

Evaluation Report of LookOut! Alcohol

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"I think it has changed my pupils' judgement and their understanding of illness and alcohol."

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Overview and key findings

The LookOut! Alcohol project, an alcohol education tool aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils in Lancashire's primary schools, was selected as a Mentor UK CHAMP Awards (Young People's Involvement section) winner in 2008.

This evaluation, which was conducted between March 2010 and November 2010, is undertaken as part of the work carried out under the award and aims to identify the impact of involvement in the project on young people in terms of four aims:

- working in conjunction with young people
- promoting the health and well-being of primary school children by providing information about alcohol in a fun and informative way
- supporting teachers in delivering age appropriate alcohol education through a cross-curricular approach
- providing information for parents and carers to use in the home

This report will also evaluate feedback from teachers involved in the project.

Section 1 of the evaluation will provide background information on the project and the context in which it operates. Section 2 describes the methodology used during the evaluation. Section 3 discusses the findings of the report and Section 4 provides the evaluator's recommendations. Section 5 of the report offers a selection of quotes from young people who participated in the evaluation.

The key findings of this evaluation are:

- There is a significant need for alcohol education for young people in Lancashire and the LookOut! Alcohol project is helping to address this need.
- LookOut! Alcohol's approach of promoting the health and well-being of young people through fun, interactive activities, appears to work well in engaging young people's interest in alcohol education.

- The central involvement of young people at each stage of the development of LookOut!
Alcohol is empowering and works to ensure young people's engagement with the project.

Section 1: Background

In 2008, LookOut! Alcohol won a CHAMP award in the Young People's Involvement category. The award has been significant in supporting LookOut! Alcohol to continue developing their work with young people and assisted them in securing a further two years' funding.

LookOut! Alcohol was developed by the Lancashire Young Persons Alcohol and Tobacco Team. The Young Persons Alcohol and Tobacco Team is a strategic early intervention and prevention service, based in Lancashire Trading Standards and funded by Lancashire Drug Alcohol Action Team. The service takes a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach to tackling young people's alcohol and tobacco misuse and its impact on young people and communities throughout Lancashire.

The team aims to develop and raise awareness of the effects of alcohol and tobacco, providing information, advice and guidance. Through consultation and research, the team engages with young people, parents and retailers in identifying, promoting and developing messages and materials.

The team works closely with Lancashire County Council's Teacher Adviser for Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Education. The school adviser provides advice and information about substance misuse to schools, and offers support to schools via policy development and training for the school workforce and members of the school community including parents and carers. The LookOut! Alcohol website was a joint project. While the service is based physically in Preston, the LookOut! Alcohol project, covers the whole of Lancashire and is aimed at all primary schools in the county.

The tool takes the form of a website with an interactive game for young people and resources for adults. The website is used independently and flexibly by teachers in schools and is mostly used with pupils in upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). LookOut! Alcohol aims to develop pupils' knowledge in relation to alcohol alongside their attitudes and life skills. The Young Persons Alcohol and Tobacco Team have also established a LookOut! Tobacco website that is also aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils and operates in the same way as LookOut! Alcohol.

From the outset, primary school pupils from within the county have been directly involved in the

development of the website in a range of ways. Young people worked with the project's staff during the initial design of the website and their ideas were central to the tool that was eventually produced. For example, young people came up with the idea of the website being set in a futuristic city and for the inclusion of aliens. Young people, as well as their teachers, are able to submit evaluations of the project via the website. Schools who use the website have been actively involved in evaluating the website on an on-going basis and the results of these evaluations have been used to further develop the tool. For example, during the period of the evaluation, some of the prize money LookOut! Alcohol received from the CHAMP awards, has been used to update the website in a number of ways including introducing a facility to turn off the website's background music and a wider range of facts and links built into the game. New areas have also been added that explore anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and road safety in relation to alcohol consumption as well as providing the Chief Medical Officer's guidance.

The LookOut! Alcohol website comprises of three distinct sections aimed at:

- young people aged 7-11
- Key Stage 2 teachers
- parents and carers

The section of the website aimed at young people is based around the interactive game, which allows young people to explore a futuristic city, answering alcohol related questions as they progress. As a reward for correctly answering questions, pupils are able to collect photographs of friendly aliens. When pupils answer questions, they have a chance to read more detailed information about the subject with some questions having information or worksheets linked to the answers.

