



First Give



**Impact
Report
2023**



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Introduction

Leading an organisation like First Give is an immense privilege. Every day the team and I are witness to inspiring, creative and compassionate acts carried out by young people across the country. This report is a snapshot of moments, stories, and the varied outcomes that the First Give programme inspires. It is not big enough to hold the full impact of the work, but it does provide examples to motivate and drive us forward.

And as we move into the 2023/24 academic year, that is exactly what we intend to do. Drive forward. As we approach our tenth year, we have already started a full strategic review. We are excited about what new projects and opportunities this might lead to. But for now, let's reflect on the year just past.

First Give grew again this year, delivering 196 programmes across England and Wales. This meant reaching almost 36,000 young people – all of whom were given the opportunity to reflect on the issues affecting our communities; to connect with change-makers in the charity sector; and to take action themselves to support the causes they care about.

Attending First Give Finals and seeing the programme in action is an absolute highlight of working at First Give. It is a reminder of how much the programme benefits young people, their schools and of course the charities that young people choose to champion. And so, if you are reading this and want a dose of positivity and hope, why not get in contact. We are always looking for members of the community to join First Give Finals to sit on the judging panel.

Thank you to all of our school, funding and charity partners for another fantastic year. We look forward to working with you in 2023/24 to continue to inspire, motivate and equip young people to give back to their community.



Louisa Searle

Director

Who is First Give?

Since 2014 First Give has been working in partnership with secondary schools to inspire and empower young people to take action to make a positive change in society.

Our work inspires and equips children to take action to support the causes that they care about. We believe in their ability to make a positive difference now, but we also aim to inspire a habit of service and giving for life.

Our year in numbers

196
total completed programmes

35,600
total participating students

31
new school partnerships

175
winning charities

£196,000
granted to charities

£82,081
raised by students

What are the top social issues that young people care about?

The top three social issues selected by students (based on winning charities) this year:

Health

Mental Health

Homelessness

From 2014 to now

1,124

Total number of First Give programmes completed

198,722

Total number of students who have completed the First Give programme

£1,275,500

Total amount in grants donated to charities

The First Give programme structure

The main way that we aim to achieve impact is through our innovative schools programme. In each partner school, a full year group take part.



1 Learn

Students learn about social issues in their communities and choose the issues which are important to them.



2 Research

Students research charities working in their communities and as a class, choose one to represent.



3 Meet

Charities are invited in to meet the class, so that students can learn more about their work and how to help them.



4 Plan & Deliver

Students plan and deliver social action activities (fundraising, awareness raising, volunteering) in support of their charities.



5 Present

Students learn public speaking skills and put together creative presentations about the work of their charity and what their class has done to support it.



6 School Final

One group is chosen to represent each class at your school's First Give Final. A panel of judges rate each class based on their social action and presentations. The winning class wins a First Give grant of £1,000 for their charity.

Outcomes

Outcomes for students

Increased awareness of social issues and charities

89% of students who presented at their Final reported improving awareness of social issues affecting their community

93% of students who presented at their Final reported improving awareness of how charities help people in their local community

Increased confidence to make a difference

80% of students who presented at their Final told us their ability to help others in their community had improved

Skill development

97% of students who presented at their Final told us they improved in at least one of our key skill areas: Presentation skills; Teamworking skills; Leadership skills; Research skills; Project Planning skills

Motivation to help others

94% of students who presented at their Final told us they may or will do more social action in the future

Outcomes for schools

94% of lead teachers would recommend First Give to other teachers

94% of lead teachers said partnering with First Give helped their school to support and encourage students to tackle social issues

88% of lead teachers said partnering with First Give helped their school to develop more meaningful ways to connect with the community



Case study

The Forest Academy

Mr Lamont is the Head of Year 12 at The Forest Academy, based in Redbridge, London. In addition to his Head of Year duties, Andre also teaches Business and Accounting, and this year has coordinated the First Give Programme. Supporting his students and colleagues through the delivery of the First Give Programme to an enthusiastic and conscientious bunch of Year 12 students.

The Forest Academy run the First Give Programme in what's called 'Wednesday 5' – which is a time where the year group come together, announcements and updates are shared, and students embark on their personal development work. This is where First Give has been integrated into their curriculum, and for the students at The Forest Academy, that's seen some really positive results "The students wants to do this work", reflects Andre. "They're actively asking questions and working on their projects all the time. It's so engaging, and they're so engaged. It's outstanding, I'm really proud of them". We're certainly glad to hear it!

Through the First Give programme, students develop their ability to look outwards and be more aware of the needs and goings-on in their local community. We want them to be inspired, get creative, and do good. We provide students with the opportunity to do something meaningful, and in creating these opportunities, we aim to support young people to practically apply their First Give skills beyond the programme too. We call this igniting a spark of social conscience. What's also great, is that the programme can inspire others too. Andre agrees:

"I've noticed sparks in myself, definitely. I have always had that mindset of giving back, you know, where I'm in a position to offer my help, my assistance, my time, my financial contribution. Time went on, and the First Give programme kind of brought me back to basics to remind me I can help. This programme reminded me of that foundation I had – that sense of giving, and that sense of helping out."

