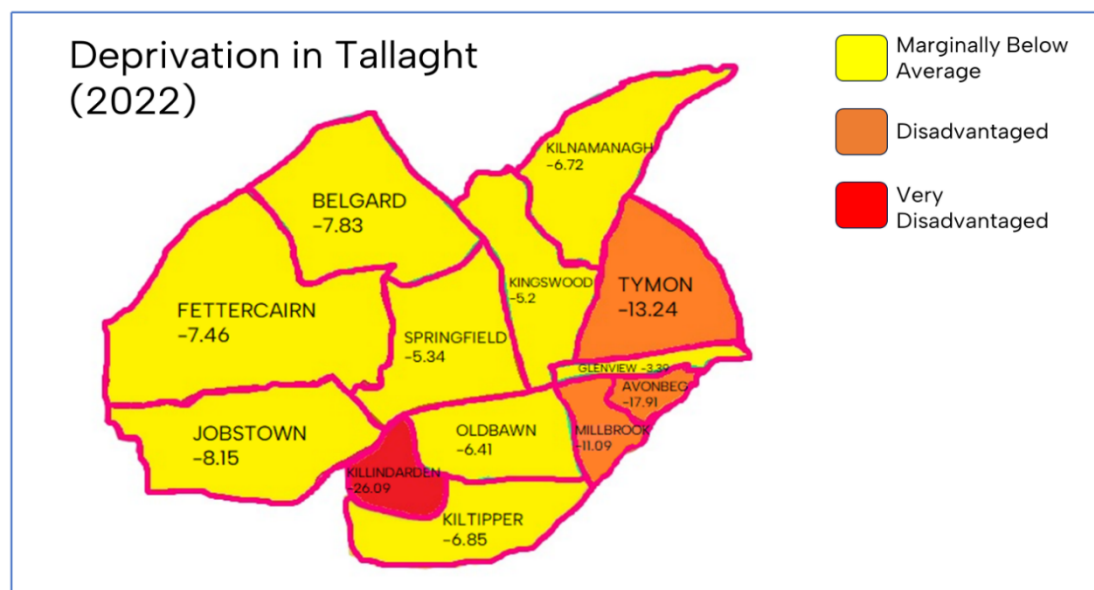
We recognise that families can constitute a diverse range of relationships and connections. For the purposes of this report however, we will simply refer to ‘parents’ as an overarching term for anyone providing care and guardianship to children and young people. It is intended as an inclusive term, and the authors recognise the central role of other caregivers.

3.0 Context

Citywise Education is based in Jobstown, Tallaght, and works with young people drawn largely from the neighbouring areas, and almost exclusively from Dublin 24 (D24). The most recent census and Pobal HP deprivation indices data (2022) show that deprivation levels in the D24 community have disimproved in recent years when compared to the national average, and with previous census data. The definition of deprivation is recognised as “*an absence of essential or desirable attributes, possessions and opportunities which are considered no more than the minimum by that society*” (Coombes et al., 1995).

Overall, Tallaght is deemed a marginally below average area in terms of deprivation, with a total population of 81,022 and a deprivation score of –9.67, indicating it is very much on the cusp of being designated a disadvantaged area. The 2022 data shows Avonbeg, Tymon and Millbrook are the electoral divisions deemed as *disadvantaged*. Killinarden is the most disadvantaged electoral division in D24, being deemed as *very disadvantaged* by the Pobal Index¹ and having the 9th worst deprivation score nationally. Notably, 10,019 people in Tallaght are living in electoral divisions deemed as disadvantaged and 3,878 people are living in electoral divisions deemed as very disadvantaged. Of the thirteen electoral divisions in Dublin 24, only Fettercairn has improved its socioeconomic status since the last census was undertaken in 2016.

Table 1: Deprivation in Tallaght



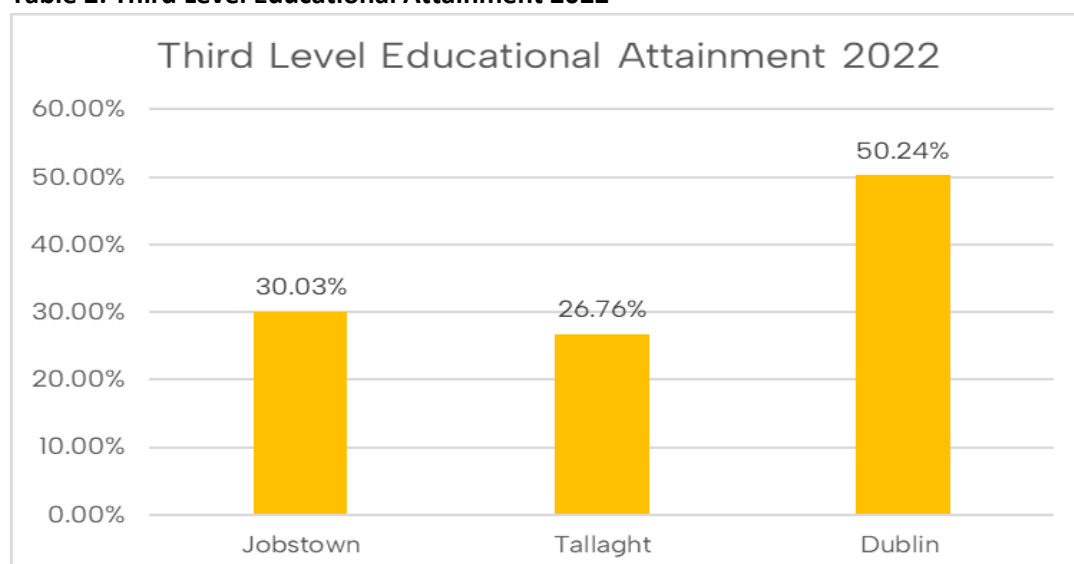
Jobstown is considered to be marginally below average, with a deprivation score of –8.15. The current population in this electoral district (ED) stands at 18,125, with 35.52% of parents in the area

¹ Extremely Disadvantaged = Over -30
 Very Disadvantaged = -20 to -30
 Disadvantaged = -10 to -20
 Marginally Below Average = -10 to 0
 Marginally Above Average = 0 to 10
 Affluent = 10 to 20
 Very affluent = 20 to 30
 Extremely Affluent = Over 30

identifying as lone parents, 14.6% of males being unemployed, and 13.89% of females being unemployed. This compares with national figures whereby 17% of parents are lone parents, 4.6% of males are unemployed and 4.2% of females are unemployed (CSO, 2023). Clearly a far greater proportion of residents in this part of Tallaght are experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage when compared with national norms. Lone parenting is a key indicator of poverty, as families must rely on the income of one parent, and this has been further exacerbated by the rising cost of living in Dublin and beyond. In Ireland, 43.5% of households comprising of one adult with children under 18 years of age are living in poverty (CSO, 2022). There is no doubt that some of the children and young people who attend *Citywise Education*, are likely to be either living in difficult circumstances or at risk of such, with financial burdens, consistent stress and high levels of need.

Deprivation is not a one-dimensional concept. Living in deprivation impacts all aspects of a child's life. Household deprivation and poverty is associated with children's outcomes, including their education, cognitive ability, and social and behavioural development (Bradbury et al, 2015; Washbrook et al, 2014; Treanor, 2020). Economic deficiency and social isolation contribute to underachievement in school settings, which further perpetuates the generational cycle of poverty (Carroll, 2022).

Table 2: Third Level Educational Attainment 2022



Three in ten people in the Jobstown community (30.03%) have attained a third level education, however, the deprivation gap is evident as this number rises to 50.24% for Dublin County. Furthermore, just over one in ten local people (10.97%) only completed primary level education. For Jobstown, these numbers have improved over the last decade, as only 22.47% had obtained a third level education in 2011 and 25.7% in 2016. Although the growth in educational achievement is evident, the continuance of deprivation demonstrates the need for community-level supports and interdepartmental collaboration to improve outcomes for the children and young people of Jobstown and the surrounding areas (Carroll 2022).

Several Irish studies of young people living in disadvantaged communities have identified recurring themes which are highly relevant to the work of *Citywise Education*.

- A recent study by the ESRI reported that:

"Students in more disadvantaged settings were more reliant on class tutors or subject teachers for advice. However, their reliance on teachers did not boost their intention to go on to higher education, suggesting that such advice was not sufficient to make up for the lack of insider knowledge of the education system among their family members" (Smyth, 2023).

- There is evidence of poor availability of career support for young people in underserved communities (O'Brien, 2021). A lack of information, confidence and resources, as well as a lack of prior student awareness of course content is leading to high drop-out rates at third-level education and poorly made career choices. There is also a significantly higher drop-out rate from third-level colleges amongst students from underserved backgrounds (op city). The Technical University Dublin (TUD) in Tallaght cites first year dropout rates of 40% in some courses post Covid, indicating the level of support needed both in choosing courses and sustaining participation (O'Brien, op cit).
- A Mental Health Foundation study states that *"two-thirds of people living in the most deprived areas of West Dublin are reporting mental health issues"* (2018). This is echoed by Comiskey et al whose research on the unmet mental health needs of young people in Tallaght found that thousands of children were either experiencing or at risk of experiencing mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress, and that many of these children were not getting the needed interventions due to long waiting lists and a lack of resources (2019).
- A report by the CSO on the impact of Covid notes that those aged 18-34 were more likely to report lower well-being scores than other age groups and that *"Over four in ten (42.1%) respondents aged 18-34 rated their overall life satisfaction as low"* (2020). This cohort also saw an 80% decrease in those rating their overall life satisfaction as 'high' in 2020, compared with 2018.
- Given the above stark statistics, it is perhaps unsurprising that Ireland has one of the highest levels of intergenerational transmission of educational disadvantage in Europe (Smyth et al, 2019).

All of this is relevant because there is a plethora of research which clearly evidences the link between educational under attainment and poor life outcomes. Despite the relative success of the DEIS programme in supporting children from disadvantaged communities, and the fact that Ireland has less relative inequality than other OECD countries (PISA, 2018), living in a poor community increases the chances of early school leaving many times over, whilst those young people who do not at least complete their upper Secondary education are more likely to face unemployment, poor health, engagement with the criminal justice system and poorer mental health (Smyth et al 2019:18).

Thus, it is apparent that the community within which *Citywise Education* is based, and from which it draws its participants, is one with high levels of disadvantage and social need. In addition, there is evidence that post-Covid, many young people need additional supports to navigate the transition from school to further education, and that this cohort experience mental health difficulties and poor self-esteem at a greater level than other populations. These characteristics underpin the importance of a progressive universalist approach, whereby all young people receive supports but there is a recognition that some need more support at particular times to prevent educational disadvantage and promote educational equality.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Summary

This review was undertaken using a mixed methods approach, which included the following:

- Desk research, considering local documents, plans and data, to evidence emerging needs, participation, objectives and outcomes, service provision and socio-demographic data
- Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with the following stakeholders: children, young people, staff and volunteers engaged with *Citywise Education* to elicit their experiences and perspectives on the supports offered in Citywise, determine their motivation for being involved, and understand their views on how these might be improved
- Short surveys with all FGD participants, collecting data relating to age, length of time attending Citywise, and the programmes attended
- Surveys with parents regarding their perspectives on Citywise, and to collect sociodemographic data, the latter being to verify that the organisation is engaging with those young people it aims to support. Due to logistical issues in gaining access to parents it was agreed that a survey would be the most effective method of engagement
- One-to-one semi-structured interviews with the CEO of *Citywise Education*, and with one corporate funder to get a sense of their vision for the organisation. These interviews were undertaken after all other data collection processes had been complete and so served as a mechanism to fact check some elements of the analysis.

4.2 Participant selection and screening

Participants in the focus groups came from children and young people who already use the programmes available in *Citywise Education*. Recruitment of these participants was undertaken by the staff at *Citywise Education*.

An open invitation was made to staff and volunteers to attend a focus group, with one being held for each group, whilst parents were encouraged by both staff and volunteers to complete the survey either electronically or in hard copy.

4.3 Consent process and right to withdraw

Parents were provided with details of the focus groups and were required to complete a consent form giving signed permission for their child to take part in the focus group. Parents were also asked to complete a form providing demographic information. Copies of these forms are provided in Appendix I. Children whose parents did not return the completed forms could not take part in the focus groups. A total of 25 parents completed all forms on behalf of the children who took part.

Staff and volunteers signed consent forms at the start of the focus group, having had the purpose and anonymisation process explained.

All focus group participants were provided with the following information at the beginning of the focus group: the purpose of the focus group; the consent process; that all of the information gathered would be anonymous (with no names attached to forms, pictures or any other contributions made during the focus groups), and that they had the right to withdraw and/or withdraw their contributions from the focus group at any time up to the anonymisation.

4.4 Facilitator's Guidelines

Two separate facilitator's guides (one for Primary and one for Secondary students) were developed and provided by the Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) with input from the CEO of *Citywise Education* and the Focus Group Facilitator. A copy of each can be found in Appendix II. These were used for planning and delivering the three focus groups and contain details such as materials required, timings and guides to questions and activities for each group. Likewise, guidelines were developed for both the staff and volunteers' Focus Groups, to provide focus and ensure a comprehensive discussion. These can also be found in the Appendices (III and IV).

For the focus groups with the children and young people, the Facilitator attended Citywise early on the afternoon of the first focus group, met the CEO and was given a tour of the buildings and an introduction to their programmes. The materials were gathered in the assigned space, the group was brought into the room at the allocated time, and the Facilitator was introduced before the focus group commenced.

4.5 Data gathering

Data were gathered through:

- Notes taken by the Facilitator (sometimes on the flipchart) as participants gave verbal contributions. For the children, these discussions were prompted and informed by their drawings, and for the young people by their choices of prompting photographs and subsequent questions from the Facilitator, and
- Forms completed by participants within the focus groups.

No audio recordings were used as it was felt that this would mitigate against a naturally flowing discussion.

Analysis

All of the data were read several times and a number of initial themes were identified by the facilitator. The process was then repeated at least twice more to further refine the themes. Through this iterative process the themes outlined and discussed below were identified.

4.6 Limitations

It is worth noting that the focus group for secondary school-age participants was very small (only four students) and the insights and reflections are therefore inevitably limited.

As the focus groups only took place on one night for each age group and attendance required the written consent of parents, there may be other members of each of these student groups whose views have not been taken into account by this report, and perspectives which have not informed this review.

5. Participant Profile

5.1 Focus Group Participants: Children and Young People

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with children and young people who participate in Citywise programmes were held on site in the Citywise building during the normal attendance time of the group involved. The following table summarises the three focus groups which took place:

Table 3: Children and Young People's Focus Group Participant Numbers

Date	Time	Group	Number attending
16/10/ 2023	5.00-6.00pm	Secondary Students	4
19/10/2023	4.30-5.30pm	Primary Students	13
24/10/2023	6.30-7.45pm	Leaders group	8

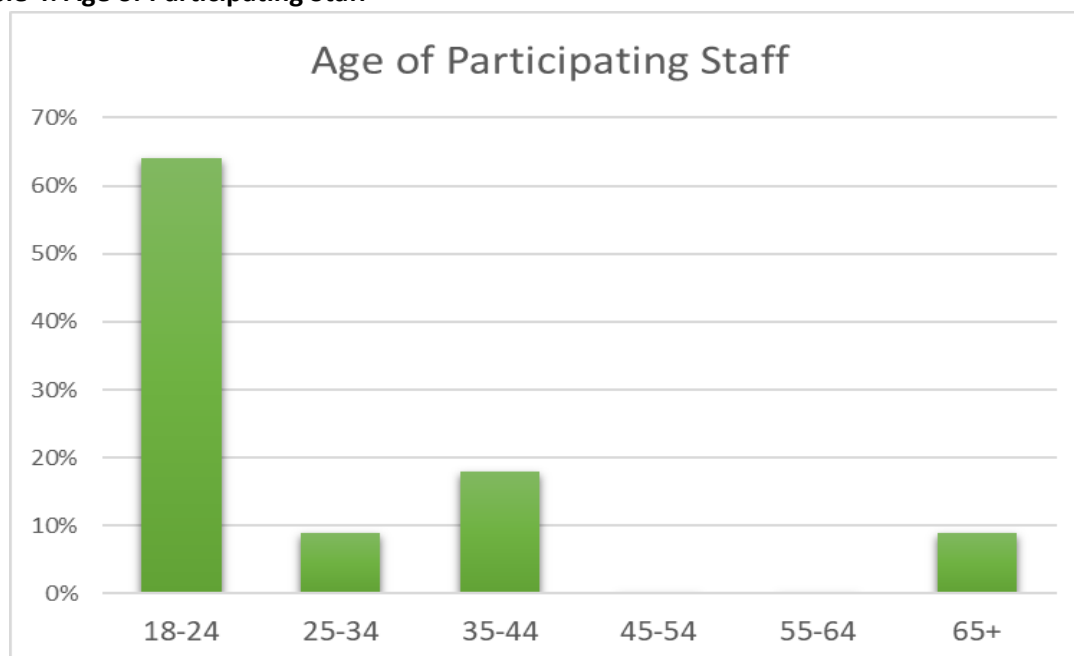
The FGDs for children and young people were categorised as follows:

- Secondary school students
These four students were a group of mixed-gender, younger secondary school aged students who take part in a wide variety of groups and/or clubs in *Citywise Education*
- Primary school students
These 12 students were a group of mixed-gender, primary school aged students from different schools in the area who take part in a variety of groups and/or clubs in *Citywise Education*
- Leaders group
These eight students were a group of mixed-gender, older secondary school aged students from different schools who take part in a variety of groups and who also engage in leadership activities with younger children's groups and/or clubs in *Citywise Education*.