The section of the website aimed at Key Stage 2 teachers contains six lesson plans, each aimed at either Years 3 and 4 or Years 5 and 6. Each lesson plan contains an objective and suggested activities, with some plans also containing extension activities and worksheets. The lesson plans take a cross-curricular approach to alcohol education; for example addressing alcohol through history, literacy and ICT as well as PSHE education. Parental homework activities are also available on teacher section of the website to support work undertaken in school. Each homework activity

contains notes explaining the task and gives advice on how parents and carers can support young people in relation to alcohol education.

The area of the website for parents and carers addresses the issue of when and how they discuss alcohol consumption with the children they care for. It also contains a link to the guide 'Clear: Alcohol, you and young children'.

1.1 The context in which the project works

Lancashire is a region in the North West of England that covers 3075 sq. km., consisting of rural and urban areas. The socio-economic demography of the county is very varied. According to the Lancashire 'Health and Wellbeing Summary Traffic Lights for Districts and Unitaries, 2010', six of the 14 districts and unitary authorities within Lancashire score *significantly worse* than the national average in relation to adult binge drinking and eleven areas score *significantly worse* than the national average in relation to hospital stays for alcohol-related harm. Meanwhile, three of the districts within Lancashire score *significantly better* than the national average in terms of alcohol related hospital stays¹

Since the early 1990s, the number of alcohol related deaths in the UK has risen constantly² and in the year 2007/08 there were approximately 863,000 alcohol related hospital admissions in England; a 69% increase on the year 2002/2003³ and the cost of alcohol related harm to the NHS across the whole of England was estimated at £2.7 billion in 2006/07 prices⁴. In Lancashire, all but one of the 14 authorities in the county were ranked in the top 50% of local authorities in terms of the instances of alcohol related deaths. Blackpool Unitary Authority has the highest rate of male alcohol related deaths in England.

Data from the Office for National Statistics, indicates that alcohol related deaths in England and Wales are 45% higher in areas of deprivation. For men living in these areas alcohol related deaths

1 Available at http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/areas/wellbeing.asp Accessed 21 October 2010

2 Available at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=1091> Accessed 15 November 2010

3 Available at <http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/assets/files/SMART/Don%20Lavoie%20Presentation.pdf> Accessed 15 November

4 [The cost of alcohol harm to the NHS in England: An update to the Cabinet Office \(2003\) study](#) (London: Department of Health) 2008, p2.

are five times higher than for people living in the least deprived areas and for women they are three times higher⁵. The traffic light data for Lancashire shows six of the districts within the county score significantly worse than the national average in terms of general deprivation as well as the proportion of children living in poverty⁶. National trends are reflected in the county with the three districts that have lower than average hospital admissions also experiencing less deprivation than average (although some districts in the county with low levels of deprivation still have high levels of hospital admissions)⁷.

Misuse of alcohol by young people, as opposed to the general population, is recognised nationally as a serious problem. The amount of alcohol young people, on average, report drinking has increased from 6.4 units week in 1994 to 12.7 units a week in 2007 with data from 2001 showing that young people tend to consume the units they drink over a fewer number of days than adults⁸. The impact on the health and well-being of young people who abuse alcohol includes: involvement in crime, engaging in risky sexual behaviour, mental health problems and poorer school performance and attendance⁹. A clear link can be made between alcohol consumption and teenage conception. Recent research by the North West Public Health Observatory found that in electoral wards with the highest levels of alcohol related hospital admissions, the rate of conception for girls aged 15-17 years of age was 41 per 1000. This compared to 34 per 1000 in electoral wards with the lowest levels of alcohol related hospital admissions¹⁰.

Whilst the above shows a need for interventions that support young people in relation to alcohol, and it is widely believed by professionals, young people and their parents that schools need to place alcohol education higher up their agenda, there is no general agreement as to what approaches work best.