Inspired by the First Give programme and the journey his students have been on, Andre's own curiosity and interest in the programme has ignited in him a greater awareness and enthusiasm for altruism and giving. He added that he recently attended a tea party hosted by his class's chosen charity.

They might think 'my voice is just a small voice', but even doing these social action projects, one person reaching another person, that's how it starts."



Mr Andre Lamont
Head of Year, The Forest Academy



"Normally, my weekends are spent at home, but we went to the tea party and it sparked off so many other conversations about giving and doing things to help others."

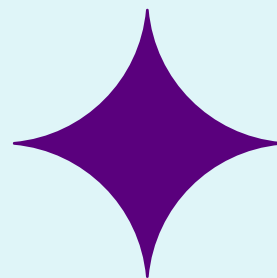
What's striking when speaking to Andre is his passion for supporting those in less privileged positions than himself. He reflects that he's found himself researching facts at home or thinking about the project during his down time, inspiring him to be more socially active. His tremendous drive has clearly inspired his students' engagement with the First Give programme:

"I can see that they realise it isn't just about how much can you donate to a charity. They're thinking about volunteering now. It's important that charities have financial donations because they need to be able to operate, but I love that my students also understand the value of giving up their time as well."

"It's good that we can have these conversations with our students. They get so caught up with social media, and the programme actually gives them time to sit and reflect, to ask "what contribution can I as an individual make to my community?" They might think "my voice is just a small voice", but even doing these social action projects, one person reaching another person, that's how it starts."

Andre summarised what he's particularly proud of when it comes to how his students have tackled the First Give programme by saying:

"It's how seriously they are taking it. These are students working hard to achieve good grades. The First Give programme isn't coursework, they're not getting anything from this in terms of a final grade, but they're putting in every effort to do a good job. They're proactive, and they're emailing me about it, seeking me out in school to tell me about their progress or, you know, to borrow the camera to do a bit more work on their presentations. Amongst their peer groups you see that they're working closely in their teams, there's a buzz of competition in the air."



Case study

Martin House Children's Hospice

Year 9 students at Bradford Girls' Grammar School kept the momentum going following their First Give Final this year, with the winning group being interviewed for their local radio station, Bradford Community Broadcasting (BCB).

The school have embedded the First Give programme into their Year 9 curriculum since 2018. This year, students researched and investigated a wide range of social issues, representing charities including: Martin House Children's Hospice, Sharing Voices Bradford, Hope Housing, Staying Put and Bradford Central Foodbank.

Young people can make a real difference to their communities, and the First Give programme harnesses this, understanding that young people can do something now, not just when they're older. Once they've identified their class charity, students then learn about social action. We define this as 'practical action taken to make a positive change in society'. This is where students can get really creative, planning and undertaking their own social action through activities such as fundraising or raising awareness.

This year, students at Bradford Girls' Grammar raised a phenomenal amount of money in their social action, with the winning class alone raising an amazing £1,132.92 for their chosen charity – Martin House Children's Hospice. *"It has been a delight to work with Bradford Girl's Grammar School... They have been incredibly dedicated towards supporting Martin House and creating vital awareness"* said Rebecca Taylor, Regional Fundraiser at Martin House Children's Hospice. *"I have witnessed firsthand how the First Give programme has inspired young individuals to support incredible local causes."*



"I have witnessed firsthand how the First Give programme has inspired young individuals to support incredible local causes."

Rebecca Taylor, Regional Fundraiser,
Martin House Children's Hospice

Summarising the work of Martin House, Rebecca adds *"We focus on fun when children come for a planned stay at Martin House. We work with every child and their family to make sure they get to do the things they enjoy... Play is such an important part of a child's life, and we work hard to ensure every child who comes to the hospice has access to play, no matter what their needs or abilities."*

With play, creativity and imagination such core values at the heart of this charity, it made sense for the students to harness that in their social action, which was to sell teddy bears, which were kindly donated by the charity itself.

Following their social action projects, students move to the second half of the First Give programme, where they develop and deliver presentations to talk about what they've learned, and what they did to support their chosen charity. All of this builds to the exciting conclusion – their First Give Final! This is an opportunity to really celebrate all of the hard work undertaken by every student on the programme, and for a group from each class to present to an audience and a panel of judges, who will determine the winning group. The winning group secures a £1,000 prize grant for their chosen charity. Martin House were incredibly grateful, as expressed here by Rebecca: *"It's thanks to your support that we can give these kinds of experiences to children who have serious and life-limiting conditions. Thank you once again for helping to make a difference to the lives of the families we care for, helping us to be here when they need us most."*

Following the success of the students' work on the programme, the winning group were interviewed by their local radio station, Bradford Community Broadcasting, who asked the students about their First Give journey. Students "spoke eloquently" said Ms Gant, Subject Leader of Drama at the school. *"They talked about what they had done as their social action and why they had chosen the charity, and about the First Give organisation."* We're so happy to see these students being such fantastic ambassadors for their charity, continuing the hard work even after their First Give programme has ended, though we hope that this is only the beginning of their journey...