5.2 Focus Group Participants: Staff

A total of 11 staff took part in this focus group, including eight males (73%) and three females (27%).

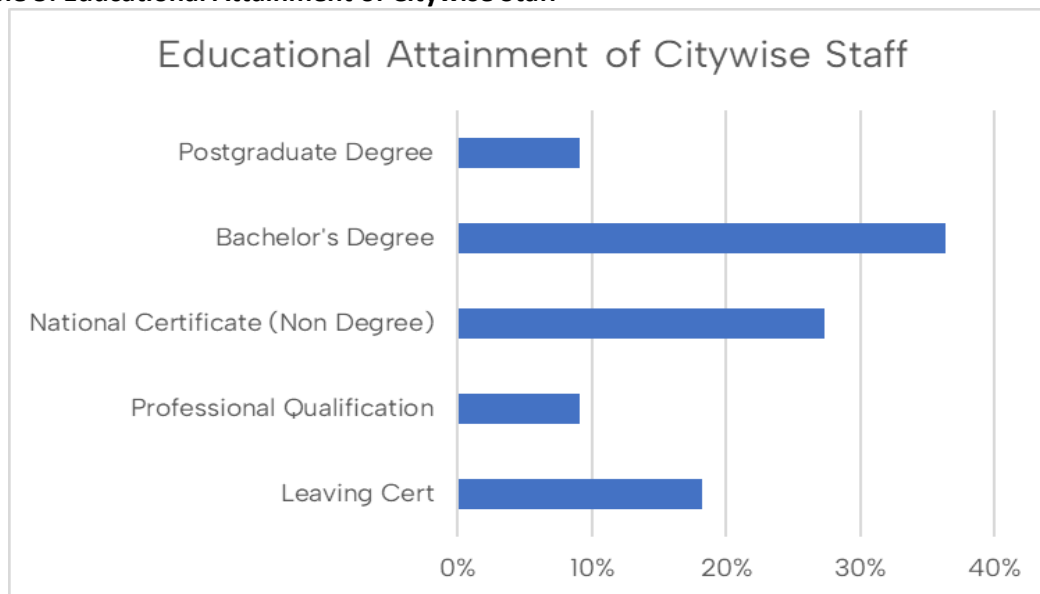
Table 4: Age of Participating Staff



Of the eleven staff respondents, seven were aged between 18-24 (64%), one was aged between 25-34 (9%), two were aged between 35-44 (18%), and one was aged over 65 years of age (9%).

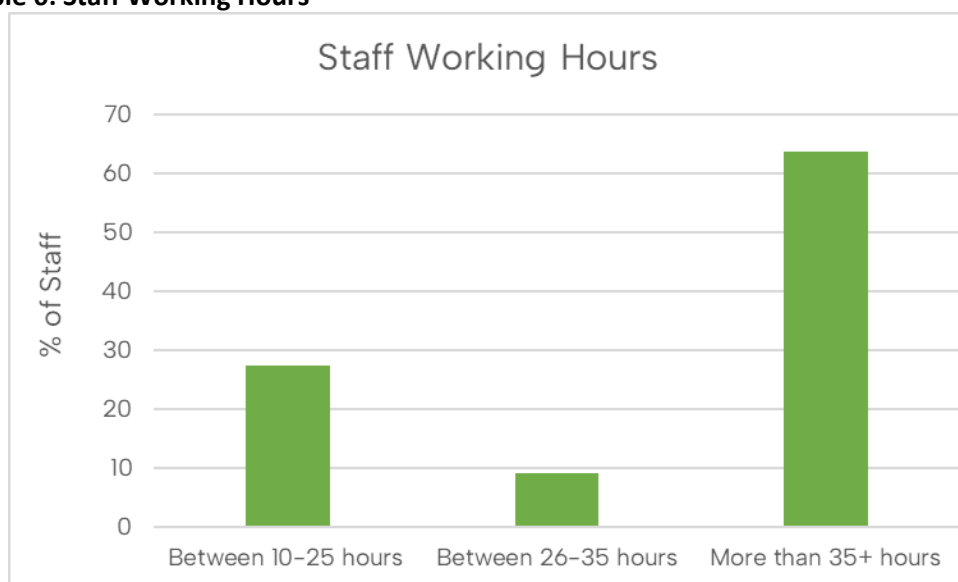
Ten staff members (91%) identified as Irish. One staff member (9%) noted their ethnic background as any other white background.

Table 5: Educational Attainment of Citywise Staff



When asked for their highest level of educational attainment, two staff members noted the Leaving Certificate, one staff member has a professional qualification, three staff members have a National Certificate (non-degree), four staff members have a bachelor's degree, and one staff member has a postgraduate degree.

Table 6: Staff Working Hours



In total, seven staff members work full time (35 hours +) and four staff members work part time. Of the part time staff, 27% work between 26-35 hours per week and 9% work between 10-25 hours per week.

Table 7: Length of Employment

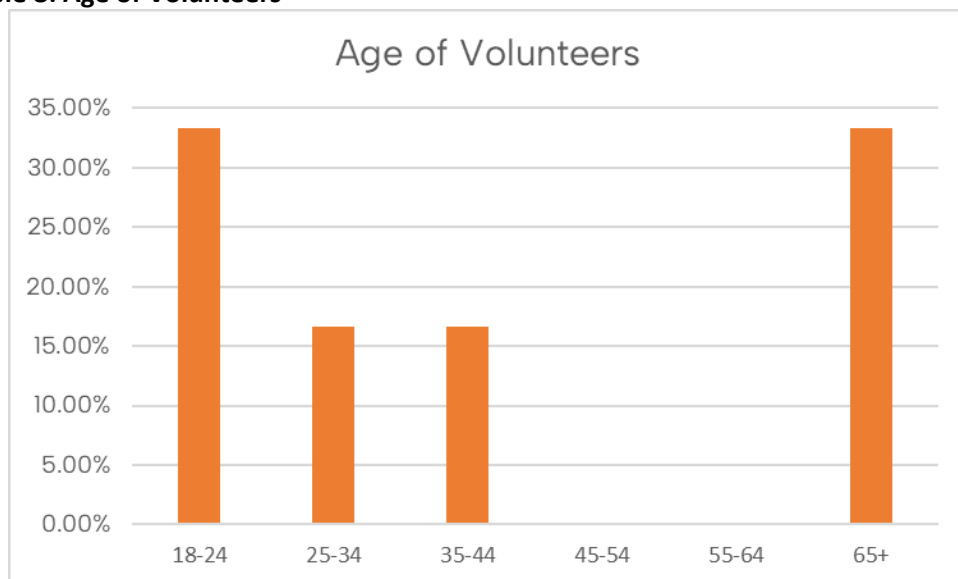


Nearly half of all staff respondents have been working for Citywise between 1-3 years.

5.3 Focus Group Participants: Volunteers

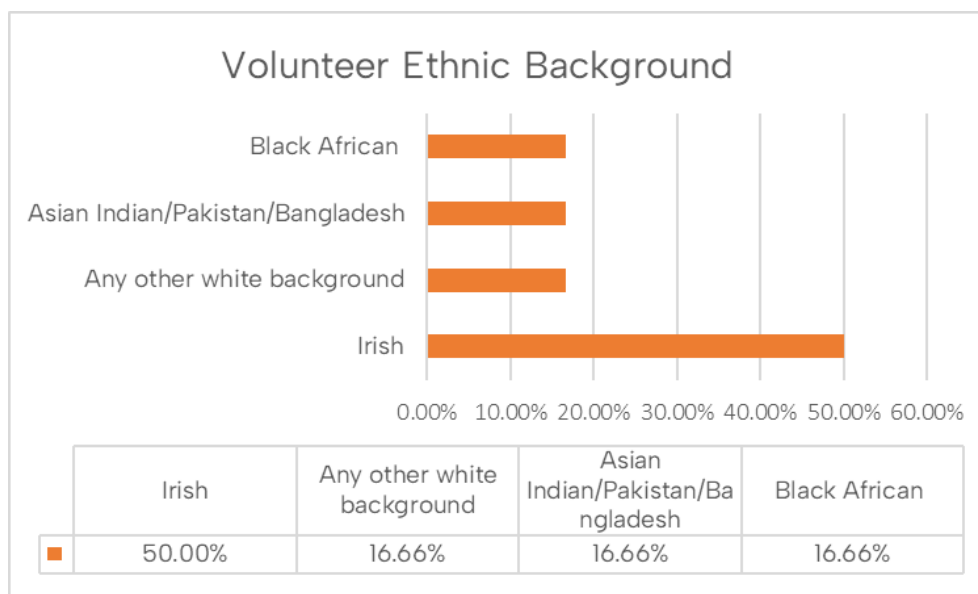
Six volunteers participated in the focus group, evenly divided between males and females.

Table 8: Age of Volunteers



One third of volunteer respondents are aged between 18-24. An additional one third of volunteers is aged 65 and over, with the remainder being aged between 25 and 44 years. No volunteers were aged between 45 and 64 years old.

Table 9: Ethnic Background



Half of all volunteer respondents identified themselves as Irish. The remaining 50% (or one of each) identified as any other white background, Asian/Indian/Pakistan/Bangladesh, and black African. Half of all volunteers hold a third level bachelor's degree, while an additional third hold a post-graduate qualification. The remaining 15% hold a leaving certificate.

All Citywise volunteers work less than five hours per week.

Table 10: Volunteering Duration



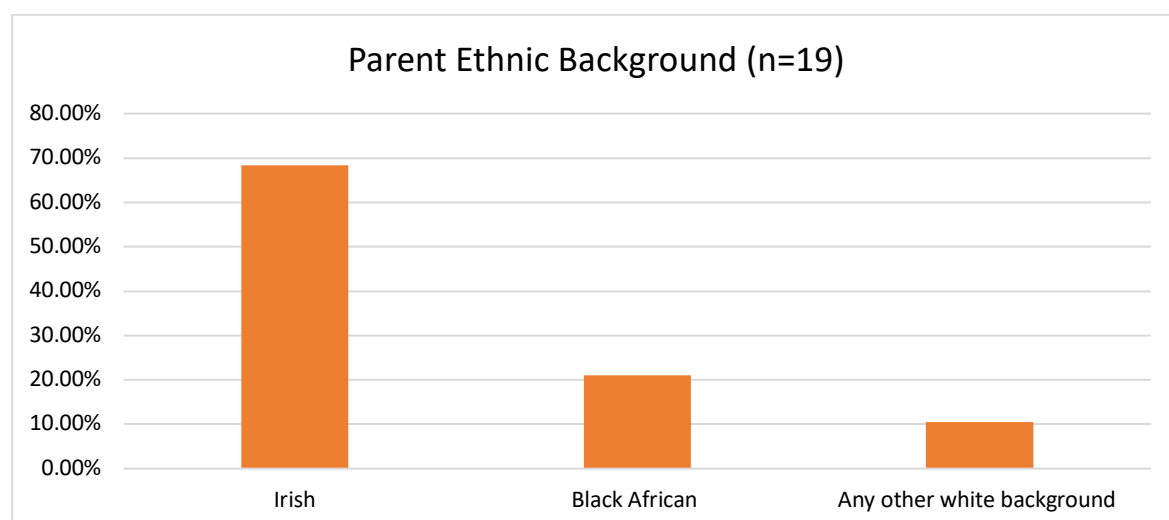
Half of all respondents have been volunteering their time to Citywise for over five years.

5.4 Survey Responses: Parents and Guardians.

Twenty-one parents and guardians, with a combined total of thirty-four children attending Citywise, completed the evaluation form. The sample consisted of seventeen mothers (81%), one father (4.8%) and three grandparents (14.3%). Two parents didn't disclose their age range, but of those who did, 10.5% were aged between 25 – 34 years old, 42.1% were aged between 35 – 44 years old, and 47.4% were aged between 45 – 64 years old. Two parents didn't disclose their marital status,

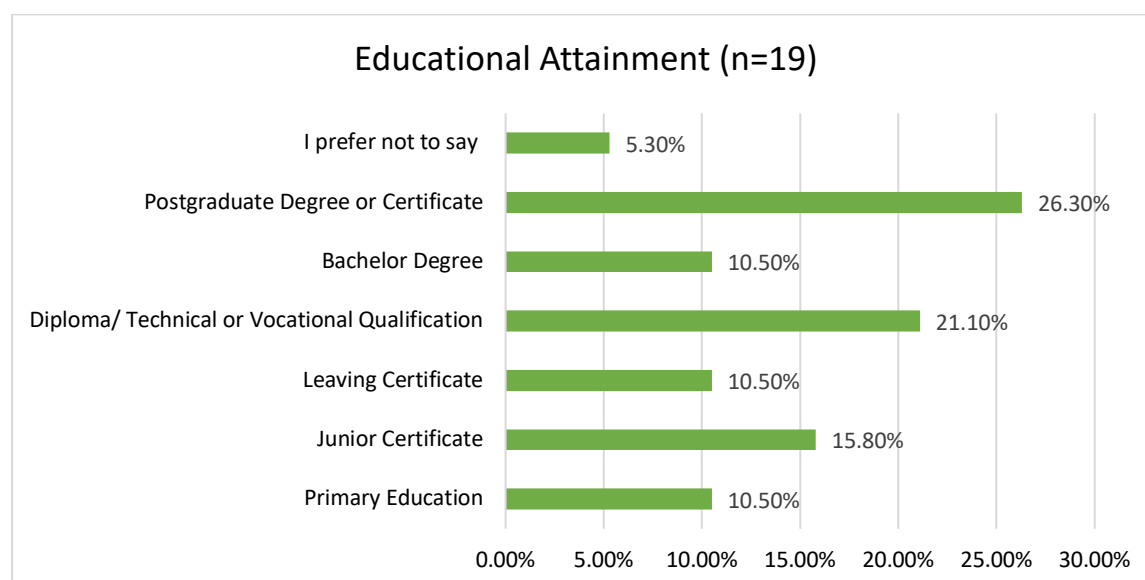
but of those who did, 10.5% identified as single, 5.3% are cohabiting, 78.9% are married, and 5.3% are separated.

Table 11: Parent Ethnic Background



Over two thirds of parents identified their ethnic background as Irish (68.4%), 21.1% identified as black African, and 10.5% identified as any other white background. Two parents in the sample did not provide any information about their ethnic background.

Table 12: Educational Attainment



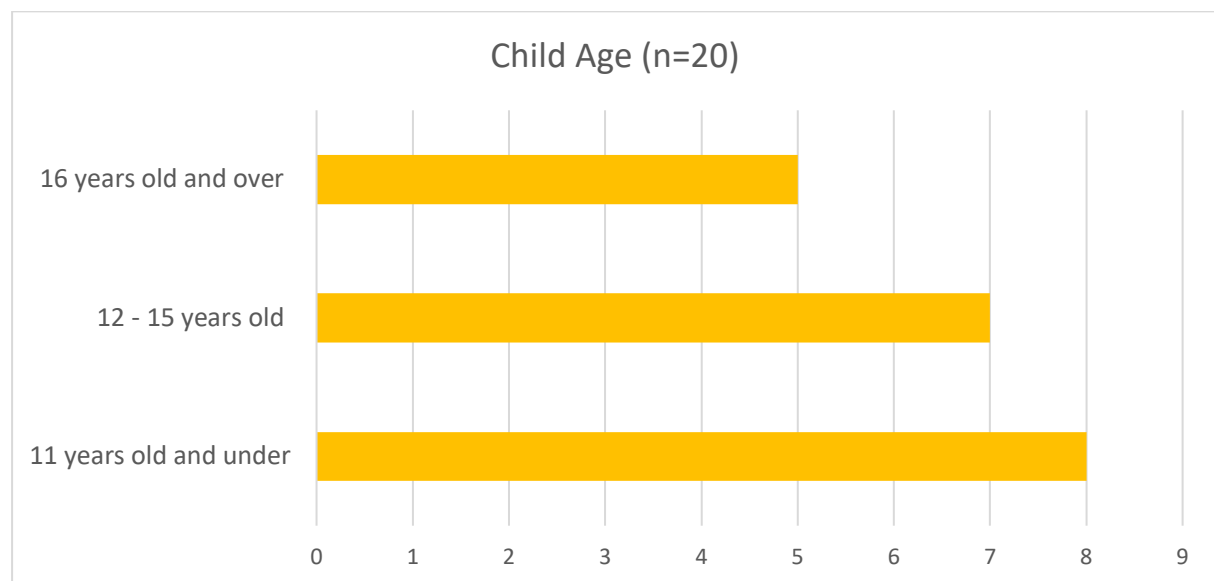
Over one quarter of parents noted their highest level of educational attainment as being a postgraduate degree or certificate, 21.1% have a higher diploma or technical or vocational qualification, and 10.5% only have their primary level education.