5 Health Statistics Quarterly (London: Office of National Statistics) Spring 2007 No 33 Available at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_health/hsq33web.pdf Accessed 15 November

6 Available at http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/areas/wellbeing.asp Accessed 21 October 2010

7 Available at http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/areas/wellbeing.asp Accessed 21 October 2010

8 *Impact of Alcohol Consumption on Young People: A Systematic Review of Published Reviews* (London: Department of Health) 2009

9 *Youth Alcohol Action Plan* (London: Department of Children, Families and Schools, Home Office and Department of Health) 2008. Available at <https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http://publications.education.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Cm%25207387.pdf&embedded=true&chrome=true> Accessed 20 November 2010

10 Bellis MA, Morleo M, Tocque K et al. *Contributions of alcohol use to teenage pregnancy* (Liverpool: North West Public Health Observatory). 2009

However, recent guidance suggests it is important to start such work in primary schools, as the LookOut! Alcohol website does. For example in 2004, the then Department for Education and Skills, issued guidance stating alcohol education should start in primary schools before drinking patterns become established¹¹. Current NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) advice recommends that work done with children in schools 'should aim to encourage children not to drink, delay the age at which young people start drinking and reduce the harm it can cause among those who do drink.' It suggests this is done by increasing young people's knowledge about the physical, mental and social consequences of alcohol, providing opportunities to explore young people's attitudes towards and perceptions of alcohol, developing young people's coping skills and self-esteem and developing understanding of how others, including the media and peers, can influence alcohol consumption. NICE suggest this is done via a whole school approach, involving staff, parents and young people¹².

Involving parents in work with young people seems especially important as recent data shows 77% of young people would approach their parents for information about alcohol. This is compared to 75% who saw television as a source of information about alcohol and 63% who saw teachers as a source of information¹³. However for certain groups of young people it is clear that parents are not necessarily a key source of information. According to the report 'Children, Young People and Alcohol', young people from minority ethnic backgrounds, or who lived in households in social gradients C1, C2, D and E, are significantly less likely than average to have had discussions with their parent about alcohol. The same report provides data to show that Asian parents, and Muslim parents in particular, were less likely than other parents to report feeling very comfortable talking to their children about alcohol (66%, compared with 83% on average)¹⁴.

This research is relevant to the context LookOut! Alcohol works in because, as discussed above, there are areas of high deprivation and poverty in Lancashire. In addition, data from the Office of

11 *Drugs: Guidance for School* (London: Department for Education and Skills) 2004

12 *Interventions in schools to prevent and reduce alcohol use among children and young people* (London: National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) 2007

13 Fuller, E. and Sanchez, M., *Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England in 2009* (London: NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care) 2010. Available at <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/sdd09fullreport> accessed 20 November 2010

14 *Children, young people and alcohol* (London: Department for Children, Schools and Families) 2010

National Statistics, shows that while Lancashire as a whole has a slightly higher proportion of people from White British ethnic backgrounds than is average in England, people who define themselves as “Asian or Asian British” make up 6% of the county's population, which is slightly above the national average. This data applies mainly to people living in Preston and four districts in East Lancashire¹⁵.

It is clear from the above research and data that significant work needs to be undertaken with young people in Lancashire in relation to alcohol education and that any tools used need to be flexible given the socio-economic variations seen across the county and indeed a variety of work is being undertaken by a number of agencies across the county. In addition, projects such as LookOut! Alcohol are especially pertinent to specific groups of young people in the county.

¹⁵ Available at http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/monitors/popethnic.asp
Accessed 20 November 2010

Section 2: Methodology

The evaluator conducted one focus group in each of four primary schools across Lancashire. The website is promoted to all primary schools in the county and all schools in the county have been invited to the 'Legal Drugs: The World of Alcohol and Tobacco' conferences run by the Alcohol and Tobacco Team and Lancashire County Council's Teacher Adviser for Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco education, which looked at the both of the LookOut! websites. The schools selected for the focus groups were all ones that had participated in the conference and who were therefore known to actively use the website. The schools were also selected, in conjunction with the team and the teacher adviser, to give, as far as possible a representative sample of the county's schools. An overview of the schools involved is given below:

School 1: School 1 is in Central Lancashire and is an average sized primary school. It is situated in an area with higher than average levels of social and economic disadvantage and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than usual. The school also has a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small number of pupils coming from minority ethnic backgrounds. The young people who took part in the focus group had used the website on a one-off basis. Other young people in the school had previously used the website in conjunction with the available resources.

School 2: School 2 is also situated in Central Lancashire and is a smaller than average primary school. The area served by the school faces slight social disadvantage and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is just above the national average. Most pupils at the school are White British and have English as their first language however there are a few pupils at the school who have English as an additional language. Pupils had used the LookOut! Alcohol website on a number of occasions and had done work around the website content. They had also used some of the teacher and parent resources on the website. Some of the pupils who were involved in the focus group had attended 'Legal Drugs: The World of Alcohol and Tobacco' conference and had participated in a number of in school activities as a result of this, including a whole school assembly and presentations to other Key Stage 2 classes.

