



A REAL WORLD STUDY TO
LOOK AT USING THE
MENTAL TOUGHNESS
QUESTIONNAIRE TO
IDENTIFY AT RISK PUPILS
- DEEP SUPPORT PILOT
PROJECT 2008

Background

All Saints Catholic High School in Knowsley have taken a number of proactive steps forward following on from the Excellence in Cities programme, launched in March 1999. This has included introducing a proactive learning mentor system, the introduction of emotional literacy and transition programmes, amongst other changes. In 2007, the school was chosen to represent the Northwest as a hub school and to build on their existing work to take forward the Deep Support Pilot Project (DSPP).

The aims of the DSPP

By building on the work of All Saints, the DSPP will be driven by the needs of the students in the cohort. An authentic needs-driven approach will aim to:

Increase the students' level of self-worth;

- Develop their levels of resilience so that they have greater influence over their futures within a changing world;
- Increase their aspirations;
- Enable the students to be involved in developing their learning programmes so that learning is relevant, engagement is maintained and potential is realised;
- Open doors of opportunity previously not considered.

Methodology

- Used a psychometric approach, using the Mental Toughness Questionnaire, MTQ48, to assess pupils for resilience and emotional sensitivity
- Pilot carried out with Year 7 pupils, all 181 pupils
- All pupils received feedback
- A smaller cohort of 39 chosen for pilot interventions
- Parents/carers and form tutors of smaller cohort assessed for resilience and emotional sensitivity
- Tutor training

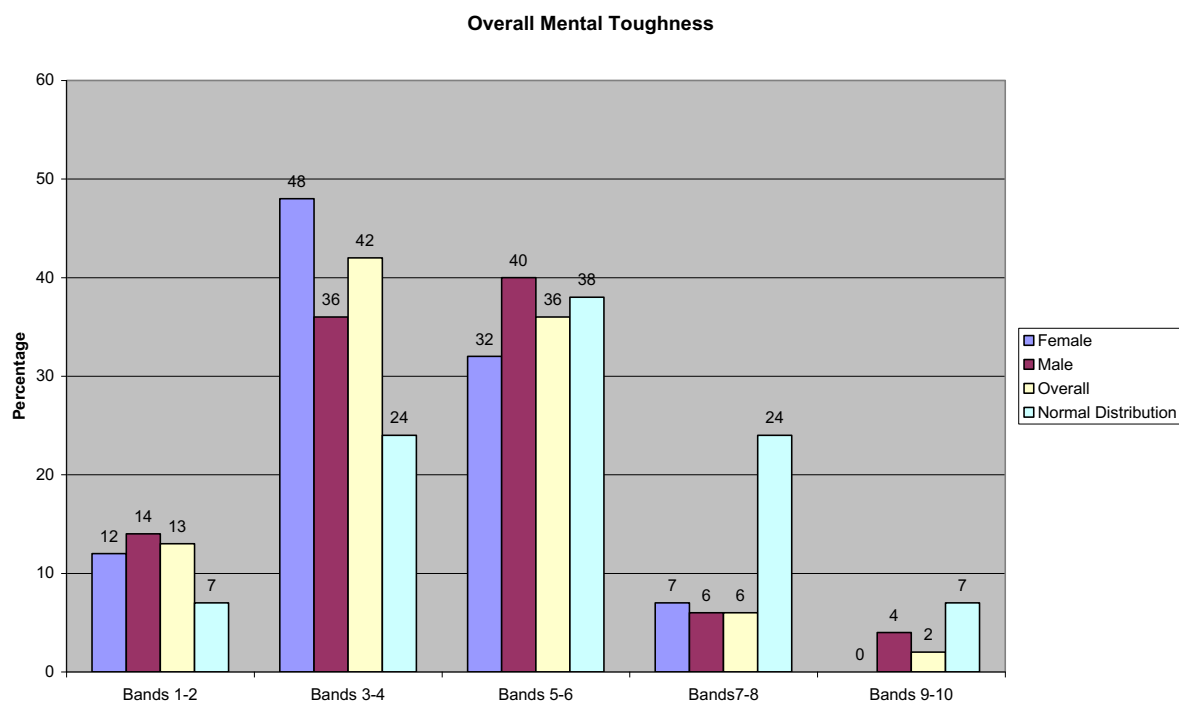
The work was conducted under the expert guidance of Dr Peter Clough, University of Hull, who is also the developer of the Mental Toughness concept and measure.