Parents were asked about their accommodation status to gain a better understanding of the living arrangements of the children availing of the service. Of the sample, two parents did not provide any information, 36.9% were renting (local authority, cooperative housing body or private landlord), 52.6% owned their home either outright or with a mortgage, and 10.5% preferred not to say.

Parents were also asked about health insurance, as this is widely used in Ireland as a way of understanding a family's income status. Over half of the families (52.6%) who responded held a full medical card, indicating low income.

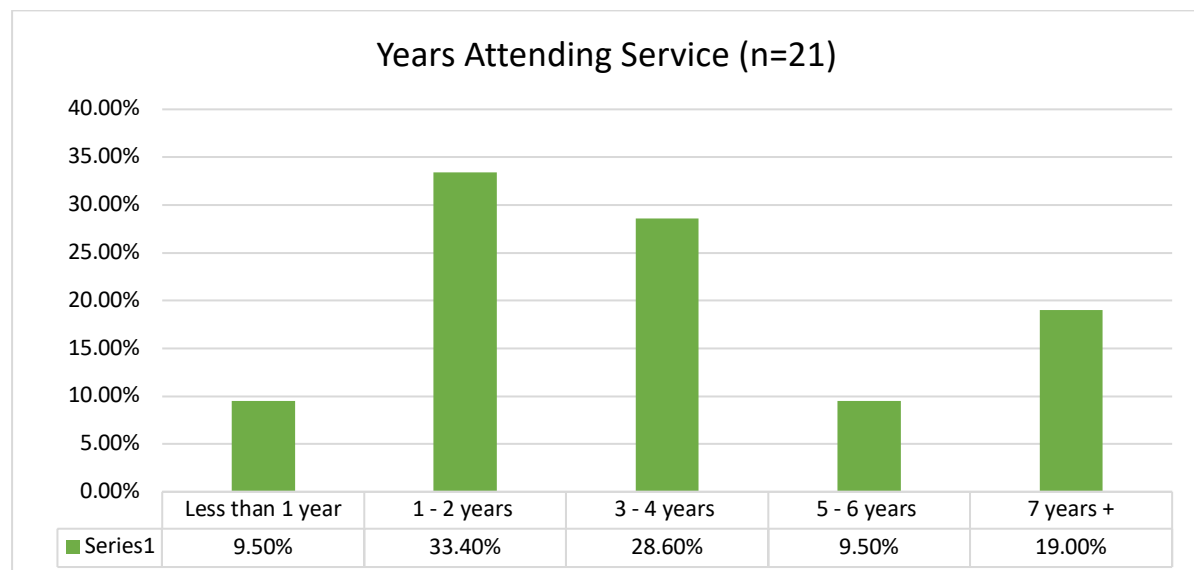
Parents were asked some questions about their child and their experience with Citywise. Those who have numerous children attending the service were asked to report on the child who is most involved in the service. The sample consisted of twenty-one children, of whom 52.4% are male and 47.6% are female.

Table 13: Child Age



Twenty parents shared their child's age. The children were aged between 10 and 18 years old. Nearly a third of the sample were 11 years old (30%).

Table 14: Years Attending Service



Over a third of children have been attending the service for between one and two years, and nearly one fifth of children have been involved in the service for seven or more years.

6.0 Participant Feedback

6.1 Children and Young People

This section summarises the feedback from children and young people, commencing with the survey responses and then detailing the Focus Group Discussions.

Table 15: *Citywise Education* programmes attended by Primary School aged participants

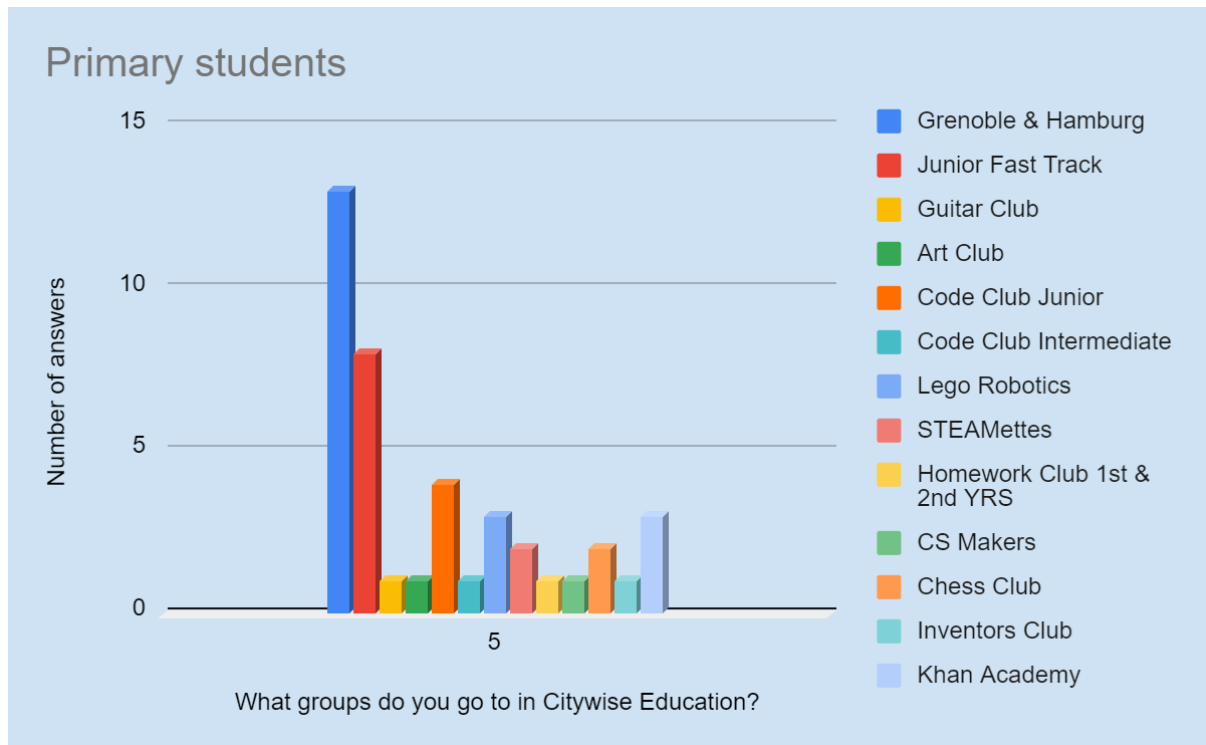


Table 16: *Citywise Education* programmes attended by Secondary School aged participants

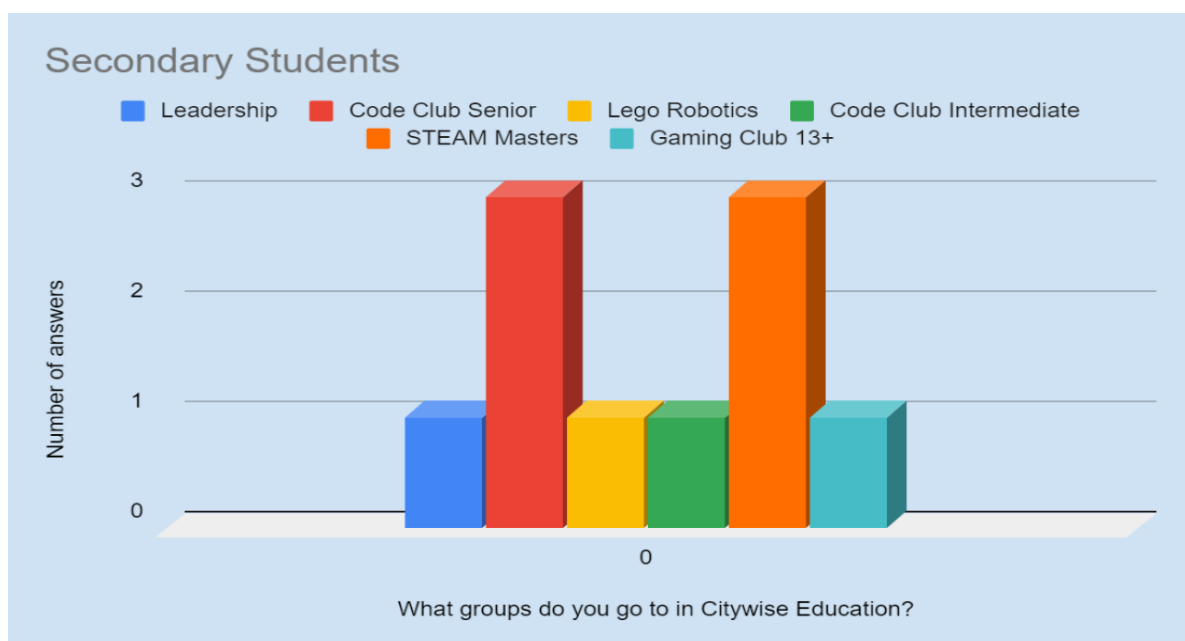
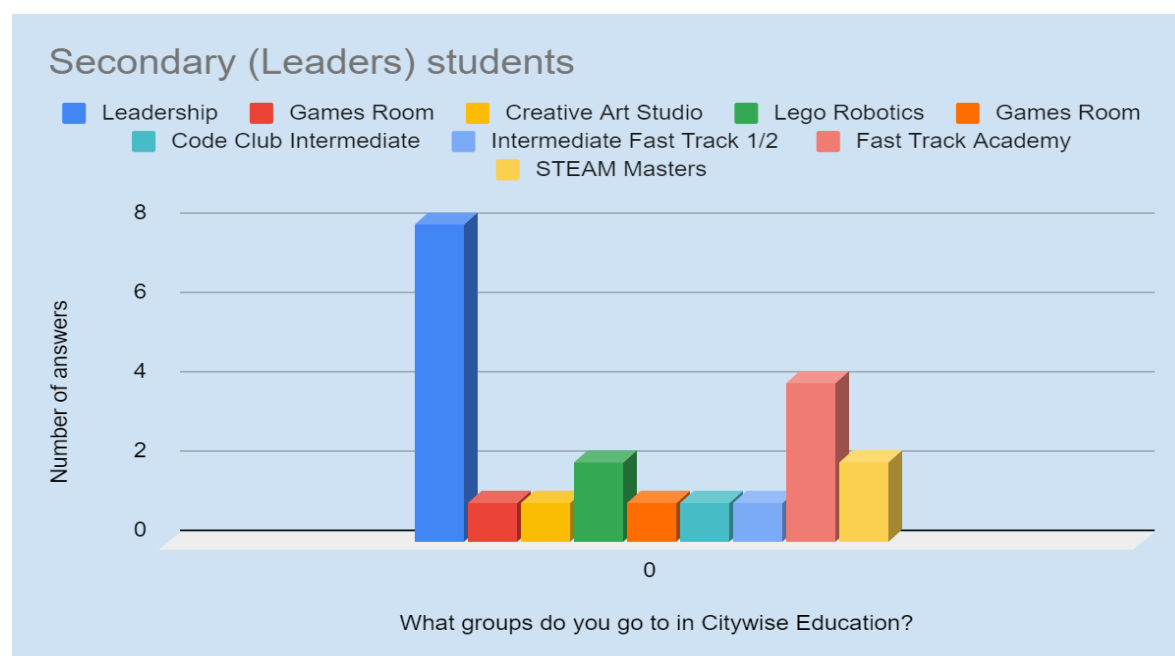


Table 17: *Citywise Education* programmes attended by Secondary School Leader Programme participants



As can be seen from the charts above, the primary students go to a wide range of programmes available in *Citywise Education* although most go to the Grenoble and Hamburg/Athens and Brussels clubs and/or Junior Fast Track.

For the secondary school age group, STEAM Masters and Code Club Senior were the most attended, whilst for the Secondary Leaders group, the Leadership Programme and the Fast Track Academy were the ones they took part in most.

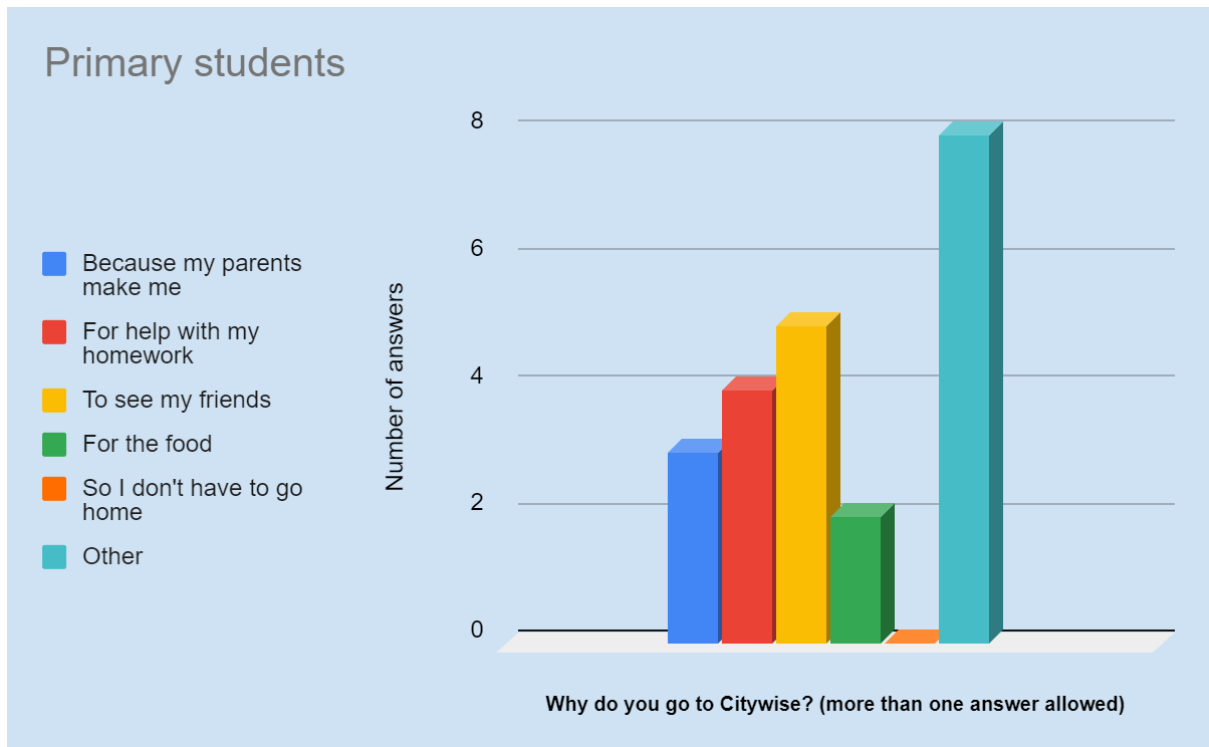
Nearly all students, in all of the student groups, attend *Citywise* at least twice a week, with approximately half of all students attending more than twice a week.

Table 18: Frequency of Attendance at Citywise

	Once a week	At least twice a week	More than twice a week	Once a month
Primary school	3	3	4	1
Secondary school	1	2	1	0
Secondary school Leaders	0	1	7	0

- **Why do you go to Citywise?**

Table 19: Primary Reason for Attending Citywise, Primary



Primary students predominantly go to Citywise to see friends and to get support with schoolwork. Under other reasons, students mentioned “to have fun” and “because I want to” and one student mentioned that “I’m in my room all day”.

The majority of secondary school-aged respondents (n=4) stated that they go to Citywise for ‘other’ reasons than those suggested and named the following: to learn/learn coding, because it is “something to do” or because they think it’s fun. One respondent said they go to see their friends.

The Leaders group mostly attend to see friends and to get help with homework, although some mentioned under other reasons study/learning, leadership, having fun and enjoying the atmosphere.