School 3: School 3 is a smaller than average primary school in the East of the county. Around a

fifth of pupils are of Asian heritage, with the majority of these pupils having English as an additional language. The number of pupils at the school who are entitled to free school meals is lower than average while the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties/disabilities is higher than average. The young people who took part in the focus group had used the interactive game on the website on a number of occasions.

School 4: School 4 is situated in the North of Lancashire and is an average sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and there are very few pupils who have English as an additional language. The school also has a lower proportion of pupils claiming free school meals or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is average. However the school does have a higher than average proportion of pupils who are in the care of the local authority. This school had used the website on an on-going basis and had used some of the teacher and parent resources available. School councillors had also done presentations for younger children in the school after attending the 'Legal Drugs: The World of Alcohol and Tobacco' conference.

In each school, 15 young people participated in the focus group. In three of the schools, the pupils involved were Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. At the fourth school, Year 4 pupils were involved in the focus group, along with two Year 6 pupils, as the school had directed the website at Year 4 while the Year 6 pupils had attended the 'Legal Drugs: The World of Alcohol and Tobacco' conference. Each focus group lasted for around one hour. All quotes used from these focus groups have been anonymised and all the young people who participated gave permission for their quotes and ideas to be used.

The evaluator also interviewed a teacher at each of the four schools involved in the focus groups. The teachers interviewed were those who were currently using LookOut! Alcohol within school. A guided interview structure was used. Three of these interviews were conducted face-to-face and one over the telephone, due to teacher illness. Follow up interviews were conducted with three of these teachers at the start of the next academic year also using a guided interview structure; unfortunately one teacher left their post during the period the evaluation was taking place and so no follow up interview was possible. One follow up interview had to be done via email due to pressures on the teacher's time.

It is important to note that during the process of the evaluation, many methodological difficulties were faced. Due to staff illness, turn over and the high workloads of all the teachers and schools involved, it took many months to conduct all the interviews and focus groups and they were consequently carried out over a long period of time, which was far from ideal. Interviews in schools 1, 2 and 3 were carried out during March and April 2010 but, due to another school unavoidably withdrawing from the evaluation, the interview and focus group at School 4 were not completed until July 2010. As a consequence of this initial delay, the follow up interviews were not carried out at regular intervals.

The impact of the above delays were less significant than they might have been as each school uses the website and its resources differently and at different times throughout the year to fit in with their own curriculum. For example, some schools use the website on a one-off basis while others use it on an on-going basis. Some schools use the website's lesson plans to deliver alcohol education while other schools use the website as part of their own curriculum. However these variations did present other methodological challenges as they meant it was not possible to collect comparable, quantitative data on pupils' knowledge, attitudes and skills in relation to alcohol before and after the tool was used in schools. It was also not possible to identify a control group of young people not accessing the resource as the website is promoted to all primary schools in the county.

Questionnaires were sent to teachers at each of the schools who had attended the 'Legal Drugs: The World of Alcohol and Tobacco' conferences and follow up telephone calls were made to each of these school reminding them about the questionnaire. However, there was an exceptionally low response rate and so these results are not included in the evaluation.

The evaluator would like to thank all those who contributed to the evaluation, particularly the staff who gave up their time to answer questions and to all the young people who participated in the focus groups and who shared their ideas, thoughts and experiences clearly and enthusiastically and who had put so much thought into what they were going to say.

Section 3: Findings

3.1: Working in conjunction with young people

As suggested by the NICE guidelines discussed above¹⁶, the Young Persons Alcohol and Tobacco Team and the Teacher Adviser have worked in conjunction with young people from the outset of the project. The website was designed in conjunction with young people from schools within the county and the game design is based on their ideas. For example, the Project Manager reported that it was young people involved in the initial consultation who wanted the website to be set in a futuristic city as they thought this would mean it was more likely to appeal to all young people in the county because it would not look like it was set in a particular area of Lancashire. The young people consulted were also keen for the places that are visited in the game to be places young people could relate to: a school, a youth centre, a supermarket and a home environment.

It was clear to the evaluator that the participation of young people in the design of the website had worked to increase the effectiveness of the tool. The teachers who participated in the interviews all praised the design of the website and discussed the fact they thought it had helped their pupils to engage more fully with the tool:

“My class really like the appearance.”

“The kids really like the appearance of the website and the fact it ties in with the Tobacco one.”

