



Impact Report 2024



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Introduction

This year has been one of significant transition for First Give. In May, we said farewell to Louisa Mundachali Searle, our Director for the past seven years and also to Sinclair Beecham, our Founding Chair of Trustees. Their departure marks the end of an era, and we are extremely grateful for the strong foundations they have left behind.

In the wake of these departures, we were delighted to welcome Daryl Fielding as our new Chair of Trustees. She brings with her a wealth of experience and a fresh perspective, and we are excited about the new directions and opportunities her leadership will bring. Alongside Daryl, I am thrilled to have stepped into the role of Director this year.

Leading a charity like First Give is a real honour. Every day, I am reminded of how passionate young people are about social justice, particularly in their local area. Our communities, and the schools and charities that serve them, are facing unprecedented challenges. It would be easy to feel hopeless. But this report serves to encourage and motivate us, as I hope it will you. It cannot communicate the full scope of the impact of our work, but it does provide stories and details of some of the varied outcomes that First Give programmes inspire.

It is a source of some pride that over the last academic year we partnered with almost 200 schools to inspire, motivate and equip over 36,000 young people.

All that remains to say is thank you. To the inspiring teachers we have collaborated with; to the dedicated funders who have supported our work; and to the charity partners who work tirelessly to improve the lives of others. We look forward to sharing our new strategy soon, and to working with all of you over the next few years.



Isaac Jones
Director

Who is First Give?

Since 2014 First Give has been working in partnership with schools to ignite a spark of social conscience. Our programmes are designed to inspire, equip and motivate young people to take action to support their local communities.

Our year in numbers

- 191**
total completed programmes
- 35,230**
total participating students
- 32**
new school partnerships
- 176**
winning charities
- £191,000**
granted to charities
- £79,795**
raised by students

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

The top three social issues selected by students this year:

- Health**
Including cancer, terminal illness and hospice care
- Community cohesion**
Including youth work, knife crime and community projects
- Mental health**

Since 2014

- 1,315**
Total number of First Give programmes completed
- 234,506**
Total number of students who have completed a First Give programme
- £1,469,000**
Total amount in grants donated to charities

The First Give programme structure

Over the last academic year we delivered our core programme 191 times in partnership with 189 schools. Alongside this, we extended our First Give Primary pilot, working in partnership with eight schools, and completed four First Give Step Up programmes.

Over the last year we have started to develop new programming, but our core programme structure is shown below:



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 their 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.

Where we currently work

First Give really has had a transformational impact on the relationships between classes, between students and their tutors and on students' confidence – absolutely undeniably."

Lead Teacher,
Co-operative Academy Stoke-on-Trent

West Midlands
8 schools

Wales and the South West of England
34 schools

Yorkshire and the North West of England
17 schools

London and the South East of England
132 schools

"I have never seen such tangible social and individual development as I have through the First Give programme."

Head of Year,
Ark Acton Academy, London



Outcomes

Outcomes for students*

Increased awareness of social issues and charities

98% of students who presented at their Final reported improving awareness of social issues affecting their community.

98% 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

95% of students who presented at their Final told us their ability to help others in their community had improved.

Skill development

99% 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

90% of students who presented at their Final told us they may or will do more social action in the future.

Medium term outcomes for students

We also surveyed 828 students who took part in First Give last academic year as part of First Give Step Up.

69% of students told us they had raised money for charity since taking part in First Give.

79% of students said they had raised awareness for a cause since taking part in First Give.

48% of students said they had donated their own money to charity since taking part in First Give.

Outcomes for schools

99% of lead teachers told us they were likely or very likely to recommend First Give to other teachers.

89% lead teachers agreed or strongly agreed that partnering with First Give helped their school to develop more meaningful ways to connect with the community.