Table 20: Favourite thing about Citywise, Primary

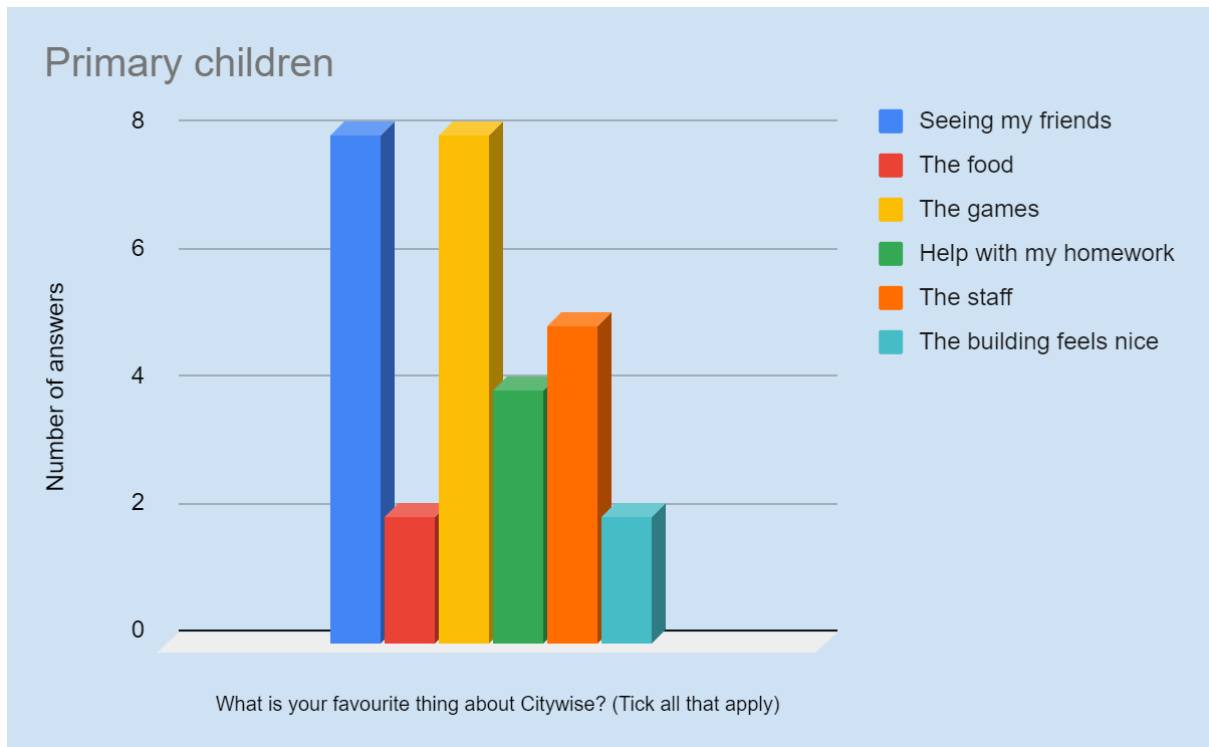


Table 21: Favourite thing about Citywise, Secondary

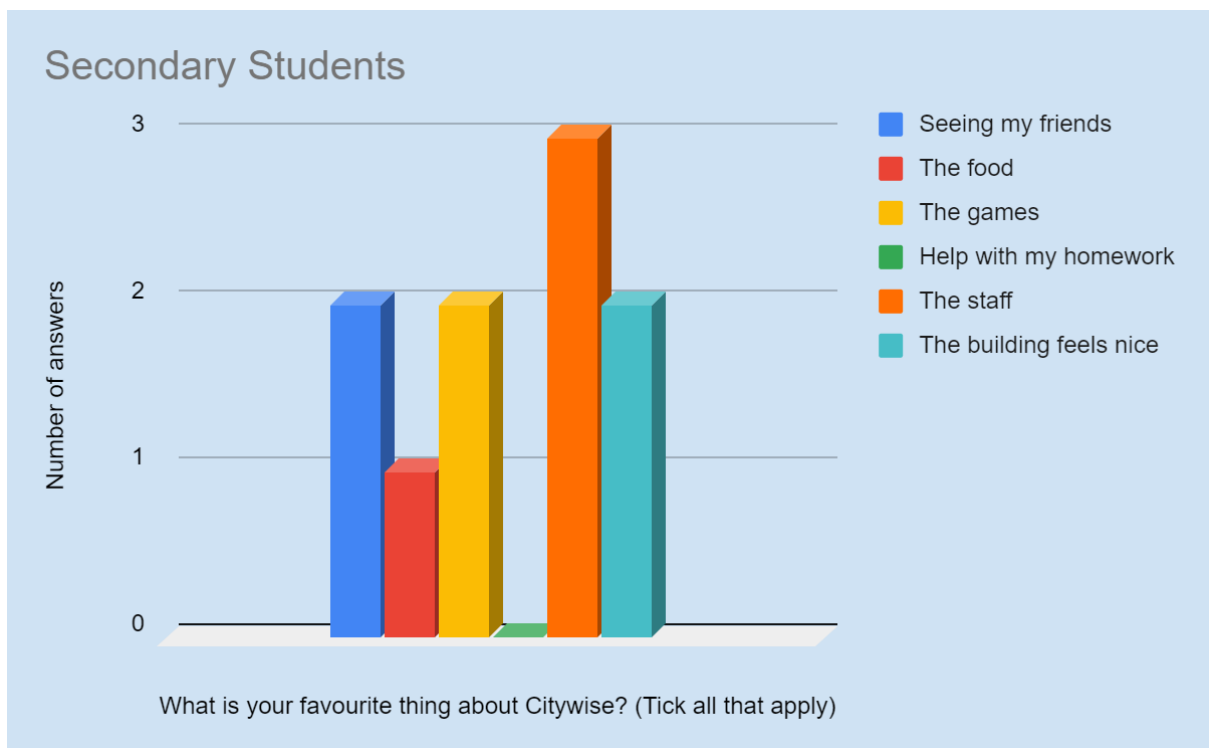
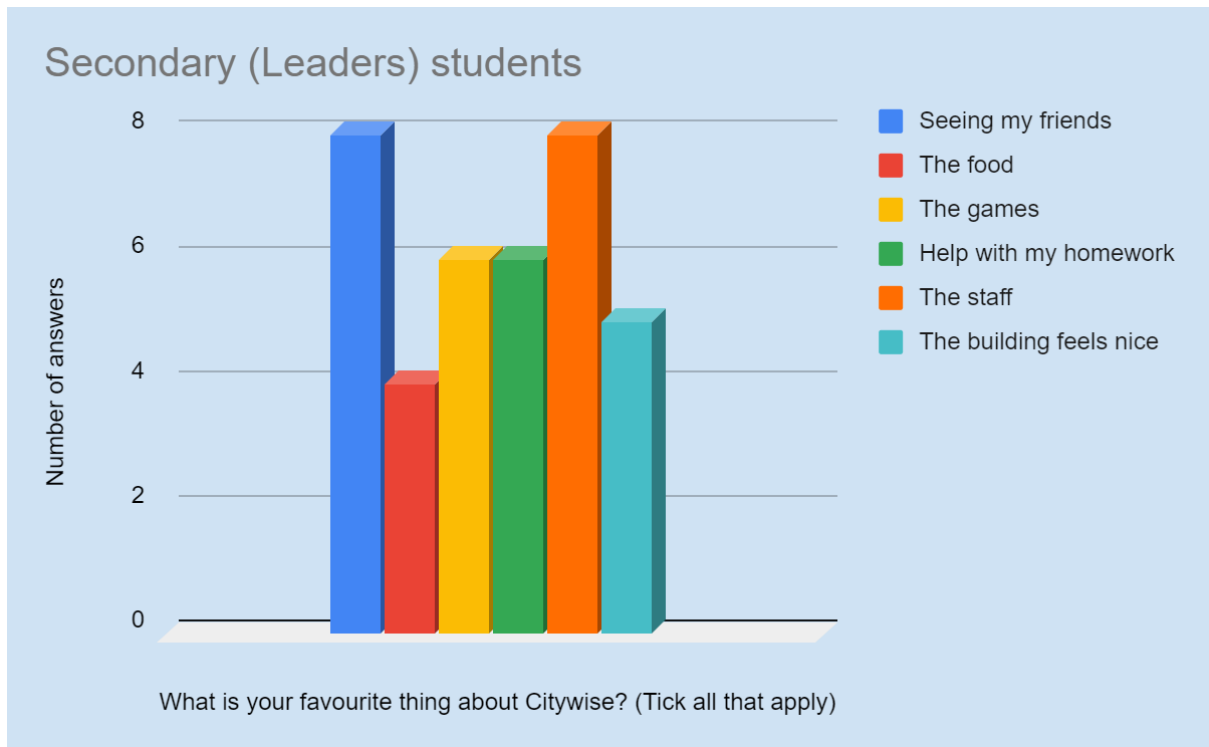


Table 22: Favourite thing about Citywise, Secondary Leaders



For all of the students, irrespective of age, the favourite things about Citywise are seeing their friends, the staff and the games.

Table 23: Does Citywise help with your schoolwork? (Primary students)

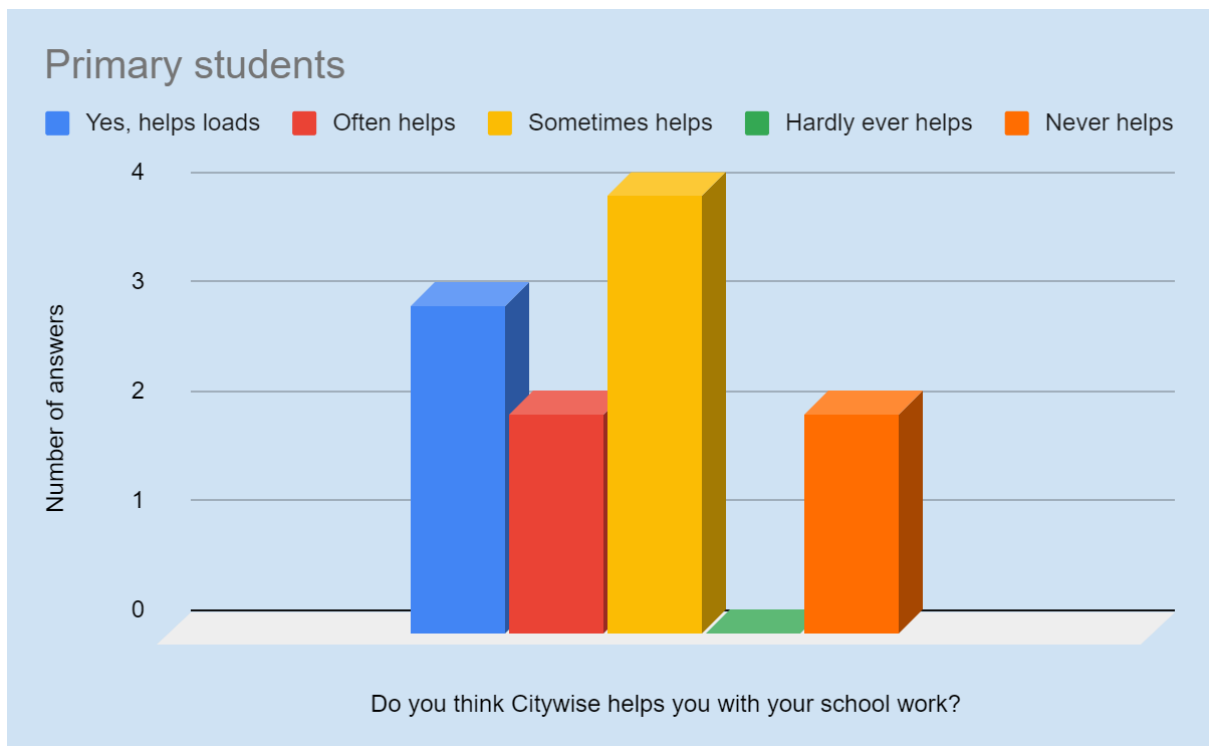
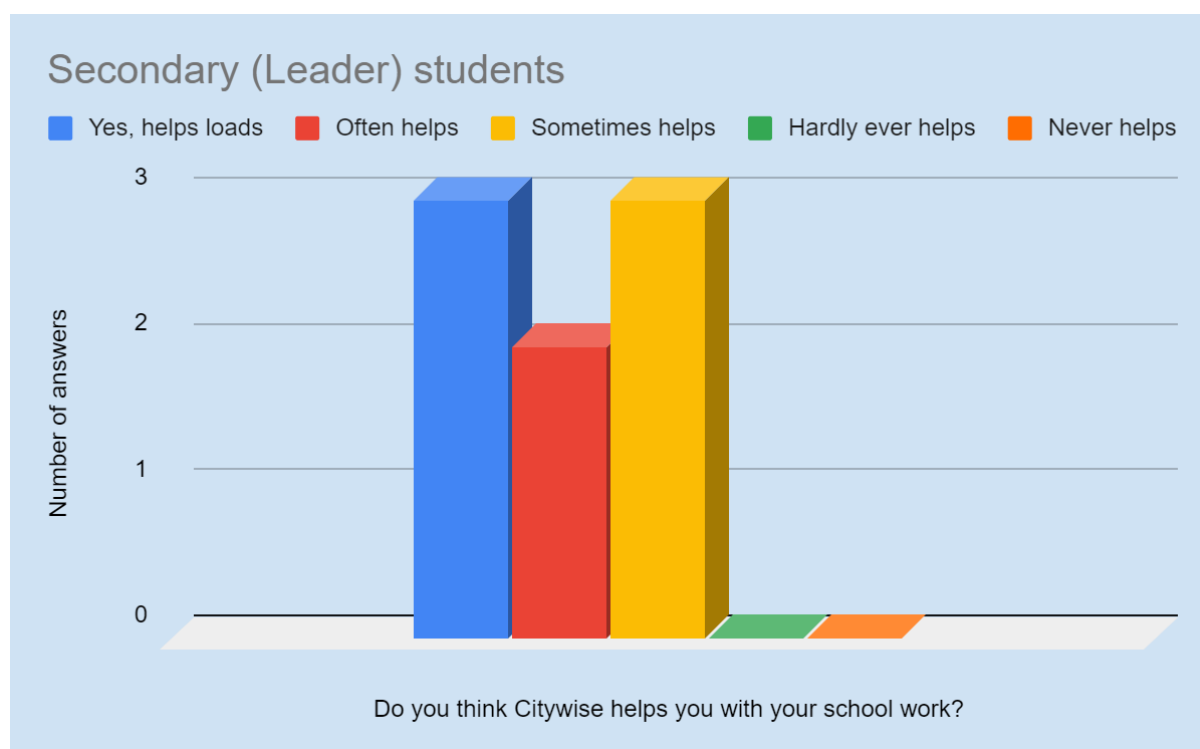


Table 24: Does Citywise help with your schoolwork? (Secondary Leaders)



For almost all of the students, Citywise helps them with their schoolwork. The overwhelming majority of answers (83%) given by students were that Citywise helped either loads, often or sometimes with their schoolwork. For secondary school participants however, whilst two respondents said that Citywise helps 'often' with homework, two also said it 'hardly ever' does so.

Finally, the children and young people were asked 'If you could change something about Citywise, what would you change?' with the following responses being provided:

For Primary students:

- More football and other sports for girls
- A playground instead of just the astroturf pitch
- More football for boys
- More sports
- The shop would be cheaper or food would be free
- Less coding
- A gaming club for under 13-year-olds.

For Secondary students:

- More space for more people to experience Citywise
- A bigger room like a big hall
- Computer activities should be inside in Summer because of the sunlight
- Less education.

For the Leadership students:

- More clubs suited to older students
- More spaces where the Camp attendees and other big groups can have lunch altogether
- More space for more people to be able to access Citywise
- More opportunities to lead groups during the year.

5.2 Children's and Young People's Focus Group Discussions

There were many themes which emerged during the discussions with the three focus groups. Some of these themes emerged more with one group than with others (as will be outlined below), whilst others were named in all three focus groups. The themes were as follows:

5.2.1 Social interactions

It was obvious from observing the interactions between the Secondary group that they are very friendly and familiar with each other. There were many moments of laughter and support with each other during the Focus Group. One example was when one student expressed light-hearted concern about a parent teacher meeting and the others assured them that it would be fine. They also shared many humorous anecdotes about their time together in Citywise with all of them smiling or laughing together. A shared love of gaming, particularly Dungeons and Dragons, was a big feature of their connection to each other.

The Primary students, although a much bigger group, also seemed to be familiar and comfortable with each other, despite being from different schools. There seemed to be a clear division between the boys and the girls who sat near each other but in separate groups. Although they interacted with each other, they tended to work and physically remain in their own gendered group. In their drawings, several of the children had written words like "fun" or "good time" when referring to Citywise, indicating their enjoyment of the time they spent there.

The Leaders group were very familiar with and respectful of each other. The girls seemed very close with each other and sat together and the boys also seemed to be close with each other and sat together. Observation suggested that the boys and girls were less familiar with each other as a whole group and more familiar within their gender groups. The fact that they do activities (such as outings, etc.) separately may be a factor in this.

This group spoke a lot about the social dynamics within Citywise and always in a very positive way, with examples including the following:

- People help each other out at Citywise and engage in teamwork and collaboration during various difficult club activities, one example being of older and younger students working well in teams for treasure hunts during the Summer camp
- Working collaboratively and the peer support they receive from each other for their student enterprise projects, for which the girls' team won a prize
- Good communication and a strong sense of community in Citywise
- Citywise is always full of chat and laughter and because people are familiar with each other, people feel approachable so you can get support when you need it
- Helping people to see things from different perspectives and how sometimes this makes difficult things easier to accomplish, for example, making maths homework fun
- Joyful moments and memories in Citywise and the fact that you see joy in Citywise all the time. They particularly mentioned the Summer Camps as being really fun and enjoyable for

everyone. In terms of joy and enjoyment they also mentioned overnight stays away with hiking, cooking together, having no phones, just chatting, and the music they shared

- Particular enjoyment of the Christmas dinner for leaders and staff with the special wide range of food to choose from-it was obvious from their comments that events like this in which they as leaders were valued and rewarded were particularly special for them as a group.