Young people have been involved in the development of the website on an on-going basis. As discussed above, the Young Persons Alcohol and Tobacco Team and the Teacher Adviser have run conferences, 'Legal Drugs: The World of Alcohol and Tobacco', aimed at teachers and young people from across the county and at which the LookOut! Alcohol and LookOut! Tobacco websites were discussed and shared. Teachers and pupils took resources away from the conferences and made pledges regarding how they would follow up on the conference in their schools.

During the interviews, teachers spoke highly of these conferences and said they had helped the young people in their classes to feel as though they were 'part of' the project and as though they were 'listened to'. A number of the teachers commented that it was very unusual for young people

¹⁶ *Interventions in schools to prevent and reduce alcohol use among children and young people* (London: National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) 2007

to be invited to conferences with their teachers but that they thought the model had worked very well to motivate young people. Teachers felt that pupils were more 'open' to the messages of LookOut! Alcohol as a result of being invited to participate in these conferences. One teacher commented that:

“The training was very good. The children loved it...It's a shame there aren't more [conferences].”

Teachers also reported that they felt confident in using the website with the young people in their classes after attending the conference and that they did not feel they needed any more training or guidance in order to use the tool.

In the focus groups, young people discussed their participation in these conferences with enthusiasm and confidence and obvious pride that they had been involved. They also discussed the activities they had run for other young people in their own schools and it was clear that they had felt they had gained in confidence and self-esteem from their involvement in these activities and from working in partnership with their teachers:

“We did an assembly for the other children...”

“We went to each class [in Key Stage 2] and talked about the conference.”

While only four pupils had attended the conference from each school, other participants in each of the focus groups discussed the fact that young people had attended the conferences with teachers and had brought what they had learned back to school. Again it was clear to the evaluator that this was seen as an important and central element of the tool by the young people involved.

It was noticeable to the evaluator that the young people involved in the focus groups felt that any opinions they gave in relation to the project would be listened to and potentially acted upon. For example, participants in each of the focus groups were keen to discuss ways they thought the game could be further developed and for these to be passed on.

3.2: Promoting the health and well-being of primary school children by providing information about alcohol in a fun and informative way

All four teachers interviewed said that their pupils found the LookOut! Alcohol website 'fun' and 'engaging' while a number of teachers reported that their pupils 'love it' and that it was 'geared up for the right age group'.

The teachers' perception was that pupils enjoyed using the website because of the interactive game and the reward of photographing the aliens. Teachers also stated that the 'nice, bright' colours used across the website helped to engage and maintain pupils' interest as it is similar to websites they use at home for fun. All four teachers reported that they believe the extent to which pupils enjoy using the website increased their engagement with alcohol education. The teachers interviewed also reported that the similarities between the LookOut! Alcohol and LookOut! Tobacco websites are helpful in engaging pupils' interest and enthusiasm.

While all the teachers felt the 'fun' format of the website helped to promote the well-being and health of pupils in their classes, a number of the teachers raised an issue in relation to the impact of the website for some young people. They had observed that a small number of pupils guessed at the answers to questions so they could move on to collect the photographs of the aliens. The teachers felt that, for these pupils, this limited the impact of the website because they were able to progress through the stages without necessarily developing their knowledge, attitudes or understanding in relation to alcohol. This issue was also picked up on by young people in one of the focus groups. One teacher suggested:

“Multiple choice questions – not just yes and no answers - or a penalty for getting so many questions wrong [would improve the website].”

As will be discussed below, an increased uptake of the other resources available on the LookOut! Alcohol website would also ensure that teachers are able to assess the extent to which pupils have taken in the information presented to them on the website.

The vast majority of pupils who participated in the focus groups also reported that they enjoyed using the website:

“I think it's fantastic because you get to collect monsters.”

“I like collecting the aliens [best].”

“I like taking the pictures [best].”

“I think it is very memorable.”

“I’ll play it again when I get home tonight.”

Many of the young people in the focus groups linked their enjoyment of website to the information and questions:

“It’s okay because it has games *and* questions.”

“[I like] searching for more information best...”

“Answering the questions is the best bit.”

“Good as a game because it makes you want to learn more about alcohol.”

Both the teachers and young people who took part in the evaluation commented on the ease with which they are able to access and navigate the LookOut! Alcohol website. All the young people who took part in the focus groups were keen to express to the evaluator how easy the website is easy to use, excepting the difficulties discussed above some pupils face in accessing the text. The extent to which young people find the website readily accessible can be seen in the following quotes, which were repeated by many young people:

“It’s really clear to use.”