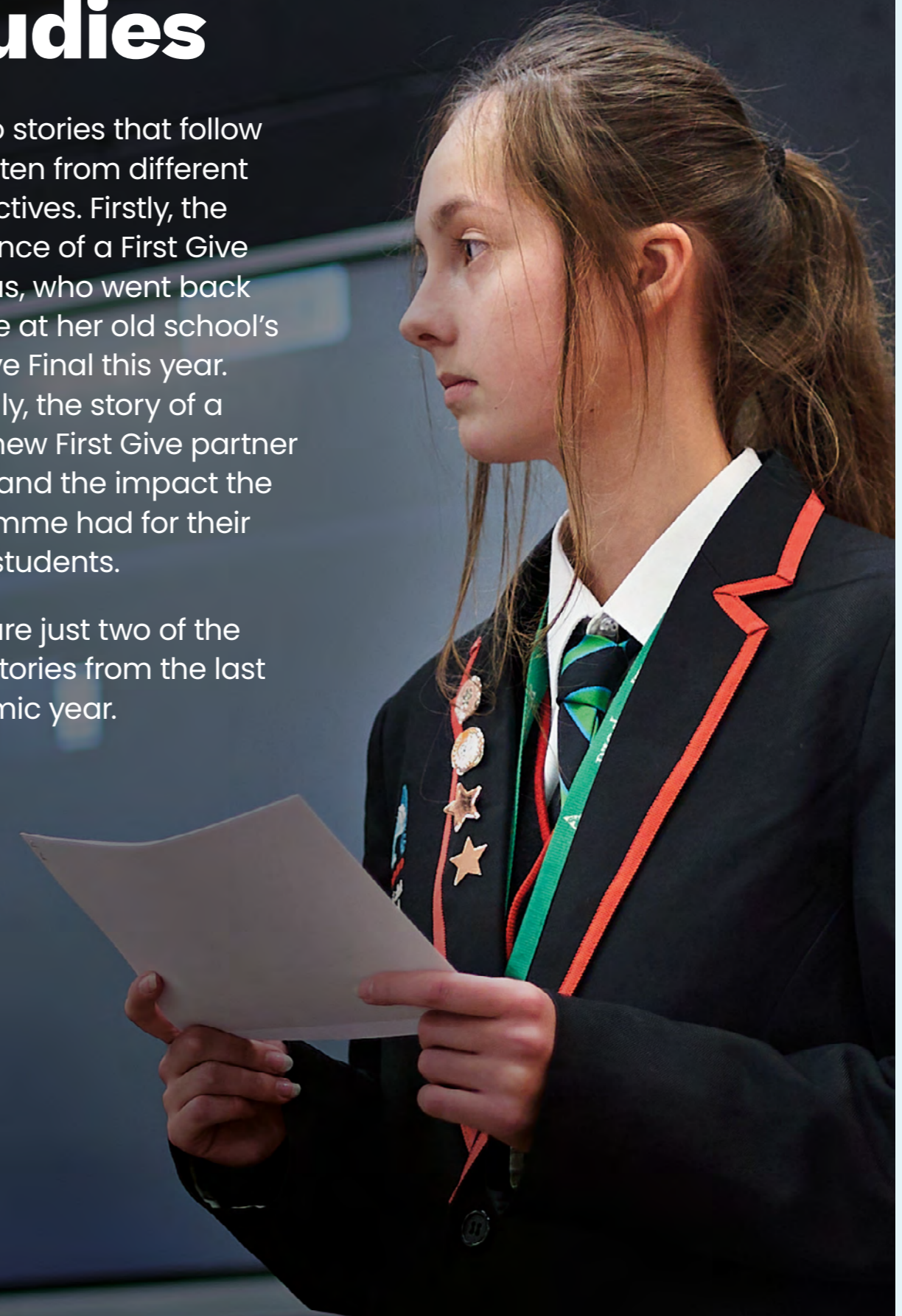
91% of lead teachers agreed or strongly agreed that partnering with First Give helps their school play a more meaningful role in tackling social issues in their community.

* These figures are based on responses from 1,968 students who presented at their school's First Give Final.

Case studies

The two stories that follow are written from different perspectives. Firstly, the experience of a First Give alumnus, who went back to judge at her old school's First Give Final this year. Secondly, the story of a brand new First Give partner school and the impact the programme had for their Year 9 students.

These are just two of the many stories from the last academic year.



CASE STUDY



From participant to judge

A student article: My journey through the first give programme and beyond

In 2017, my life took a significant turn when I participated in the First Give Programme. Little did I know that this decision would shape the next 7 years of my life, leading me to discover the profound impact of community service. Fast forward to today, and I find myself on the other side of the table, serving as a judge for First Give.

The First Give programme is about engaging young people in social action by having them compete to win £1,000 for a local charity through research, advocacy, and presentations. This is the story of how one small step into volunteering has blossomed into a lifelong commitment to making a difference.

My experience with the First Give Programme was transformative. As a participant, I was tasked with delivering a presentation for the charity SHOC (Slough Homelessness Our Concern) to a panel of judges. The aim of this charity is to provide support and services to individuals experiencing homelessness, through day centres, outreach programmes, and tailored assistance. The process involved researching the charity's work, understanding the challenges faced by the homeless community, and articulating the impact of our support. Winning a grant for the cause was not just a financial achievement but a personal victory that ignited my passion for social and humanitarian action.