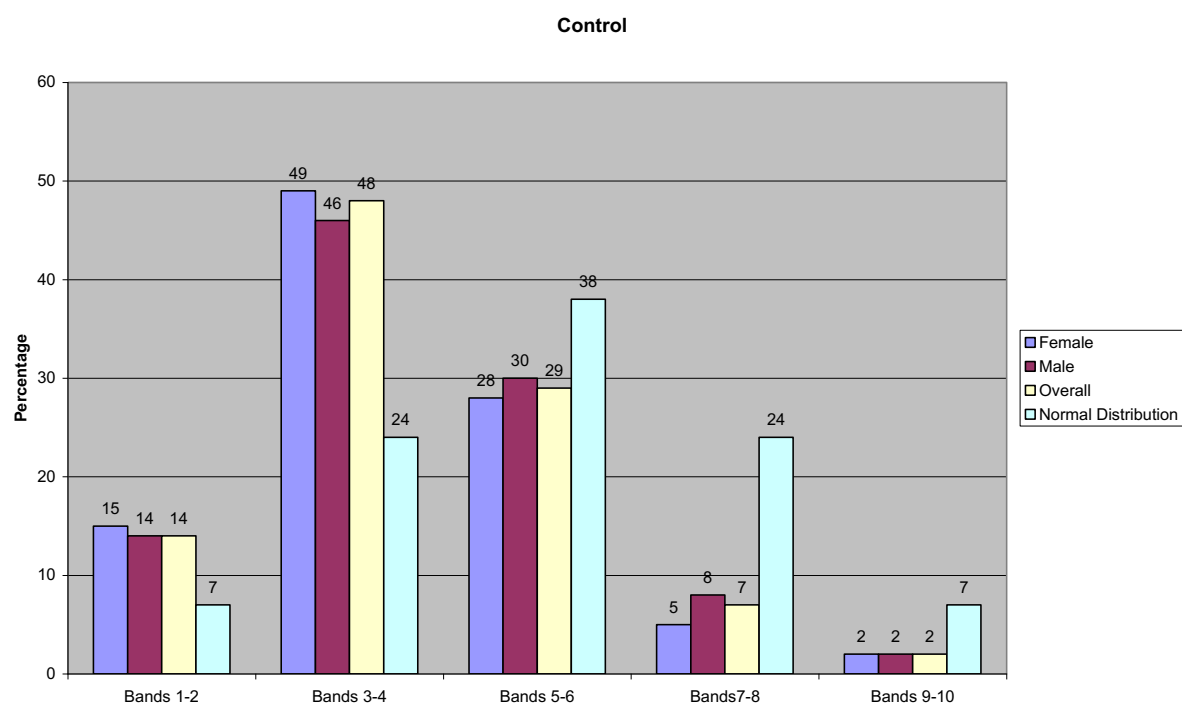
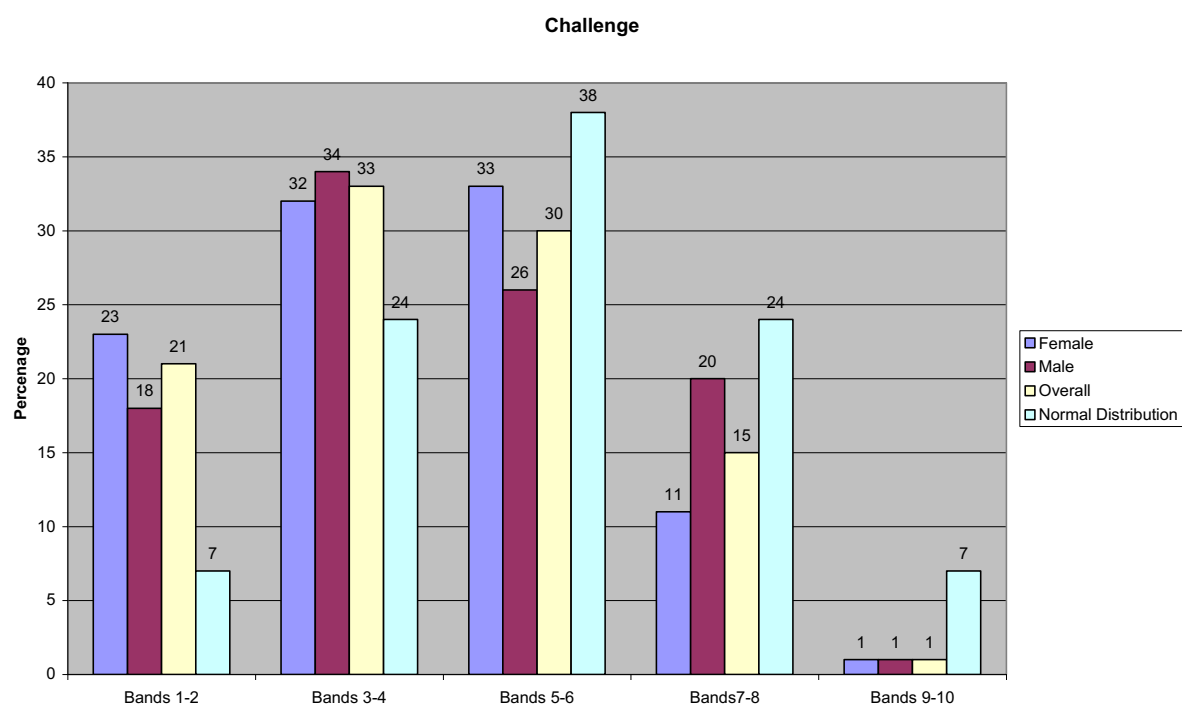
Key Messages:

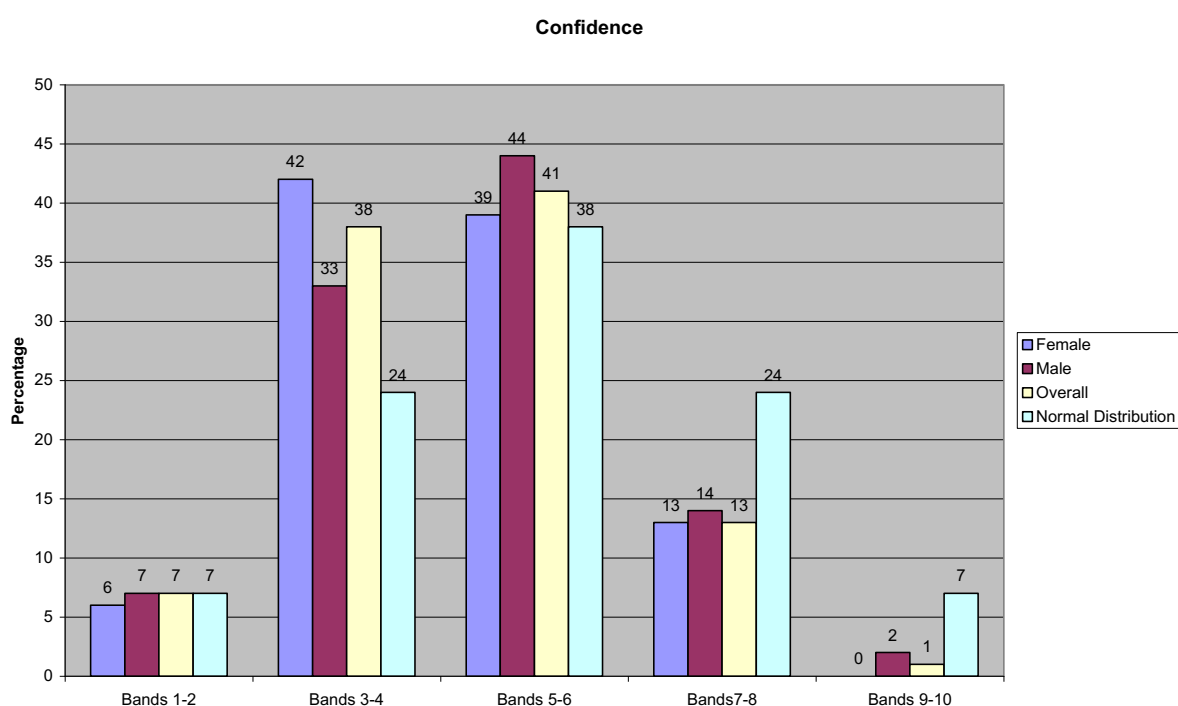
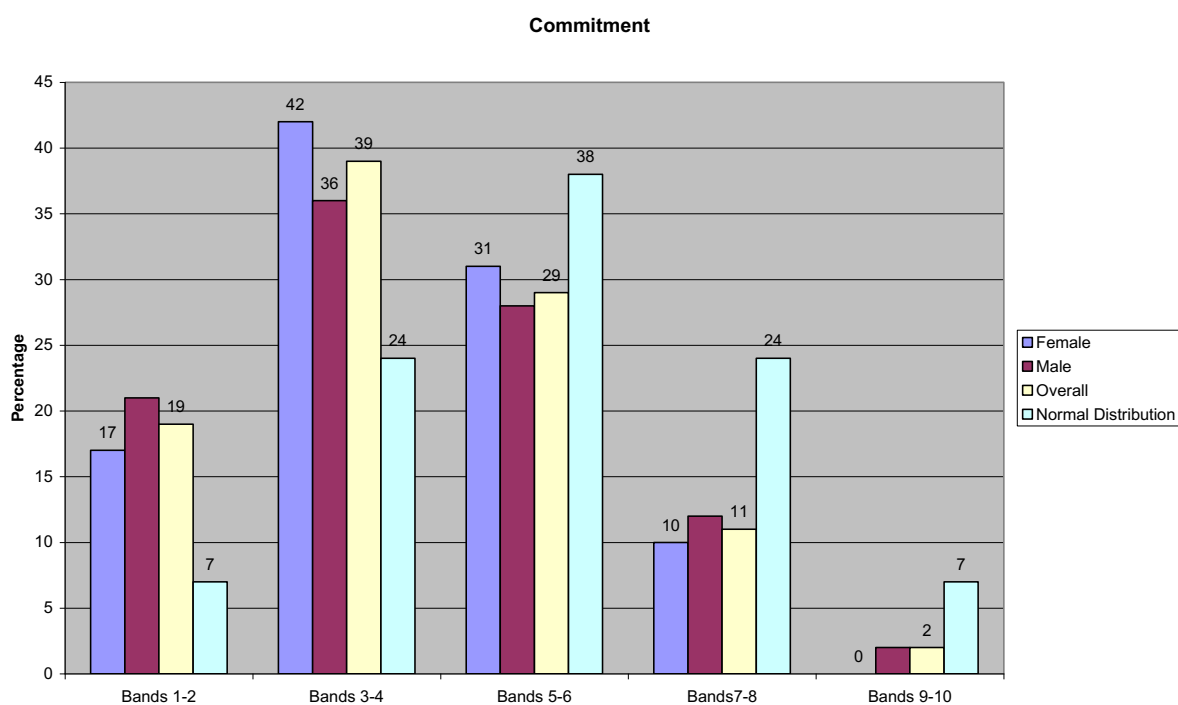
- Mental toughness is associated with educational attainment levels, and performance and behaviour in the classroom.
- A person's mental toughness can be developed.
- It would appear that the traditional methods of teaching and learning do not support the development of mental toughness.
- Incorporating the development of mental toughness into the curriculum has implications for workforce remodelling.
- To implement an authentic needs-driven approach to the DSPP for families, provision will need to be flexible, barrier-free and pro-active.
- Training and CPD will be fundamental to the success of implementing this model of transforming learning. The model is underpinned by coaching and mentoring skills.

Next Steps

- Facilitate whole family involvement
- Identify interventions based on need
- Inform commissioning board of research findings
- Evaluate the impact of interventions on the child and family
- Roll out learning from project to other Learning Centres in Knowsley







The pilot cohort were selected from those pupils scoring in stens 3-4. It was felt that these pupils were those not already picked up by other methods and receiving support elsewhere. Interventions are likely to make a significant impact on these pupils.

Stens 3-4