5.2.2 Staff

In the Secondary group, the students seemed very comfortable and familiar with the staff who interacted with them during the Focus Group. They repeatedly referred to one particular staff member who they seemed very fond of and who was described admiringly as “fun” and easy-going.

The Primary group did not talk very much about the staff of Citywise except for one member of staff, whom they specifically requested to come back to Citywise.

One student in the Leaders group described how the support received from staff helped them gain confidence in their ability to code and also taught them that if they work hard at something, they can succeed. Another student mentioned that they received emotional support from a member of staff to go on a scary ride in Tayto Park, which helped them overcome their fear.

5.2.3 STEAM/Coding/Gaming

The Secondary group were enthusiastic about the gaming that they do at Citywise, saying “cause it’s awesome”, particularly playing the Dungeons and Dragons game which they spoke about a lot. They all agreed that it was their favourite part of coming to Citywise and one student said, “more gaming would be great”. They explained the STEAM activities and someone said, “you learn a lot in that one”. One student said that they “don’t like Science” and another said that they “don’t like Maths cause I’m not good at Maths”. However, there was agreement that a recent art activity that they had done on the computer had been really enjoyable. They described coding as “educational”, “fun” and having “interesting topics”. Interestingly, almost all of this group included either gaming or coding in their future personal aspirations.

The Primary students were not so enthusiastic about coding with some of them describing it as “boring” and saying they wanted to do “less coding” as they felt they did too much. They suggested that there should be a gaming club for those aged under 13 as they would like access to gaming too. These students also suggested having a night where they can use their phones to look at videos together and doing more Kahoot and Bluket quizzes.

The Leaders group did not mention these topics so much although they were very enthusiastic about the Games room, particularly pool and foosball and the Arcade games Mortal Combat and Pacman. They said that it’s a great place to talk to friends and have fun.

5.2.4 Sport, Crafts and Hobbies

The Secondary group did not talk about any of these themes.

Many children talked about wanting to play more football when they were in Citywise. There was a distinct and very vocal split on this matter across gender lines, with the boys saying that they wanted to play more football but the girls specifically saying they wanted there to be more football “for girls”. The girls expressed that the boys had more opportunities to play football at Citywise than the girls and when asked why this was the case, they said that they did not know. It was obvious from

the conversation that they felt very strongly about this matter and that it was very important to them.

In terms of other sports, the students mentioned that they would like to have a boxing club and opportunities for GAA practice (both suggested from girls) and rugby.

The Primary group included many sports and hobbies/crafts in their drawings of Citywise and in the discussions, with the following suggestions being made:

- Origami club – one boy said that he knew some origami and would like to share his knowledge with friends and learn some new origami
- Crochet, sewing and knitting club – some children said they knew how to do some of these crafts already but would like to learn more
- Book club - some children said they liked reading so talking about and reading books together could be good
- Photography- some children thought a photography group could be good fun
- Cooking club - particularly for baking and potentially having baking competitions, such as a bake-off
- Karaoke - one child mentioned that a karaoke session would be really fun
- One child mentioned dance and there was a lot of debate about this with most children saying they would not be interested in this (and there seemed to be a lot of laughter/criticism around the idea of dancing). When dancing on TikTok was suggested the participants said that they do that in other places but not in Citywise
- One child came up with the idea of having pets at Citywise or a 'bring your pet' day. Lots of children thought this was a really great idea
- One child suggested that Citywise could develop a museum of all of its achievements and display all of the awards in it.

The Leaders group did not mention sports at all but did mention hiking trips that they really enjoyed, particularly noting the teamwork aspect of it. One student said that everyone was there because they wanted to be there, which is what makes them great events, and that they were fun even though sometimes they were very cold. They also mentioned how much they enjoyed making food together when away on outings. One of their suggestions for a change at Citywise was to have a cooking club where they could learn how to cook and bake.

5.2.5 Outings

The Secondary group did not mention outings at all.

The Primary group suggested that they do more trips to different places such as: Clara Lara; Laragh Lodge; Funtasia; Tayto Park; a waterpark.

The Leaders group, particularly the girls, spoke very fondly about trips away, particularly the overnight stays. One girl talked about an eight-hour hike that they did on one overnight during which they had to really support each other to get finished as parts of it were very tough. She said it was really challenging but fun. Another spoke about the joys of making food together and the great chats they had because they had their phones taken off them for the overnight trip, so they had to chat without using phones. They talked about music they used to connect, inspire and cheer themselves up at different points during the trip (Material Girl by Madonna and the Stranger Things soundtrack). It was obvious during this conversation that the memories from these trips and the bonding that took place on them were really important to the students.

5.2.6 Leadership

The Leaders group was the only group who spoke on this subject. They spoke about their enjoyment of activity days during Summer camp with “mad” Primary school children. One student said that they got a lot of enjoyment from working with the younger children who he described as “annoying but funny”.

Another student said that they were inspired by the older leaders and remembered them from when they were young, and saw them as role models.

One suggestion that the students had was that they would get a chance to do the Enterprise competition again when they were leaders as they had enjoyed doing it so much.

When asked about why they stayed on as leaders, one student said that they missed the atmosphere at Citywise when they had left for a while and they came back to be a leader because they wanted to look forward to coming to Citywise during the week.

5.2.7 Learning and Homework

One of the Secondary students said that they “don’t like learning” when they are at Citywise, indicating that they see it as a place that is, or should be, different from school and school-type activities.

None of the Primary students mentioned learning or homework during our discussions, even though getting support with homework was noted as an important reason for attending Citywise in the Reflection Forms for many of the students.

For the Leader students, it was obvious that the support they got with schoolwork at Citywise was important to them. One young person said that being in Citywise is fun but *‘you are also learning and sometimes you get the kind of experiences that are good for your CV, like when they did the door-to-door fundraising’* for Citywise. Another young person spoke about the support they get with schoolwork which is “brilliant” and noted that they had learned loads in maths grinds with a worker from Intel who supported at most three students. One of the students also spoke about her enjoyment of supporting the younger children with Maths homework because she managed to make it fun for them.

5.2.8 Food/Building

In the Secondary group, food was a recurring theme in our conversations. They said they loved the café and particularly loved the sausage rolls and the salt and vinegar Pringles. They said that they would also like to be able to buy cooked foods (so they could eat more of them than they are given for their snack by Citywise). The café was described as one of their favourite things about Citywise and they described it as “a place for relaxation”, you can “chat with your friends there” and it’s “a good place for chat”.

In terms of the building, the Secondary group had some suggestions about how it could be improved as follows:

- A “bigger building so more people can experience it”
- “Add a Sensory room like I used to have in Primary school”. Lots of the young people agreed with this. One of the young people expressed that they had autism and they and others used this room a lot in Primary School with friends and would love one like it in Citywise. They all suggested things that could be in it – Lego, a big ball, “cool texture fake grass”, a projector with lights, a ball pit, couches, hollow foam cylinders, fish tanks and most importantly that it would be dark.

For the Primary children, there were also lots of mentions of food and the café during the conversations and these were some of the changes they suggested:

- For the shop to be cheaper or the food to be free
- That the café serve chips and chicken balls, and in the summer ice cream and slushees
- A pizza night once a month.

These students also mentioned the new building that is being developed for Citywise and the possibilities of a playground and a bigger Astroturf area.

For the Leaders students, food was not discussed but they had some suggestions for the building as follows:

- A bigger building with more rooms
- More facilities to eat indoors during the summer camps because they had to do it in different rooms rather than all together in one big space.

5.2.9 Time

The only group to mention times was the Primary group, as follows:

- Most children felt that the times that they came were fine
- One child said that they would like it to have longer sessions (e.g. from 3.30 to 6.30) and some children agreed with this
- Most children agreed that a Thursday night was a good night to come to Citywise.

5.2.10 Future Careers

When asked what they would like to do in their futures the Secondary students answered as follows:

- Journalism or coding
- Coding or robotics
- Gaming or coding
- Short term: make more 2d or 3d animation and make a fur suit
- Long term: 2d & 3d animation; programming; make and sell fur suits; make an animated TV show.

For the Leaders students they all talked about future jobs as follows:

- Programming
- Mechanical Engineering
- Surgeon
- Entrepreneur (shoes/trainer designer)
- Primary school teacher
- Physiotherapist
- Paediatrician
- Engineer.

5.3 Staff Focus Group Feedback

The majority of staff participants had also been involved in Citywise as participants, and their responses often reflected this experience.

In terms of assessing outcomes or measuring success, it was noted that whilst there are generic outcomes (such as improved confidence and social skills), each group also has its own objectives. Whilst most groups do not include any formal assessment process, some do have continuous assessment with weekly tests which inform the content for future sessions and highlight if participants need individual attention.

The group noted that they can observe children's and young people's enjoyment by the fact that they *'come in happy and excited'* and that *'they wouldn't come back if they weren't enjoying it'*. One member of staff noted the joy which comes from *'Seeing children who don't talk at the start, and watching them become confident, engaged...'*.

Another added that *'when children start really engaging with you, wanting to tell you what's going on for them, wanting to chat, that's just great'*.

Relationships are clearly, if not explicitly, at the centre of all interactions between staff (paid and unpaid) and the children and young people.

Retention was seen as an indicator of success, with staff noting the importance of children and young people progressing to other programmes as they mature. Progression to third level education was also seen as an indicator of success, with participants noting the increase in the percentage of young people in the Fast Track Academy going onto third level as evidence of the effectiveness of supports provided. Young people thinking about their future, and beginning to work towards a long-term goal, were also seen as important successes.

The range and strength of corporate supporters was also regarded as indicative of Citywise's success, with these relationships being seen as evidence of the organisation's credibility and positive reputation.

Enablers of success were identified as follows:

- Well planned activities with all staff and volunteers knowing what's expected in advance
- Being able to tailor programmes for the individual needs of children and young people
- Regular reflection on programme delivery, identifying what went well and how it could have been improved
- Scheduled training for staff and volunteers during summer and easter holidays
- Consciously differentiating from school e.g. rooms are named after countries, rather than being numbered
- Having new and exciting equipment which engages young people e.g. the virtual reality headsets
- The principle that *'every day's a new day'* so grudges are not held, and incidents are dealt with but don't impact on future engagement
- The Youth Steering Committee which informs developments and gives feedback on programmes and plans, helping to keep them relevant
- Diversity within the staff and volunteer team, which means *'we can connect with different kids, with their different interests'*
- The consistency of motivation and a common vision amongst the staff, which creates a level of cohesion and a strong ethos of inclusion:

'Everyone has the same end goal – so even if you're having an off day, you come in here, and you could be feeling really bad, but once you're here a few minutes, the energy improves and you just start feeling so much better. You quickly remember why you're here'.

The welcoming atmosphere was also noted as being critical for both the staff and the young people:

'It's hard to have a shit day because everyone's laughing and joking, you get over it very quickly', and

'Citywise was always like a second home. If I didn't want to be at home, I'd just come here.'

The cycle of children joining Citywise between the ages of six and eight, and moving through the different programmes, becoming youth leaders and ultimately becoming staff, was noted as important in offering positive role models for children and young people: *'There's always someone a couple of steps ahead of you'*. It was suggested that it also enables understanding, empathy and connection, with one member of staff noting:

'Seeing members become staff – seeing young people going through things I went through, understanding what's going on for them and what might help....'

5.4 Volunteer Focus Group Feedback

The six volunteers, all of whom deliver classes in a variety of subjects to children and young people, identified a range of benefits which engagement with Citywise brings for the participants, including:

- Exposure to alternative, positive role models
- Help for working parents
- An educated community will earn and contribute more
- Opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds and experiences
- Teaches young people how to expand their network
- Teachers can go off curriculum to create a love of knowledge
- Citywise volunteers can offset poor quality teaching and help young people to apply learning
- Reestablishes a relationship with learning.

One volunteer suggested that engaging in Citywise is *'transformative'* for children and young people, while another said that it *'is not just a transactional relationship, there is an emotional attachment'*.

The centrality of relationships between volunteers and the young people was evident in how the group described their approach to teaching. They noted the importance of getting to know the children and young people, not only to enable tailoring of subject content to engage participants but also because children seeing the volunteers *'taking notice'* can motivate learning. Other aspects of the approach identified as important included that classes are structured but informal; the service is safe; it offers an alternative approach to traditional teaching and takes a holistic approach to education; the *'palpable energy'*, and the atmosphere is always respectful, warm and welcoming. The provision of food and the engagement with kitchen staff were specifically noted as being important.

The flexibility of the teaching approach was discussed by the volunteers as a key enabler, with the ability to be side tracked, follow aspects of interest to the group, and to differentiate the content

depending on the interests of the participants all being seen as important. One volunteer noted that the children and young people can be tired when they come to Citywise, having completed a day in school, and so *'you need to be interesting or outrageous'* to engage them. The volunteers discussed ways in which they create interest in their subjects, and support active engagement, such as bringing in worksheets, finding interesting facts on the internet, and bringing the subject to life for the participants. It was apparent that the volunteers put a lot of thought into their sessions and given that half the group have been volunteering for over five years, there is clearly a deep commitment to the organisation. They noted that content is often developed through 'trial and error' and that sharing experiences and insights with each other would be very helpful.

Whilst the diversity of backgrounds from which volunteers are drawn was recognised as important in exposing the young people to a range of experiences and perspectives, being rooted in the local community, and having staff and volunteers from the area were also identified as key to the organisational approach. Specifically, this offers positive role modelling, with one volunteer suggesting that *'seeing kids who look like me, ahead of me, it makes me realise there's no reason why I can't do that'*.

When asked about potential improvements, the group identified the following:

- Links with wider supports e.g. martial arts, boxing etc
- Utilise the multilingualism of diverse population
- Meet other volunteers – learning and sharing space
- The 'Bridge to College' programme is for a limited number – could it be expanded?
- Expand the Transition Year programme
- Getting anonymised feedback from staff and young people on how I'm doing
- Expand reach via social media
- Help build trust with parents.

The trip to Kenya which takes place every few years was noted as a fantastic opportunity for the participants, not only in the experience of seeing a different culture, but also the planning and fundraising that is required. Having something to work towards was seen as a valuable learning experience for the young people.

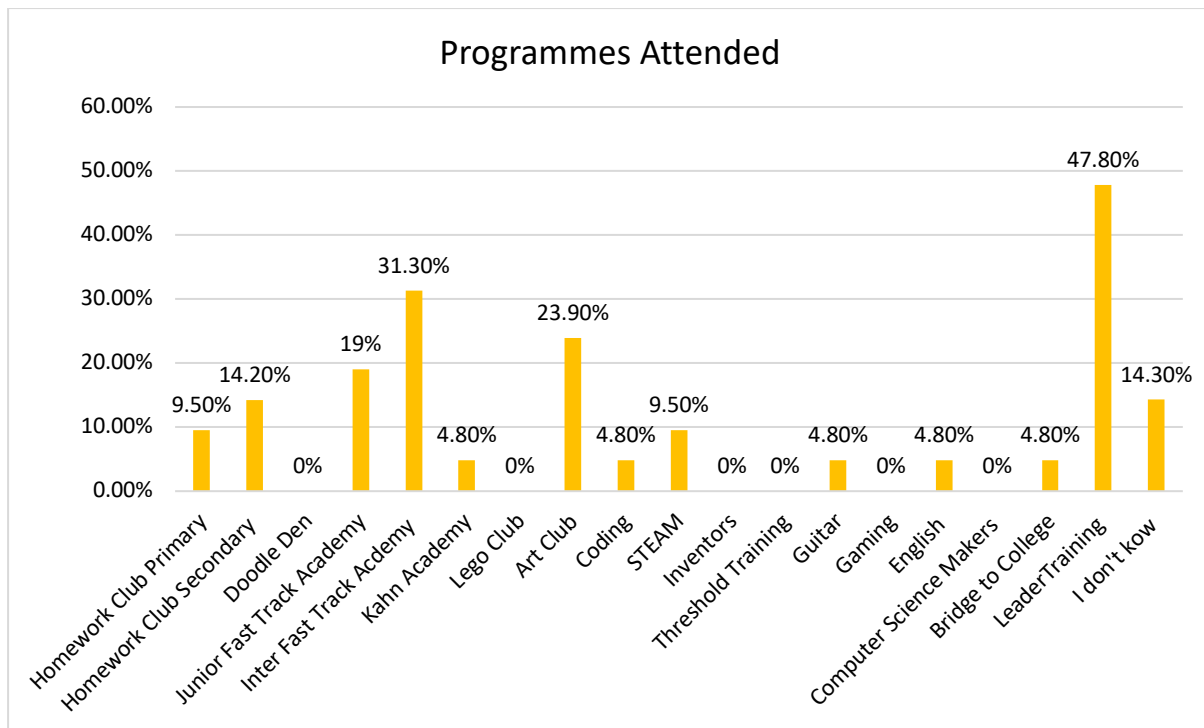
In considering how they define success, the group noted that educational attainment, and young people going onto further education or jobs with opportunities were important. However, they also considered socioemotional development as a critical aspect of the work, noting the growth in confidence and social skills as outcomes for many participants.