“The buildings highlight when you hover over them; that’s helpful.”

“There are helpful characters who tell you what to do.”

The ease with which pupils are able to use the website was emphasised to the evaluator by the number of pupils who said they had used the website at home both on their own and with younger siblings, parents and grandparents.

The teachers interviewed by the evaluator also felt the website was 'easy' for them and their pupils to use. Teachers also reported that the ease with which pupils can access the website helps ensure they develop their knowledge and attitudes in relation to alcohol rather than just their ICT skills.

These views are reflected in the follow quotes from teachers:

“Once you go on it, you know what you are doing.”

“All my pupils can use alone.”

“[They] can go on individually and in pairs.”

“They need initial adult input but once they know what they are doing they are fine on it.’

It was notable to the evaluator that the website had promoted both the health and well-being of the young people who had participated in the project. Pupils in each of the focus groups were able to list some of the physical harm that can be caused by alcohol including:

“You can forget things.”

“You can choke.”

“If you drink too much it can cause cancer.”

“It can kill you.”

They were also able to explain the specific physical risks involved in under-age drinking:

“...being younger it can seriously damage your body.”

The young people in each focus group attributed this understanding to their use of LookOut! Alcohol.

In each of the focus groups, young people were able to describe and discuss potential social impacts of drinking alcohol in more detail than they were able to describe the physical effect and were very confident in doing so. In each group, pupils explained that alcohol can impact on your behaviour, which in turn can impact on your relationships with other people and can get you in trouble with the police (young people gave the examples of fighting and drink-driving):

“Don't drink alcohol if you know it is going to affect your behaviour.”

“You can get put in prison for drinking too much.”

Young people in each focus group, and especially in the focus groups in School 2 and School 4 where the young people had engaged in follow up work after using the website, also discussed the financial implications of excessive drinking and discussed not being able to afford rent and food or having money for other 'fun' things if you drink excessively:

“[If you drink too much] you can't pay your bills...”

“[If I drink too much] then I won't have enough for my house and car and rent...”

Again young people attributed this understanding to the work they had done in relation to LookOut! Alcohol.

Participants in each of the focus groups were able to confidently discuss the extent to which LookOut! Alcohol had changed their attitudes in relation to alcohol.

“I have learned that you need to measure the drink.”

“It will definitely make me not drink a lot now I know it can kill you.”

“I didn't think it was dangerous to drink before.”

A number of the young people explained that before taking part in the LookOut! Alcohol they thought “it was just a bad drink” and that it “could only make people ill” but that they now understood the importance of moderating what you drink:

“I've learned it's ok to drink a bit but don't have too much.”

“[Now]...I will only drink a small amount of alcohol [when I am older].”

There were however a very small number of focus group participants who displayed some confusion about the safety of alcohol:

“If you have one drink it can sometimes be helpful.”

“...I thought it was bad but it can sometimes help you.”

All four teachers interviewed were positive about the impact of the website on their young people. Two of the teachers in particular emphasised the importance for their pupils of having access to information from a good alcohol education tool. One of the teachers explained that she saw it as especially crucial for many young people who attend her school as their wider experiences do not provide them with any 'positive views' in relation to alcohol and result in them perceiving it either as 'very dangerous' or 'very cool'. This teacher felt the information available on the LookOut! Alcohol website presents pupils with a 'balanced view' of alcohol that they can engage with without the perceiving it as being the teacher 'telling them what to think'. A second teacher explained that having access to a well developed alcohol education tool enables schools to make their alcohol

education more effective in passing on messages about attitudes and behaviour in relation to alcohol than just listening to the teacher's explanation:

“ [It's] good to have information from another source...backs up what you are saying.”

In the interviews the teachers reflected that it is very difficult to assess the extent to which the tool had influenced their pupils' knowledge and attitudes. They reported that it was especially difficult to assess the extent to which these changes were long term because alcohol education has to fit into the whole curriculum, meaning that teachers do not always have time to revisit the work they have done in relation to alcohol. However, even with these reservations, teachers were overwhelmingly positive about the impact of LookOut! Alcohol on their pupils' knowledge and attitudes:

“It has definitely improved their knowledge.”

“[It has] consolidated their understanding of why they shouldn't drink *now*.”

“The website has changed their views on alcohol and the effects of alcohol. They realise what it can do.”