...the First Give Programme was a catalyst for my lifelong commitment to social and humanitarian action."

Commitment to community and social impact

The programme changed my trajectory in numerous ways. It instilled in me a deep sense of responsibility and a commitment to giving back to the community. After the programme ended, I continued to engage in social and humanitarian activities. I volunteered at local charities, organised community events, and took on roles that allowed me to make a tangible impact. Notably, I worked with Human Appeal and participated in events that raised over £400,000 for humanitarian crises.

Working with charities has become an integral part of my life. I am driven by a desire to contribute to meaningful causes and to support those in need. This commitment to social change is not just a personal mission but a professional one as well. During my gap year, I worked as a teaching assistant at a secondary school, specialising in supporting individuals with special educational needs. This role was incredibly rewarding, as it allowed me to make a direct impact on students' lives, helping them to overcome their challenges and achieve their potential.

Bringing it full circle

What I loved most about the First Give Programme was the sense of empowerment it gave me. It showed me that even small efforts can make a significant difference. This realisation has had a profound impact on my life, motivating me to continue my journey in social impact. Serving as a judge for the programme at Eden Girls' School in Slough has brought my experience full circle, allowing me to inspire and support the next generation of change-makers.

The First Give Programme has also influenced my academic and career aspirations. It is a key reason why I will be studying Law and Anthropology at The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) from September 2024. This course will equip me with the knowledge and skills to further my commitment to social justice and humanitarian work.

In conclusion, the First Give Programme was a catalyst for my lifelong commitment to social and humanitarian action. It set me on a path of continuous involvement in community service, volunteering, and professional roles aimed at creating positive change. This journey has not only shaped my career aspirations but also reinforced the importance of working with charities and contributing to social change. I am dedicated to continuing this work, driven by the belief that every effort, no matter how small, can make a significant impact.



CASE STUDY

Beginning our First Give journey

A school story: Edgar Wood Academy



Edgar Wood Academy is a relatively new school based in Heywood, Rochdale. The communities that the school serves have higher than average levels of deprivation, with free school meal eligibility sitting at just under 40% in the school.

Edgar Wood Academy partnered with First Give for the first time this academic year to work with the school's eldest year group – their Year 9 students – to equip students with the knowledge and skills to give back meaningfully to their communities.

Assistant Headteacher, Becky Worth, has coordinated the programme this year, supporting class teachers and students as they embarked on their First Give journey. "We wanted something that would allow our students the opportunity to see what kinds of things they could do to 'give back'. We're on a school improvement journey, so it was even more important for us to think about our students' experiences of education and to give them something that was positive and meaningful."

...it really improved my awareness of social issues and how to combat them. I wish I could do it all again!"

Layla, Student

Empowering student voices

It is the hope that a continued partnership with First Give will be a great way to build positive community links around the school, and that the programme will empower students to speak up about the social issues that matter to them. Indeed, one student who took part, Layla, said: "First Give was an amazing opportunity for me. I thoroughly enjoyed it, and it really improved my awareness of social issues and how to combat them. I wish I could do it all again!"

Echoing Becky's hopes for the programme was the positive experiences of the staff and students, who have demonstrated great commitment to their First Give work. Marie said: "It was cool to know it helped raise awareness and learn a lot about my chosen charity and helped improve my public speaking skills." Leon added, "First Give was an amazing opportunity for me to gain more confidence."

Social action with a buzz

Students created quite a buzz with various fun social action activities such as penalty shoot outs, bake sales, raffles, and the student favourite this year, 'The Teacher Splash Out!' "There's been such a buzz and excitement" added Becky. Thinking about the First Give legacy, that they care about, Becky notes "we expect that the First Give programme will have a knock-on impact on how the students think about making changes in the future".

This was echoed by another student, Mubaraq, who said: "First Give has really helped me to show empathy, and [understand] that young people could make a huge difference in their community. I also feel so proud of myself in how I was able to make a difference and build my confidence."

Headteacher Paul Jones was blown away by the brilliant work of students through the programme, adding "I can't tell you how proud I was of our pupils and all of the work that they did as part of the First Give programme. This is the first time I've been involved with First Give, and it's a partnership that I'm very keen to maintain and develop." We're thrilled to have had such a brilliant start to the First Give partnership with Edgar Wood Academy, and we look forward to seeing how they get on in 2024/25. Watch this space, and well done to the staff and students at Edgar Wood Academy!