Finally, the focus group discussed some of the practicalities of their role, with the suggestion that some processes be reviewed to improve efficiency. The practice whereby volunteer teachers cannot communicate directly with the children and young people outside of the centre was understood as being informed by child protection policies, but was also identified as burdensome. Volunteers must communicate through Citywise staff if they want to follow up on learning or give feedback to participants. It was suggested that parental permission for a drop box or other shared (and therefore transparent) communication method, would be more efficient.

5.5 Parent Survey Findings

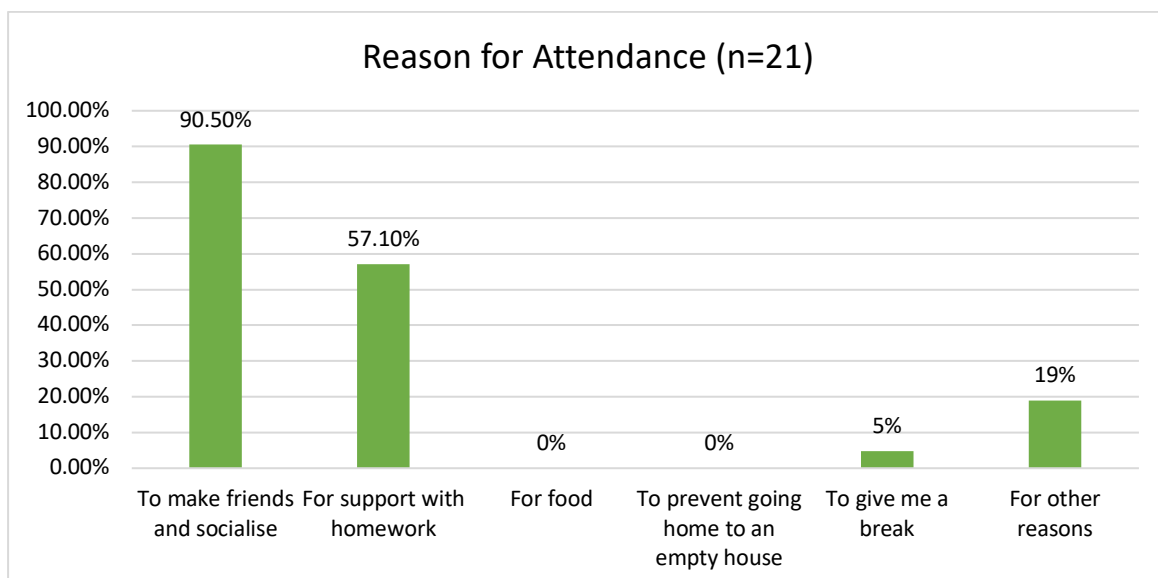
This section summarises the findings from the survey completed by 21 parents of children and young people who attend Citywise Education.

Table 25: Programme Attended

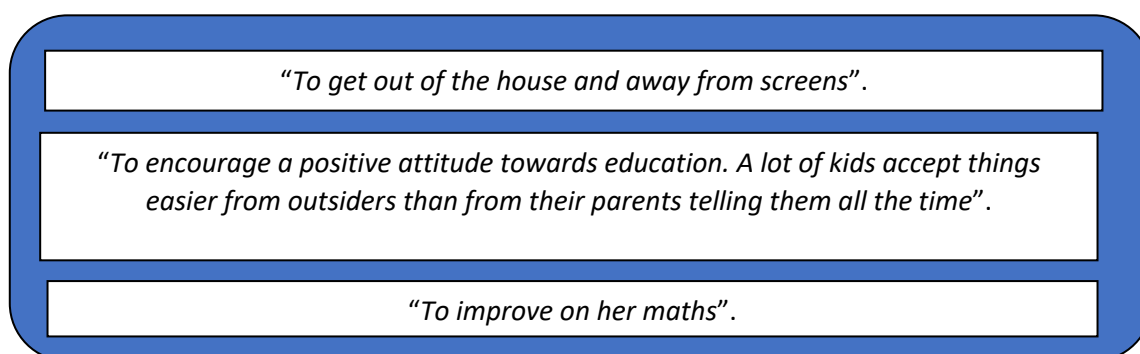


Citywise offers a wide range of programmes, tailored to different age groups, needs and interests. A list of programmes is included in Appendix I. Of the parents' responses, the most commonly attended programmes were Leadership Training (47.8%), Inter Fast Track Academy (31.3%) and Art Club (23.9%). Of the sample, 14.3% of parents noted they didn't know which programmes their children attended.

Table 25: Reason for Attendance

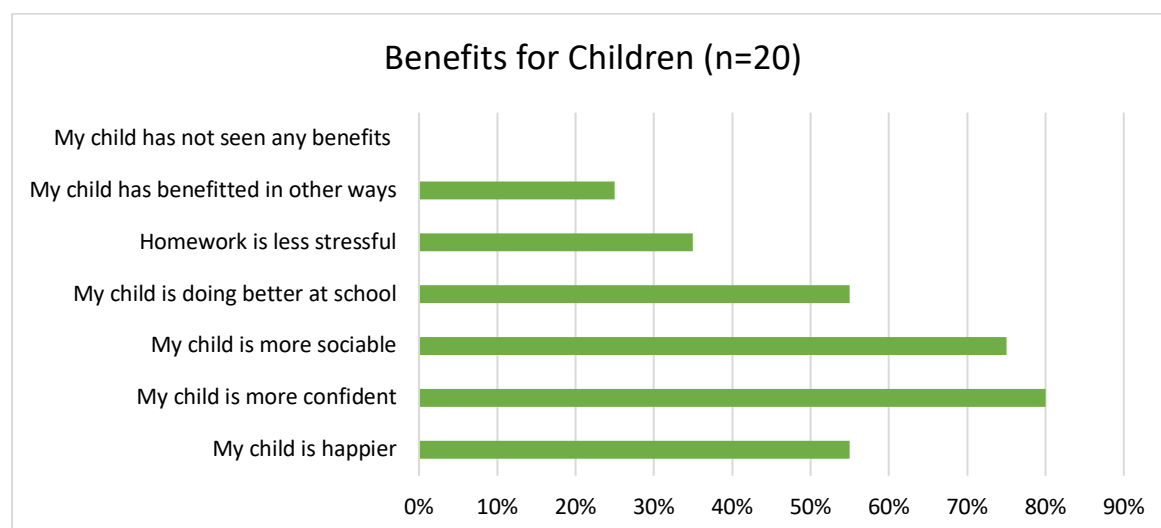


To understand the needs of the children attending Citywise, parents were asked why their child attends the service, selecting all options that apply. Most of the sample noted their child attends to make friends and socialise (90.5%), and 57.1% attend for support with homework. Nearly 20% of respondents stated their child attends for other reasons, as follows:



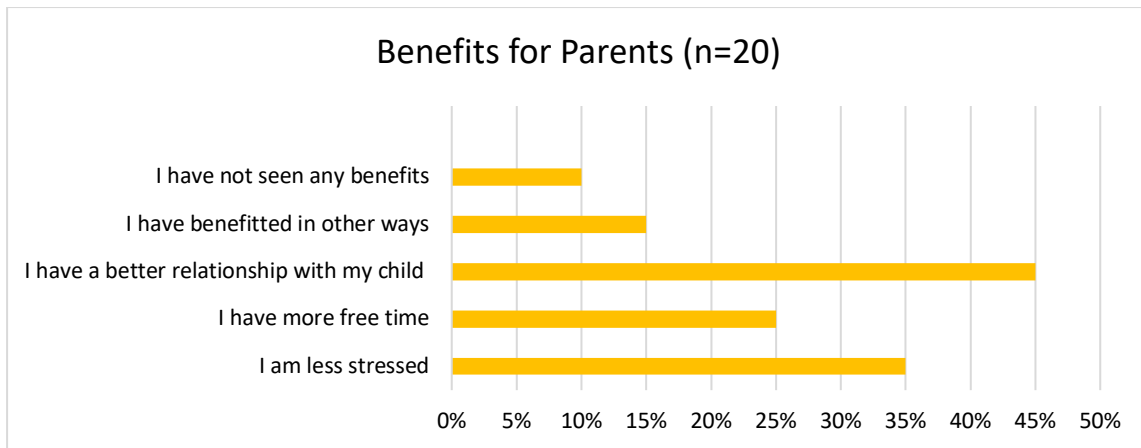
Parents were asked if their child had benefitted from attending the service, and if so how. Parents were asked to select all applicable options. Most parents (80%) noted their child is more confident as a result of attending Citywise, and exactly three quarters of parents felt their child is more sociable since joining Citywise. Over half the parents (55%) said their child had demonstrated improvements at school. No parent suggested their child has not benefitted from attending Citywise.

Table 26: Parents Perceptions of Benefit to Children



Parents were also asked if they had gained anything as a result of their child attending Citywise. Nearly half of parents noted they have a better relationship with their child (45%), 35% feel less stressed, and 10% noted they have not personally benefitted from their child availing of the service.

Table 27: Benefits for Parents



To understand parental satisfaction with the service, parents were asked how happy they were with the services/ support provided by Citywise. Twenty parents responded to this question, of which 15% noted they were *happy* and 85% noted they were *very happy*. No parents were unhappy with the services and support provided.

To gather some qualitative feedback, parents were asked what they liked about Citywise, and the services provided. The responses were positive, with numerous parents noting how friendly the staff are, and the welcoming environment created for all who avail of the service.

"The staff are so friendly and great with the kids"

"It's inclusive and affordable"

"A massive support to kids and parents and bigger community. All children are treated with respect and kindness"

"Always a very positive, open and friendly atmosphere. All the kids seem very happy there and look forward to attending"

Numerous parents that they loved the service, how invested staff are in the children, and the vast selection of programmes available. The wide array of programmes provided their children with the opportunity to explore their individual interests in a local setting.

"I love Citywise, it's very good for my kids they put lots of time into the kids"

"I love that my child(ren) are able to go somewhere local that has activities that suits their personalities."

Parents also focused on the positive impact Citywise has had on their children's education, with feedback including that staff are encouraging and supportive, and the setting provides the opportunity for children to focus and use their time effectively in a quiet, study environment.

"Citywise have been great towards my children/grandchild education"

"Encouragement to always do best in education"

"Calm quiet place for study"

To elicit constructive feedback, parents were asked how Citywise could improve their services. Numerous parents felt that the service was great and couldn't identify an area of improvement.

"We as parents can't see any way you could improve your service. We think you operate an exceptional service and are so delighted our child's teacher encouraged our child and suggested we link in with you. Well done Citywise – keep up the good work!"

"I find their service fantastic"

Some parents noted they would like more interaction from the service through one-to-one meetings. Having this engagement would allow parents to be more in tune with their child's individual progress in the service.

"More interaction with parents".

"To try and organise meetings with parents on a one to one to discuss the progress of the child at least once each term please".

When reflecting on how the service could be improved, a parent identified communication as an area of improvement.

"Communication on certain events could be improved. Last year I applied for some groups but didn't hear back so had to wait until this year for my child to attend".

Although some parents noted the programmes were affordable and priced fairly, a couple of parents felt money was a barrier to their child's participation in programmes.

"Cheaper Fast track".

"My son left leadership because of all the collecting for money".

As Citywise offers such a wide range of programmes, one parent suggested having regular taster sessions as a way of allowing children to explore everything that's on offer in the service and potentially discover new interests.

"Maybe have more tasters days where kids can get a feel for the different programmes on offer".

6.0 Recurring Themes

The following conclusions are derived from the contents of the discussions which took place during the Focus Groups in Citywise, the interviews conducted and the survey responses.

6.1 Programme Content

It is notable that the programmes offered in Citywise are largely STEM or STEAM focused or school/learning support programmes. For some students, particularly the cohort of Secondary students, this is exactly what they are looking for. However, the responses of the Primary students indicate that they would like other types of programmes to be offered and they identified a number of suggestions during discussions. It is apparent that gaming and playing games like Bluket, as well as fun, computer-based art activities are really valued by the students. Meanwhile, activities like coding, Science and Maths were received less enthusiastically by many students, particularly the younger ones. This may indicate that for many students Citywise is seen as a place where children and young people go to for fun and relaxation, non-academic/school type activities. It may be the case that after a day in school and then getting support with homework, the activities students want to do are those that are more social and playful and therefore more relaxing for them.

It was interesting to note that the types of programmes which all of the students attended were similar to many of the future activities or careers the Secondary students aspired to, possibly indicating that their attendance at Citywise was reinforcing the development of such interests. This pattern does offer an additional rationale for the proposal to offer a wider range of activities, in order to expose the young people to diverse skills and interests, and potentially expand their views regarding future career paths.

Making space and time in the week for more football for all of the Primary students, but particularly the girls, would seem to be an important step for Citywise to take, based on the FGD's. It may also be worth exploring the possibilities for other sports to be practiced in Citywise. The Primary students also had many ideas for other crafts and hobbies that may be explored as regular or once-off events, depending on interest. It is worth noting that many of these activities could be creatively linked to elements of Computational Thinking such as decomposition, etc.²

Across age groups, cooking and baking were mentioned and this may be an additional way for the students to engage with STEAM learning, particularly as baking and cooking can involve lots of opportunities for Maths and Science learning. A social element could be added by having the students work in teams.

Outings were obviously something that is highly valued by many of the young people and particularly outings that involve physical engagement and possibly an element of risky play. It was evident in the focus groups that these outings were key to bonding and memory making amongst the young people. Engaging in more events such as these would increase the strong sense of community and social interaction, which is already evident in Citywise and so would be highly recommended.

Citywise is important for many students at Primary and Secondary age for learning and schoolwork supports. However, for the Primary and younger Secondary students in the focus groups, it seems that there is a division for them between academic types of activities such as

² See the following website for details: <https://teachinglondoncomputing.org/> and <https://www.thetech.org/>

school/homework/Science/Maths/coding and non-academic activities like games and gaming/art/sport, etc. There is more enjoyment expressed about the non-academic types of activities. Although the social interactions with staff, leaders and peers may act as an incentive to engage in the academic-type activities, there may be other ways, as outlined above, to make these activities more fun and keep students positively engaged in them.

The overwhelming majority of students said that Citywise was helping in some way with their schoolwork, indicating that their attendance at Citywise and the support they receive there, must be having an impact on their schoolwork.

In addition to requesting more sporting activities, the Primary students also asked to have programmes similar to those available for the other students. Having opportunities to lead or be seen as older and different than younger children seemed to be important to this group.

For the leaders, it is obvious that they are highly engaged in and appreciative of, the academic and leadership activities in Citywise, reflecting their age and stage in life and the fact that this cohort are ambitious and already engaged in leadership roles.

Many of the students in the groups also mentioned enlarging the physical space of the building in some way, indicating that they felt like they needed more room at Citywise.

In their review of innovative disruptors, Kovačić et al note that *'one of the key pieces of learning from this evaluation is that it is important to research what it is that learners value most in project activities'* (2021:21). Respondents in this study were articulate and clear about what they value in Citywise and this informs the recommendations outlined below.

6.2 Engagement

From the high levels of attendance evident at Citywise by all of the students, it is obvious that Citywise is a regular feature of their weekly routines and due to this, their membership of this community may also have become a part of their identity.

Overall, we can see that for all students, Citywise is seen as a place for friendship, fun and also giving and receiving learning support. For some students, it is also seen as a place where they want to spend time.

For the Primary students, their responses indicate that Citywise represents somewhere that they themselves are motivated to go to, even though some suggested that they attended because their parents made them go.

As the students unanimously indicated that their friends, the staff and games were their favourite things in Citywise, it can be concluded that, for these young people, the social interactions that take place at Citywise are what is most valued by them. This was reiterated throughout the Focus Group discussions by:

- naming their friends, staff and games as their favourite things about Citywise
- listing the types of supports they receive from peers and staff and
- discussing the joy, fun and friendship they experience at Citywise.

The systems which staff and management have put in place to create and maintain positive social interactions, respect for each other and sense of community in Citywise should be acknowledged as instrumental in these positive interactions.

Overall, the students did not talk about the staff much, although it was obvious that they were particularly fond of certain members of staff and the staff were mentioned as one of their favourite things about Citywise. The students' interactions with staff members at the focus groups were seen to be very positive and respectful throughout and staff were always respectful and considerate of students and their needs, managing the Primary students' higher energy very calmly and consistently. The Leader students were more aware and more vocal about the amount of support and inspiration they received from staff over the time they had been in Citywise and their appreciation for staff was very obvious during discussions.