“It's made them realise that alcohol can lead to illness.”

“Yes, they are more informed and aware now.”

“I find it difficult to gauge [the impact]...but I feel overall it has a positive impact.”

3.3: Supporting teachers in delivering age appropriate alcohol education through a cross-curricular approach

In relation to the support offered to staff delivering alcohol education using the tool, the teachers who participated in the evaluation reported that they felt well placed and prepared to deliver alcohol education using LookOut! Alcohol. As discussed above in Section 3.1, a teacher and young people from each primary school in the county, had been given the opportunity to attend a conference organised by the Young Persons Alcohol and Tobacco Team and the Teacher Adviser where training had been given on using the website. All of the teachers interviewed felt they, as well as their pupils, had benefited from attending these conferences, and none of the them felt they

needed any more direct training on using LookOut! Alcohol.

However a number of teachers reported that a training guide would be useful for ensuring that other members of staff in their schools, who had not had the opportunity to attend one of the conferences, were fully aware of LookOut! Alcohol and felt confident in using the resource in their teaching:

“A guide about the lesson plans and homework [would be good]”

“A training guide for others in school to use [would be good]”

“More training would be appreciated. Not widely known in school. I use it because I went on the training course.”

These final points were reinforced by the fact three of the teachers interviewed said that they were the only member of staff to use the website in their school.

During the interviews teachers discussed how they used the website with the young people they teach. In general teachers reported using the website for whole class and partner work with some independent use of the website occurring although this was minimal, partly because pupils were encouraged to use the website at home.

In each of the focus groups, the young people discussed the information presented on the LookOut! Alcohol website. The vast majority of the young people felt the information was well tailored to Key Stage 2 pupils, and especially to pupils in upper Key Stage 2, as it taught them new knowledge and skills 'without going too far'. These views are reflected in the following quotes from young people:

“I think the information is good for our age.”

“I think it is okay because it teaches you about alcohol and the facts are great.”

“I think that there is the right information for our age.”

“It was really good for our age.”

While the majority of young people stated that they had learned a lot through using the website, there were a small number of young people who participated in the focus groups who felt that either more or less information would have been more appropriate.

In the interviews, teachers too felt that information available on the website was highly appropriate

for the young people the project is aimed at and that this had enabled their pupils to engage with and learn from the project. The teachers who participated in the interviews felt that the information was best suited for pupils in upper Key Stage 2:

“The information on the website is relevant for the age group.”

“We use it with years 5 and 6. We have used it with other years but they need more support. It's just right for years 5 and 6.”

While the teachers and young people involved in the evaluation felt that the right level of information was presented to them on the website, pupils in each of the focus groups raised the issue of accessing the text on the website. While all pupils felt the information was appropriate to their age group, some pupils said that the text was too difficult for them to access individually:

“There is too much text to read.”

“It would be better if it had easier words and help with the words.”

This issue was also raised in the teacher interviews. Some teachers had observed that for some pupils the difficulty of the text limited the impact of the website:

“I have to put lower ability pupils in a pair with higher ability pupils so they can access it.”

Other teachers felt that even for pupils whose reading age allows them to access the text:

“Some of the paragraphs are a bit long. Most in Year 5 and 6 can read it but they might just skim it.”

The teachers suggested that a solution to this problem would be a voice over that reads the text aloud. The Young Persons Alcohol and Tobacco Team explained in an interview that the suggestion of a voice over had been raised in a previous evaluation but so far the costs had proved too prohibitive to allow this to happen.

When discussing the teacher resources and homework activities available on the website, two of the teachers reported they had not used the resources at all and two reported having used the 'broken record technique' resource with their classes (both of these teachers indicated they intended to use other resources from the website now as these had been 'very easy' to implement and the young people in their classes had enjoyed it). The main reason the teachers gave for not using the teaching resources available on the website was that they had many pressures on their

time and that they had lots of curriculum coverage to fit into 'too little' time and so they were unable to work through all the resources. Teachers also said that while they remembered the website in between each time they worked alcohol education with their class, they tended to forget about the resources. All four teachers felt that reminders would be helpful in ensuring they used them. Some teachers had used their own activities based on the work pupils had done on the website: for example one teacher had put pupils in pairs to make posters based on the information they had read on the website, which they then presented to the class. Some schools had used the website as part of a school initiative, such as Healthy Schools Week, and so had fitted it in around other planned activities.