Creating a ‘giving journey’



First Give Step Up

In 2021 we partnered with Ark Acton Academy to co-design and pilot **First Give Step Up**. This year we were able to build on this success by working with five partner schools across the country on the Step Up programme. Students were given the opportunity to lead their own projects designed to improve the lives of others.

A key part of the Step Up programme is the full year group survey. We use our visit to school as an opportunity to gain insights from students one year after they completed the core First Give programme.

Findings from this extended pilot indicate the potential of sustained impact following participation in the First Give programme. One year on from completing the core programme:

56%

told us they were more inspired to take action to support causes they care about as a result of taking part in First Give

60%

told us they were more confident in their ability to help others through social action

33%

told us they had raised money for or donated money to their First Give charity since taking part in the programme

25%

told us they had done other kinds of social action (including raising awareness, volunteering or giving money to other charities)

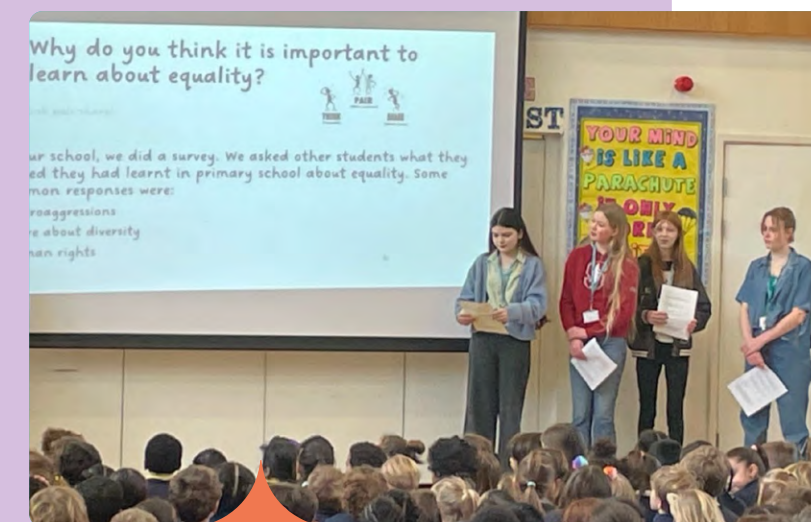
We received a report from students at Parliament Hill School detailing their experiences on the programme.

“We are a group of 9 young women who applied to the First Give Step Up programme as we wanted to make a change in our community.

We decided that we wanted to focus on promoting equality. As a single sex girls’ school, we are passionate about women’s rights and we feel lucky to be part of a feminist school. However, we realise that not every environment promotes equality and with influencers like Andrew Tate growing in popularity there are many misconceptions that need to be addressed. After a great deal of discussion on our team we decided that we would be most effective if we focused on all kinds of inequality and discrimination, not just gender equality. We felt that by focusing on a broader area we would have more of a chance of connecting with our audience.

We decided that we were going to go into primary schools to deliver workshops on equality. We reflected on our own time at primary and thought that the earlier children are introduced to the concept the easier it is to understand and to prevent any negative behaviours. We did a survey on Teams at our school to find out what students thought they should have learned more about at Primary school so we could focus on the most important topics. As well as doing workshops we wanted to deliver assemblies and provide each school we visited with a set of books about equality”

One of the students who took part in the project told us, “I’ve loved this project – something that I have accomplished is learning to work as a team to create change...it was so empowering hearing the ideas of the primary school students, in both the assembly (where there were some incredible ideas and opinions even from the reception, year one and year two students) and the workshop where it was amazing to see the year sixes both learn and teach us with their new points of view and perspectives.”



Looking forward

In this report we have reflected on the last academic year. In 2022/23 we delivered more programmes than ever before. But we are ambitious to increase our reach and impact.

This year we will therefore:

- ◆ Partner with 190 schools to deliver our innovative core programme. This will mean reaching over 34,000 students
- ◆ Extend and develop the First Give Step Up and First Give Primary programmes, delivering eight of each across England and Wales
- ◆ Embark on a strategic review and develop an ambitious business plan for First Give's future.



With thanks

None of this year's work and achievements would have been possible without the generous commitment of our funding partners. We'd like to take this opportunity to give special thanks to our funders (please see the back cover of this report for a full list).

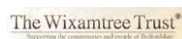
We would also like to thank the hundreds of schools and charities who have given their time to instil their passion and commitment in First Give participants. We look forward to continuing to work with you to strengthen our communities together.

Empowering young people; igniting a spark of social conscience.

Our founding funders



Our funding partners



Impact Report 2023

Share your journey with us



firstgive.co.uk