6.3 Leadership

Becoming a leader seems to be a very real aspiration for some of the young people in Citywise and the rewards of taking part in the leadership programme seem to be highly valued by those involved. The leaders who attended the focus groups were articulate and seemed to be capable, caring and ambitious young people. Incentivisation for engaging in the leadership programme should be considered as a mechanism to expand the scheme, possibly in the form of special outings, meals, competitions, etc.

6.4 Food

Food and the café were mentioned a lot during discussions as is not only a place to hang out but a resource which the students really appreciate and value. It was interesting that the students described it so clearly as a place where they socialise and have fun and that the leader students suggested that it be bigger to facilitate this socialising further

Many of the students from the two younger groups mentioned that they would like more warm or savoury food that they could buy or have for free. They also mentioned special foods for summer and pizza nights. Although the older leaders students didn't specifically mention food in the café, they did value the special Christmas meal they had with staff, showing the value which meals and food can have to bond people, especially for special occasions.

6.5 Building

The main things that were mentioned in terms of the building were that it would be bigger to incorporate a bigger lunch area or bigger rooms where everyone could gather together. A playground and a bigger astroturf were also mentioned by the Primary students, reflecting their desire to have a choice of places to play outdoors. A Sensory room was mentioned by the Secondary students, which could make a valuable addition to Citywise and might make it a more attractive venue for students with additional needs.

6.6 Time

Overall, students seemed happy with the days and times they were at Citywise with some looking for more hours there.

7.0 Replication

7.1 Opportunities and Requirements

As noted above, this review builds on an earlier assessment of the *Citywise Education* Fast Track Academy, undertaken by Galway University (Kovačić et al, 2021) which assessed seven independent organisations in terms of impact on educational disadvantage, social return on investment and scalability. These ‘disruptive innovators’ were identified because of their creative solutions to educational exclusion.

A total of 423 students participated in the Citywise FastTrack Academy during the period of this evaluation, with 90% completing the programme, of whom 80% went onto third level education. The remaining 20% were equally divided between those who went into vocational training and those who went to full-time employment. None of the young people completing the programme were unemployed which, given the local context, is remarkable. The report goes on to identify enabling actions undertaken by the participating organisations and these inform the following discussion. It was concluded that the following are central to the young people’s experience of and engagement with Citywise:

- A place to study as well as socialise
- A combination of study and personal development support
- Mentoring (op cit, p75).

A key objective of this review was to identify the potential for replicating the Citywise model, or elements of it, and setting out recommended actions to progress this.

In considering the potential to replicate the Citywise model, there are some crucial steps to be undertaken, as follows:

1. **Define the intervention** – Document the various elements of the intervention and its enablers, including those related to supporting fidelity such as training, coaching and mentoring.
2. **Identify the core components** – Distinguish between those components which are necessary for the intervention to be effective, and those which can be adapted for local context. Without the core components, the desired outcomes may not be achieved.
3. **Plan the adaptable components** – Consider what adaptations of the non-essential components are required to maximise the fit with the local context.

(Centre for Effective Services, 2022).

Understanding the local context is a critical aspect of implementation, and requires ongoing review, as the context changes over time. Context includes aspects such as the sociodemographic profile, staff capacity and organisational strengths, (Chambers, Glasgow & Stange, 2013). This should include an assessment of organisational readiness, examining elements such as the identified need, level of buy-in for the intervention, leadership and resource availability (Childhood Development Initiative, 2020).

Given the number of factors involved, scaling up a social innovation is inevitably a complex process. It will however be supported by strong data and ongoing monitoring and review.

A Nesta report on scaling social innovations, based on analysis of over 50 innovations, identified four required steps (Deacon, 2016):

Scaling what works – the analysis found that those organisations which were most effective in scaling up, had strong plans, and used data well. In addition, these organisations were able to identify the core components of the intervention, ensuring that efficacy was not compromised when scaling.

For Citywise this requires identifying those aspects which are critical to positive outcomes, having the data to evidence this and developing systems to maintain fidelity in the context of replication.

Addressing need and creating demand – the organisations most able to scale were those with a strong commitment to improving lives, and who extended their reach by creating multiple pathways. They also worked well with public sector organisations, had clear referral pathways and well thought through plans for sustainability and growth.

Applying this learning will require Citywise to identify communities with a similar socioeconomic profile, but where potential partners are embedded and hold a shared vision for the community. The Citywise model incorporates multiple access routes to the programmes, which is positive.

Finding the right routes to scale – the analysis identified a number of approaches to scaling implementation, including licensing, organic growth, and strategic partnerships. The most effective organisations had considered each of these elements and developed a comprehensive plan to utilise the more relevant approaches.

There is work to be undertaken by Citywise to develop these aspects of their replication plan. As noted above, identifying potential partners may be complex due to the wide age range, possibly requiring multiple partners in order to establish the Citywise model in a community.

Building capacity and capability to scale – this includes investing in new skills which will be required with growth (such as marketing and digital technology), ongoing communication with stakeholders, identifying and engaging with experts.

Again, Citywise will need to map its existing skills in relation to business development, marketing and so on, and plan for resourcing these.

7.2 Defining the model

As noted above, the first step in developing a replication plan, is to clearly define the model being replicated. Drawing on the research by Kovacic et al (2021), as well as the current consultation, the following interdependent elements have been identified:

- **Programmatic:** The various programmes and groups which make up the Citywise ‘offer’ are outlined elsewhere in this document, but include homework clubs, STEM and STEAM activities, the Fast Track Academy (which was not included in this review), social events and sports groups. The extent to which the content for each of these groups has been described, or even follows a curriculum, varies considerably
- **Target Group:** Citywise works with children from age eight to 18, an unusually wide age range, and potentially problematic in identifying potential host organisations in other locations to support the scale up of the model. Most youth services work with children aged 12 and over, although the move to engage with younger children has increased in recent years. Citywise may need to partner with more than one organisation in any given location, in order to maintain the breadth of target group

- **Resourcing:** the model of drawing on programme participants as volunteers, who take on increasingly more responsible roles within the organisation, up to and including staff positions, is critical to the success of Citywise. This must be central to any replication plans, and requires that each role is described along with the training and support provided
- **Community Context:** Locating replicate services will require identifying communities with a similar sociodemographic profile. Being local, visible and engaging community champions are all core aspects of the Citywise model.

7.3 Identifying the Core Components

From the consultation underpinning this review, it is concluded that the programmatic aspects of the Citywise model are not necessarily core components. Rather, it is the engagement of the local community, and the pathway for young participants to become volunteers and potentially employees, which gives participants exposure to positive role models, and the opportunity to ‘*see someone like me, ahead of me*’. The fact that Citywise combines educational programmes, often aligned to the school curriculum, with social and informal activities, is central to the motivation of children and young people to attend. This too is a critical element of the model.

7.4 Plan for Adaptation

Based on the above, the programme content and ‘curriculum’ of the Citywise Model can be viewed as flexible, and should be responsive to local community needs and the interests and strengths of the participants.

Having identified the core components of the model, the following table sets out the core programme content (ie the activities to be delivered), key elements which act as enablers, (and must therefore be present in replication processes), implementation requirements (what’s needed to deliver this), and an assessment of organisational readiness to scale, or what Citywise needs to have in place to facilitate replication.

Table 33: Key Elements of the Citywise Education Approach

	Content:	Enablers:	Implementation Requirements:	Organisational Readiness for Scaling:	Next Steps:
Programme Content	• Wide range of academic and social programmes • Some alignment to the school curriculum • Responsive, flexible content.	• Innovative staff and volunteers with capacity to listen and respond • An ethos of being needs based and student centred • School engagement • Local credibility • Community based.	• Committed, creative volunteers • Professional staff • Mentoring skills • Physical space • Equipment.	• No formal volunteer training programme • Recruitment approach is well tested • Subject content very individualised, creating challenges for replication.	• Review and update the volunteer handbook and induction process • Document the individualised approach to supporting learners • Engage volunteers and staff in developing training manuals and programme resources • Document the established programme content.
Target Group	• Located in a community of disadvantage • Academic programmes span primary school and secondary school, both the Junor and Senior cycle.	• School engagement • Local credibility • Community based • Staff and volunteers from the community • Established progression pathways.	• Wide stakeholder engagement • Agreed pathways for leadership • Local partners with capacity to work across the age range.	• Promotional materials • Some content documented • Referral/tracking process established.	• Collate all promotional materials • Document school engagement process • Agree clear criteria for location of new sites eg using Pobal HP index • Develop criteria for potential partners.
Leadership	• Training and mentoring for young people to	• Community based • Volunteers and staff drawn from the community	• Pool of young people to recruit from as leaders	• Documented training programme	• Review and update the leadership manual and training programme

	take on leadership roles Established progression pathway for young leaders.		- Community networks - Leadership training.	- Defined roles and responsibilities - Organisational structures documented.	- Consider accreditation and/or incentivisation for the leadership programme - Document the community engagement process - Document the role and responsibilities of the Youth Advisory Group and how this informs the development of the organisation
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8.0 Recommendations

8.1 Programme Content

Citywise should consider ways that activities like coding, science and maths could be made as social, playful and relaxing as possible in order to keep the young people engaged in them. Being different from school is a key asset of the organisation, and whilst this is largely due to the organisational culture, it also needs to be reflected in formal programmes. This could include combining activities that students have expressed particular interest in such as sport, pets, food, art and gaming with science, maths and coding.

Providing a wider range of activities certainly needs to be planned for, and this will certainly be supported with the expansion of the building. There is potential for greater creativity in integrating students interests into activities, possibly on a 'rolling thematic' basis, for example taking a theme each month which is applied to all activities. So for 'pets month', guitar lessons could focus on songs about animals; maths can calculate the amount of food different sized animals need, and so on.

It would be helpful for Citywise to consider which programmes have a prescribed learning model or curriculum and those which should be flexible and responsive. Work would then be required to develop the content for the formal programmes and aligned training. This would be helpful for new and existing volunteers, but is also critical to enable replication.

8.2 Leadership

The visibility of young people from the community moving through increasingly responsible roles within Citywise is a critical aspect of its success. Ensuring that these pathways the recruitment process underpinning it, and the mentoring which maintains young people on their journey, should be clearly documented. Writing up case studies, and sharing the stories of young people who began as programme participants and went on to become volunteers, and staff in Citywise could be very inspiring for current and future participants.

The separation of boys and girls should be considered and mechanisms incorporated into the organisation to ensure opportunities for gender integration. Citywise should consider whether gender segregation an important part of the programme, and clarify the rationale for the approach where this is considered to be the case.

Efforts should be made to increase the ethnic diversity of staff and volunteers to better reflect the profile of the children and young people using Citywise Education and living in the local community.

8.3 Facilities

This review is being undertaken in the context of a significant physical expansion of the Citywise buildings. This is hugely positive, and some of the suggestions identified in this report may inform the function and purpose of these spaces. Whilst the young people asked for a larger Café, any such expansion should consider the potential loss of intimacy alongside the gains. It may be more appropriate to create additional small spaces, with limited catering facilities, rather than one large venue.

8.4 Replication

A comprehensive replication plan should be developed which includes programme specific analysis and planning, in line with the framework outlined in Section 7. This requires:

- Building on the analysis of the *Citywise Education* Model in terms of its enablers, context, implementation requirements, and organisational readiness, to ensure all elements are captured in detail, and that existing documentation is collated
- Developing a set of minimum criteria for potential replication sites. This should include:
 - Level of community disadvantage using Pobal maps and the HP index
 - Capacity of existing organisations to work with the range of age groups, and/or potential for establishing/building on cross agency collaboration to provide the continuum of engagement
 - Physical space which facilitates interaction across the age ranges, and visibility of youth leaders for younger cohorts
- Undertaking a review of previous replication attempts in order to fully understand the processes which supported and mitigated against these processes
- Establishing a number of working groups with representation from all stakeholders, to review, update and develop a suite of documents including:
 - Volunteer recruitment and induction processes, including a checklist of core competencies and attitudes, and programme specific knowledge
 - Pathways and supports for youth leaders
 - Role, responsibilities and supports for the Youth Advisory Group
 - Mechanisms for reflection and programme review
 - Quality assurance processes including mentoring of volunteers, leaders and new staff to ensure consistent standards and ethos
 - Programme content
 - Monitoring and evaluation processes. This requires some programme specific elements as well as organisation-wide aspects.
- Developing the following for each aspect of the Citywise model identified as core to its efficacy:
 1. Personnel requirements and training
 2. Dissemination plan and target audience
 3. Communications and engagement strategy for corporate and state funders
 4. Monitoring and Evaluation plan to continue to support and demonstrate efficacy
 5. Marketing tools and strategies
 6. Costs.

9. Conclusion

This review has sought to understand and evidence the key processes and approaches which have informed the development of *Citywise Education*, enabled its integration into the community, and seen the organisation successfully support hundreds of young people through their educational journey and achieve high levels of attainment. Whilst there is a body of work to be undertaken, this review has clearly identified those elements of the model which have been key to its success and which must therefore remain central in any replication process.

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Appendix I: Overview of Citywise Education Programmes

General Afterschool:

Citywise Education offer after school educational and social supports to young people in the Tallaght and surrounding area. This work is carried out by a group of experiences staff supported by a large number of dedicated volunteers. More than 400 young people attend age specific programmes on a regular basis. Junior programmes are for young people aged between 9 and 12 years, with some from 8 years old.

Homework Club:

Homework club runs daily from Monday to Thursday from 2:45pm – 15:45pm, and offers children from 3rd-6th class, a quiet supervised environment and support with their homework from staff.

Athens & Brussels (Boys) and Grenoble & Hamburg (Girls) 3rd – 6th class:

Athens & Brussels and Grenoble & Hamburg are both activity-based groups that provide club style fun and games, as well as outdoor trips. These provide great opportunities to develop social skills from a young age and new pastimes while making new friends in the process. These clubs run once a week for 2 hours.

Leadership:

A weekly leadership training programme for students in 1st to 6th year. This provides students with the skills and experience to allow them to give back to their local community. Leaders also have the opportunity to help plan and deliver after school programmes for primary school members, including Easter and Summer Camps. Leaders often partake in overseas training during the Summer.

STEAM activities:

STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths, and our STEAMSquare is a state of the art area with 3D printers, laser cutters, computers, iPads, robots and all the technology one might need to take their first steps in STEAM.

Code Club Juniors:

An introduction to programming for primary school children. As they are introduced to the amazing world of coding, they will create basic games and animations using block-based tools like Scratch to introduce the fundamentals of programming in a fun and engaging way that keeps them interested.

Code Club Intermediate:

For those who may have a bit more experience with programming or who have progressed from Code Club Juniors. Code Club Intermediate offers a place to experiment and to improve programming skills.

Code Club Seniors:

For secondary school students looking to take their coding to the next level. Code Club Seniors introduces students to programming languages used in the IT industry such as Python and HTML to make their own apps and websites.

Inventors Club:

For primary school students with an interest in STEAM but unsure of where to start, Inventor's club will revolve around many STEAM activities to find their niche. From science experiments to engineering challenges, there's something for everyone.

STEAM Masters:

For secondary school students interested in cutting-edge technologies like 3D printing and digital arts, STEAM masters is the place to come and explore technology and see how you can bring your ideas into reality.

Khan Academy:

For anyone who needs to practice their maths skills, who enjoy maths or might need a little bit of extra help, Khan Academy has you covered using an online curriculum and teachers present to help with questions.

STEAMettes:

Rationale: A current problem we can witness throughout this country is the lack of female participation in STEM. A 2019 report conducted by the STEM Education Review Group of Ireland revealed that there was a significant drop-off in interest in STEM subjects at Leaving Certificate, especially by women. In the latest STEM Education Review Group report, it stated that only 25% of the citizens working in STEM industries in Ireland were women. A Google report also found that "Irish school girls have lowest understanding of computer science in Europe". Statistics like this form the rationale for the programmes we deliver.

Citywise have intervened with a STEAMettes programme for primary school students to encourage girls to get into STEAM. This introduces young girls with the skills, and confidence to raise their potential and consider future careers in STEAM. The girls compete in national competitions with projects that they have developed through the range of technology and equipment on hand to them through the programme.

Appendix II Parent's Informational and Consent Form

Childs Name:

Date:

We would really appreciate your help. We want to know about the benefits of Citywise Education, what your children like about it, or would change about it.

We kindly ask for your permission for your child to take part in a short focus group discussion with other young people in Citywise. This is important to us as it helps to improve the work we do.

Taking part is entirely up to you and your child. **You can withdraw consent at any point for any reason.**

You and your child can of course still use all our services, even if you withdraw or decide not to take part.

Any information provided will be anonymised and kept confidential. We will not use your child's name in any reports. In any written reports, it will not be possible for readers or anyone to know what they said or to identify your child or your family. We will not compare your child to other children who use our services.