Teachers and pupils both felt that the information presented on the website was age appropriate and teachers felt well placed to use the website with their classes although they felt the amount and difficulty of text involved in the game made it difficult for some pupils to access and benefit from. The teachers involved in the evaluation were not generally using the teaching and homework resources available on the website and this limits the extent to which the project can impact on young people, especially in relation to developing their skills resisting peer pressure.

Section 3.4: Providing information for parents and carers to use in the home

Young people in each of the focus groups said that they had used the LookOut! Alcohol website at home. Young people had used the website with a range of relatives including siblings, parents and grandparents as well as with friends.

Young people gave a range of different reasons for using the website at home including: wanting to collect all the aliens and wanting friends and siblings to enjoy the game and to be more aware of alcohol. When discussing using the website with adults at home some young people again said because they wanted to play the game again while other said it was because their parents had asked them what they had been doing at school that day. Some young people said they used the website with their parents because they were worried about the amount their parents drank or how they drank. Three of the teachers interviewed discussed encouraging their pupils to use the website at home. For example one school had put a link to LookOut! Alcohol on their school website homepage and another school had sent home LookOut! Alcohol bookmarks with each child in Key Stage 2.

However, although young people use the website at home and are actively encouraged to do so by their teachers, as discussed above none of the schools involved in the evaluation had specifically provided pupils with the homework activities or directed parents to them. These homework activities reinforce the learning pupils undertake on the website and the learning set out in the lesson plans. They provide pupils with an opportunity to practise techniques for resisting peer pressure and allow parents to see what messages are being taught to children in school. As pupils and parents involved in the evaluation were not being exposed to these resources, the impact of LookOut! Alcohol on the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to alcohol was not as great as it might have been.

Section 4: Recommendations and further work

- The LookOut! Alcohol intervention is a popular, accessible, flexible and engaging tool for teaching primary aged pupils about sensible alcohol use. The evidence discussed in this evaluation supports the aim of LookOut! Alcohol for their tool to be used in all primary schools in the county and beyond.
- Teachers and young people in each of the schools involved in the evaluation, raised the issue of the difficulties some pupils have in accessing the text on the website. LookOut! Alcohol staff have previously investigated funding a voice over for the website and so far the costs this would involved have proved prohibitive. However given the importance placed on the issue by teachers and young people alike, it would be beneficial if they were able to continue investigating possible funding.
- While teachers reported feeling confident in using the website, uptake of the teaching resources available on the LookOut! Alcohol website among those participating in the evaluation was minimal. A training guide, focusing on these lesson plans and homework activities, would be helpful for ensuring staff take up these resources and in supporting schools to develop a whole school approach to alcohol education. Such a guide would work to increase the impact of the project especially in relation to pupils' attitudes and behaviour in relation to alcohol.
- The young people and members of staff who attended the conferences run by the Young Person's Alcohol and Tobacco Team and the Teacher Adviser, appreciated and benefited from the opportunities it had provided them with. The young people involved felt listened to and involved and had apparently gained confidence through the follow up work they did in school alongside their teachers. The teachers involved felt confident in using the LookOut! Alcohol website with their classes.

It would be beneficial if the Young Person's Alcohol and Tobacco Team and the Teacher Adviser, had the resources and funding to enable them to run future conferences of this nature in order to train more school staff in how to effectively use both the website and lesson and homework resources and to ensure pupils in subsequent year groups remain

engaged with the project.

- While young people in each of the focus groups were able to discuss the physical and social impacts of alcohol and discussed attitudinal changes they attributed to the using website, it is not possible at this stage to draw any firm conclusions about LookOut! Alcohol's long term impact on behaviour and attitudes.

It would be very informative to conduct a longer term study, tracking young people from before they start their involvement with the website , through their involvement in the website and their transition from primary to secondary school.

Section 5: Pupil suggestions for the website:

Pupils made a number of recommendations for making the interactive game better. A selection of these are given below:

- At the end you could be able to play with the aliens.
- You could get a certificate to print out when you have completed all the levels.
- When you finish the game you could get to print off an alien to colour in.
- If you get a certain number of questions right, you could unlock a new level or a new alien.
- An alcohol website could be made for secondary school pupils.

Pupils also suggested other websites that could be added to the LookOut! Alcohol and LookOut! Tobacco websites. Their main suggestions were:

- A website on healthy eating.
- A website on road safety.
- A website on stranger danger.
- A website about being safe on-line.
- A website about illegal drugs