First Give Sparks

Each year we collect together 'sparks' from our facilitators, teachers and students. These sparks are little moments, highlights, quotes or images that are not full case studies, but that speak to the impact of our work. This year we would like to share a small selection of these here.

First Give has really taken off here, and is an important part of our approach to the Curriculum for Wales. We are very proud of this work and appreciate the partnership we have with First Give.

Ravi Pawar, Headteacher at Bryntirion Comprehensive



Co-Operative Stoke-on-Trent Headteacher, Shane Richardson: "The First Give event was brilliant, one of the highlights of my year, and I thought the students were fantastic." Lead teacher, Olivia Williamson told us "First Give really has had a transformational impact on the relationships between classes, between students and their tutors and on students' confidence – absolutely undeniably."



£2,533.27!

Eastbury Community School raised an incredible £2,533.27 this year through their social action activities alone, which included:

- ◆ sports tournaments and fundraisers
- ◆ a culture day for Year 12
- ◆ a car wash fundraiser
- ◆ various food and bake sales linked carefully to their social issues
- ◆ raffles
- ◆ flower selling
- ◆ creating a podcast
- ◆ writing articles
- ◆ a poetry competition
- ◆ non-school uniform day
- ◆ sponge-a-sixth-former day.

One of the students' articles was shared on a local news media platform, which you can see here:



An article written by Carolyn Klein from the charity Gratitude spoke of the impact at London Academy:

"The students embraced the challenge with enthusiasm and determination. They delved deep into understanding the challenges faced by individuals in their community and the significant impact Gratitude has in addressing these issues.

As part of their project, the students organised a collection drive and donated three boxes of non-perishable groceries to support the charity's efforts, showcasing their dedication to making a tangible difference. Thanks to their meticulous preparation and heartfelt delivery, the students won the £1,000 grant for Gratitude.

This significant financial boost will further empower the charity to expand its initiatives and continue making a tangible difference in the lives of those in need."



"I've never seen my daughter so engaged at school."

Parent of Tapton School Student

First Give Primary

We were excited to extend our pilot of First Give Primary this year, working in partnership with eight schools from across South Wales, and in London. We developed the programme structure and resources based on feedback from the last pilot.

Over the course of a full day of activities in school, pupils would:

- ◆ Be inspired by a launch assembly designed to get them thinking about their role in the community
- ◆ Be supported to empathise with others by reflecting on the problems affecting them and their friends
- ◆ Be supported to understand the root causes of broader social issues affecting the community
- ◆ Enquire about these broader social issues through interviews with community members from inside and outside school
- ◆ Be supported to decide how they can make change themselves through social action.

446
pupils
participated
at eight schools

The children felt really empowered and proud of when they were standing next to all this food. They're like, yeah, we made this."

Ravi Pawar, Headteacher at Bryntirion Comprehensive

Food Bank Support by Pupils

At Ton Pentre Primary School, pupils had chosen food poverty as an issue they wanted to focus on.

Here is our facilitator Gemma reflecting on their social action:

"There were students who had a visit from someone who was at a local food bank. So they were one of the sources that came and spoke to the children. The children within a couple of weeks were doing basketball shoot-outs, cake sales, sweets in a jar - they kind of did everything and anything. I think they ended up raising about £300, just one group, which is pretty amazing.

"They spent £100 on food to donate to the food bank... and I think the actual tangible nature of getting the things then they brought it in for the celebration - they had it all on display...that felt really impactful. And the source came along to that as well. So it was a really nice full circle. And then they took the food with them, and the children ended up donating the surplus £200 to charity as well.

"The children felt really empowered and proud when they were standing next to all this food. They're like, 'yeah, we made this'."

We look forward to reviewing learning from this extended pilot and making further improvements to the programme for next year.



Looking forward

In this report we have reflected on the achievements of the 2023-4 academic year. It has been a year of transition during which we are proud to have maintained the breadth of our work and impact.

In 2024-5 we look forward to:

- ◆ **Launching our ambitious new strategy, laying the foundations for growth**
- ◆ **Partnering with at least 190 schools to deliver the core First Give programme. This will mean reaching over 34,000 students**
- ◆ **Piloting a new secondary programme, First Give One Day, with ten schools, reaching approximately 1,800 students**
- ◆ **Extending First Give Primary, delivering ten programmes across England and Wales and reaching approximately 600 children.**



As always, our work is only possible through the support and generosity of our funding partners. We would like to take this opportunity to extend a special thanks to all of them.

Empowering young people; igniting a spark of social conscience.

Our founding funders



Our funding partners



Impact Report 2024

Share your journey with us



firstgive.co.uk