We will use this feedback to:

- Improve this and other programmes we run,
- Inform our funders, so that they continue to support our services,
- Present some of the information at conferences, or in research.

We do not anticipate any negative results from participating in this focus group. Should you experience any concerns arising from your child taking part, or should it raise any issues for you, please contact Daire Hennessy in Citywise, 014049736.

The information provided will be stored securely in line with the Privacy Policy and Data Retention Policy of the Childhood Development Initiative, who are conducting this review for Citywise. You can find these policies here <https://www.cdi.ie/> If you have any questions, or if you wish to withdraw your information, please contact Marian Quinn, 087 3158836. Please read the statements below and tick the boxes if you agree. Do not put a tick if you do not agree with the statement.

☐ I agree for my child to participate in surveys and data collection as part of the Citywise review.

☐ I have understood how the information I/my child will provide will be used.

Parent name:

Signature:

Date:

Childs Name:

Date:

We would really appreciate your help. We want to know about the benefits of Citywise Education, what you like about it, or would change about it.

We kindly ask you to help us by completing this short survey. It should take only 5-10 minutes. This is important to us as it helps to improve the work we do.

Answering these questions is entirely up to you. **You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You can withdraw at any point for any reason.**

You and your child can still use all our services, even if you withdraw or decide not to fill out this survey.

Any information you provide will be anonymised and kept confidential. We will not use your child's name in any reports. It will not be possible for readers or anyone to know what you said or to identify your child or your family. We will not compare your child to other children who use our services.

We will use your anonymised feedback to:

- Improve this and other programmes we run,
- Inform our funders, so that they continue to support our services,
- Present some of the information at conferences, or in research.

We do not anticipate any negative results for you from participating in this survey. Should you experience any concerns arising from completing this survey, or should it raise any issues for you, please contact Daire Hennessy in Citywise.

The information you provide will be stored securely in line with the Privacy Policy and Data Retention Policy of the Childhood Development Initiative, who are conducting this review for Citywise. You can find these policies here <https://www.cdi.ie/> If you have any questions, or if you wish to withdraw your information, please contact Marian Quinn, 087 3158836. Please read the statements below and tick the boxes if you agree. Do not put a tick if you do not agree with the statement.

- ☐ I agree for my child to participate in surveys and data collection as part of the Citywise review.
- ☐ I have understood how the information I/my child will provide will be used.

Parent name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix II: Primary School Children Focus Group Guidelines

Date and Time:	
Participants:	Primary school children
Facilitator:	Nicola

Materials required:

Paper, pencils, colouring pens. flipchart

Welcome and Ice-Breaker: (10 mins)

Introduce yourself and say a bit about yourself. Ask everyone in the group to say their name and tell the group where their name came from. (e.g. are they named after someone in particular?)

Explanation for the session: (5 mins)

- Assent (parental consent to have been provided)
- Anonymity
- Purpose of the session/review
- Right to withdraw.

Group Activity: (30 mins)

- Everyone to draw a picture of their CityWise group- Include as much as you can about what you like, enjoy, learn, and also anything you don't like or would change (15 mins)
- In a circle, each child tells the group about their picture, explains what's in it (15 mins)
- Write up key themes on the flipchart as you take feedback.

Individual Reflections (10 mins)

Give all the children a copy of the reflection sheet and ask them to take 10 minutes to complete it. Explain that they will not be asked to share it with the group, or put their name on it. Only you, the facilitator, will see their feedback.

Check that all the children are able to respond on the worksheet.

Collect the forms when everyone has finished.

Digging Deeper.

Highlight two or three recurring themes on the flipchart, having considered the feedback during the previous exercise.

Ask the group to tell you more about these themes, by using prompts and questioning.

Concluding Round

Tell the group something you are looking forward to in the coming days and ask everyone to also share something they are looking forward to.

Appendix III: Citywise Education Reflection Sheet: Primary School Children

What groups do you go to in Citywise Education?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Homework Club | ☐ Homework Club for 1 st and 2 nd Years |
| ☐ Grenoble & Hamburg / Athens & Brussels | ☐ CS Makers |
| ☐ Junior Fast Track *4 th , 5 th , 6 th Class | ☐ Chess Club |
| ☐ Guitar Club | ☐ Guitar Club |
| ☐ Art Club | ☐ Inventors Club |
| ☐ Code Club Junior | ☐ Code Club Intermediate |
| ☐ Code Club Intermediate | ☐ Code Club Senior |
| ☐ LEGO Robotics | ☐ LEGO Robotics |
| ☐ STEAMettes | ☐ Khan Academy |

How often do you go to Citywise?

- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Twice a week
- ☐ More than twice a week

Why do you go to Citywise? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Because my parents make me
- ☐ For help with my homework
- ☐ To see my friends
- ☐ For the food
- ☐ So I don't have to go home
- ☐ Any other reason? Please tell me about it! _____

What is your favourite thing about Citywise?

- ☐ Seeing my friends
- ☐ The food
- ☐ The games
- ☐ Help with my homework
- ☐ The staff
- ☐ The building feels nice

Do you think Citywise helps you with your school work?

Yes, helps loads	Often helps	Sometimes helps	Hardly ever helps	Never helps

If you could change something about Citywise, what would you change?

Focus Group Discussion

Time:	
Participants:	Secondary School Pupils
Facilitator:	Nicola

Materials required:

Paper, pencils, colouring pens, flipchart, Photospeke

Welcome and Ice-Breaker: (10 mins)

Introduce yourself and say a bit about yourself. Ask everyone in the group to say their name and tell the group where their name came from. (e.g. are they named after someone in particular?)

Explanation for the session: (5 mins)

- Assent (parental consent to have been provided)
- Anonymity
- Purpose of the session/review
- Right to withdraw

Group Activity: (20 mins)

- Spread out photo cards from the Photospeke pack on the floor. Ask everyone to stand up and walk around, looking at the various pictures. Ask them to choose one which makes them think about Citywise. (5 mins)
- In a circle, each young person tells the group about their picture and why they chose it (15 mins)
- Follow up with questions as required, to get comprehensive feedback from the group
- Write up key themes on the flipchart as you take feedback.

Individual Reflections (10 mins)

Give all the young people a copy of the reflection sheet and ask them to take 10 minutes to complete it. Explain that they will not be asked to share it with the group, or put their name on it. Only you, the facilitator, will see their feedback.

Collect the forms when everyone has finished.

Digging Deeper.

Highlight two or three recurring themes on the flipchart, having considered the feedback during the previous exercise.

Ask the group to tell you more about these themes, by using prompts and questioning. Possible questions for the group:

- If another community wanted to open their own Citywise, what would you advise them? What do you think would be important to get right?
- If you could change one thing about Citywise, what would it be?

Concluding Round

Ask the group to share their ambitions for the future: 'when I leave school, I plan to....'

Appendix V: Citywise Education Reflection Sheet: Secondary School Children

What groups do you go to in Citywise Education?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Homework Club for 1 st and 2 nd Years | ☐ Leadership |
| ☐ Intermediate Fast Track *1 st and 2 nd Years | ☐ Guitar Club |
| ☐ Creative Art Studio | ☐ Bridge 2 College |
| ☐ Code Club Junior | ☐ Code Club Intermediate |
| ☐ Code Club Senior | ☐ STEAM Masters |
| ☐ LEGO Robotics | ☐ STEAMettes |
| ☐ Games Room | ☐ Gaming Club 13+ years |
| ☐ Fast Track Academy | |

How often do you go to Citywise?

- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Twice a week
- ☐ More than twice a week

Why do you go to Citywise? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Because my parents make me
- ☐ For help with my homework
- ☐ To see my friends
- ☐ For the food
- ☐ So I don't have to go home
- ☐ Any other reason? Please tell me about it!

What is your favourite thing about Citywise?

- ☐ Seeing my friends
- ☐ The food
- ☐ The games
- ☐ Getting help with homework
- ☐ The staff
- ☐ The building feels nice

Do you think Citywise helps you with your school work?

Yes, helps loads	Often helps	Sometimes helps	Hardly ever helps	Never helps

If you could change something about Citywise, what would you change?

Appendix VI: Staff Focus Group Guidelines

Materials:

Flipchart.

Welcome and Ice-Breaker: (10 mins)

Welcome all to the session. Invite all to introduce themselves and say 'If I could be an animal, I would be.....because....'

Explanation for the session: (5 mins)

- Consent and withdrawal
- Anonymity
- Purpose of the session/review

Sociodemographic: (5 mins)

All to complete the online Kobo Toolbox survey.

Brainstorm: (10 mins)

What motivates you to work in Citywise? What do you enjoy about the job?

Discussion: (15 mins)

- In what ways does CityWise benefit the community?
- What makes CityWise stand out from other organisations in the area?
- How could Citywise improve what it provides?

Small Group Discussions: (20 mins)

Split the group into two, one to focus on STEM, and one on after school activities. Each group to consider:

- What are the objectives of these groups? What do you hope to achieve?
- How do the children/young people benefit from these groups?
- How do you know if you are making a difference?

Each group to appoint a note taker.

Feedback: (10 mins)

Ask for summary feedback from each group. Probe feedback for clarity as necessary.

Thank everyone for their contributions.

Closing Round (5 mins) Ask everyone to share a highlight/ memory from working in Citywise.

Appendix VII: Staff Questionnaire

We need your help. We want to know about the benefits of Citywise Education and ask you to help us by completing this short survey. It should take only 5-10 minutes.

Answering these questions is entirely up to you. **You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You can withdraw at any point for any reason.**

Any information you provide will be anonymised and kept confidential. We will not use your name in any reports. It will not be possible for readers or anyone to know what you said or to identify you. We will not compare you to other people who use our services.

We will use your anonymised feedback to:

- Improve this and other programmes we run,
- Inform our funders, so that they continue to support our services,
- Present some of the information at conferences, or in research.

Your data will be stored securely in line with CDIs Privacy Policy and Data Retention Policy which can be found on the CDI website: <https://www.cdi.ie/> . If you have any questions, or if you wish to withdraw your information, please contact Marian Quinn (e: marian@cdi.ie). If you are willing to help us complete this form, tick all the boxes that you agree with. Do not put a tick if you do not agree with.

☐ I am voluntarily willing to participate in surveys and data collection as part of the Citywise Education review

☐ I have understood how the information I provide will be used.

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Non-binary ☐ Other ☐ I prefer not to say

2. What is your age?

Only select one.

☐ Under 18 years ☐ 18-24 years ☐ 25-34 years
☐ 35-44 years ☐ 45-64 years ☐ 65 years and above
☐ I prefer not to say

3. What is your ethnic background?

Only select one.

☐ Irish ☐ Irish Traveller ☐ Roma
☐ Any other white background ☐ Black African ☐ Any other black background
☐ Asian Chinese ☐ Asian Indian/Pakistan/Bangladesh
☐ Any other Asian background ☐ Latinx ☐ Any other Latinx background ☐
Other ☐ I prefer not to say

4. If not listed above or you selected other, please specify here.

5. What is the highest level of education/training (full-time or part-time) you have completed to date?

Only select one.

- ☐ No formal education/training
- ☐ Primary education
- ☐ Lower secondary (Junior/Intermediate/Group Certificate, 'O' Levels/GCSEs, NCVA Foundation Certificate, Basic Skills Training or equivalent))
- ☐ Upper secondary (Leaving Certificate including Applied and Vocational Programmes, 'A' Levels, NCVA Level Certificate or equivalent)
- ☐ Technical or Vocational qualification (Completed Apprenticeship, NCVA Level 2/3 Certificate, Teagasc Certificate/Diploma or equivalent)
- ☐ Both Upper Secondary and Technical or Vocational qualification
- ☐ Non-Degree (National Certificate, Diploma NCEA/Institute of Technology or equivalent, Nursing Diploma)
- ☐ Primary Degree (Third Level Bachelor's Degree)
- ☐ Professional Qualification (of Degree status at least)
- ☐ Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma
- ☐ Postgraduate Degree (Masters)
- ☐ Doctorate (Ph.D.) or higher
- ☐ Other
- ☐ I prefer not to say

6. If not listed above or you selected other, please specify here.

7. Approximately how many hours per week do you volunteer with Citywise Education?

- I volunteer less than 5 hours per week []
- I volunteer between 5 and 10 hours per week []
- I volunteer more than 10 hours and less than 20 hours per week []
- I volunteer more than 35 hours per week []

8. How long have you volunteered with Citywise Education?

- Under 12 months []
- Over 12 months and up to three years []
- Over three years and less than five years []
- Five years or more []

Appendix VIII: Volunteers Focus Group Guidelines

Date:	
Time:	
Participants:	Volunteers
Facilitator:	Marian Quinn

Materials

Flichart.

Welcome and Ice-Breaker: (10 mins)

Welcome all to the session. Invite all to introduce themselves and say 'If I could be an animal, I would be.....because....'

Explanation for the session: (5 mins)

- Consent and withdrawal
- Anonymity
- Purpose of the session/review

Sociodemographics: (5 mins)

All to complete the online KoboToolBox survey.

Brainstorm: (10 mins)

Reasons/motivation for volunteering with CityWise.

Discussion: (15 mins)

- In what ways does CityWise benefit the community?
- What makes CityWise stand out from other organisations in the area?
- How could Citywise improve what it provides?

Small Group Discussions: (20 mins)

Split the group into two, one to focus on STEM, and one on after school activities. Each group to consider:

- What are the objectives of these groups? What do you hope to achieve?
- How do the children/young people benefit from these groups?
- How do you know if you are making a difference?

Each group to appoint a note taker.

Feedback: (10 mins)

Ask for summary feedback from each group. Probe feedback for clarity as necessary.

Thank everyone for their contributions.

Closing Round (5 mins) Ask everyone to share a highlight/ memory from their volunteering in Citywise Education.

Volunteers Questionnaire.

We need your help. We want to know about the benefits of Citywise Education and ask you to help us by completing this short survey. It should take only 5-10 minutes.

Answering these questions is entirely up to you. **You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You can withdraw at any point for any reason.**

Any information you provide will be anonymised and kept confidential. We will not use your name in any reports. It will not be possible for readers or anyone to know what you said or to identify you. We will not compare you to other people who use our services.

We will use your anonymised feedback to:

- Improve this and other programmes we run,
- Inform our funders, so that they continue to support our services,
- Present some of the information at conferences, or in research.

Your data will be stored securely in line with CDIs Privacy Policy and Data Retention Policy which can be found on the CDI website: <https://www.cdi.ie/>. If you have any questions, or if you wish to withdraw your information, please contact Marian Quinn (e: marian@cdi.ie). If you are willing to help us complete this form, tick all the boxes that you agree with. Do not put a tick if you do not agree with.

☐ I am voluntarily willing to participate in surveys and data collection as part of the Citywise Education review

☐ I have understood how the information I provide will be used.

9. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Non-binary ☐ Other ☐ I prefer not to say

10. What is your age?

Only select one.

☐ Under 18 years ☐ 18-24 years ☐ 25-34 years ☐ 35-44 years ☐ 45-64 years
☐ 65 years and above ☐ I prefer not to say

11. What is your ethnic background?

Only select one.

☐ Irish ☐ Irish Traveller ☐ Roma
☐ Any other white background ☐ Black African ☐ Any other black background
☐ Asian Chinese ☐ Asian Indian/Pakistan/Bangladesh
☐ Any other Asian background ☐ Latinx ☐ Any other Latinx background ☐ Other
☐ I prefer not to say

12. If not listed above or you selected other, please specify here.

13. What is the highest level of education/training (full-time or part-time) you have completed to date?

Only select one.

- ☐ No formal education/training
- ☐ Primary education
- ☐ Lower secondary (Junior/Intermediate/Group Certificate, 'O' Levels/GCSEs, NCVA Foundation Certificate, Basic Skills Training or equivalent))
- ☐ Upper secondary (Leaving Certificate including Applied and Vocational Programmes, 'A' Levels, NCVA Level Certificate or equivalent)
- ☐ Technical or Vocational qualification (Completed Apprenticeship, NCVA Level 2/3 Certificate, Teagasc Certificate/Diploma or equivalent)
- ☐ Both Upper Secondary and Technical or Vocational qualification
- ☐ Non-Degree (National Certificate, Diploma NCEA/Institute of Technology or equivalent, Nursing Diploma)
- ☐ Primary Degree (Third Level Bachelor's Degree)
- ☐ Professional Qualification (of Degree status at least)
- ☐ Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma
- ☐ Postgraduate Degree (Masters)
- ☐ Doctorate (Ph.D) or higher
- ☐ Other
- ☐ I prefer not to say

14. If not listed above or you selected other, please specify here.

15. Approximately how many hours per week do you volunteer with Citywise Education?

- I volunteer less than 5 hours per week []
- I volunteer between 5 and 10 hours per week []
- I volunteer more than 10 hours and less than 20 hours per week []
- I volunteer more than 35 hours per week []

16. How long have you volunteered with Citywise Education?

- Under 12 months []
- Over 12 months and up to three years []
- Over three years and less than five years []
- Five years or more []