**Brimsham Green – Medium socioeconomic school.**

**Gender focus group**

*Workshop was performed over two one hour sessions on the same day with 31 students. We had two groups working on Chemist, Inventor, Vet and Astronomer and one group working on geologist. Audio recordings were taken of the first session, however, the room was very loud so we did not record the second hour but made notes and wrote any interesting quotes.*

*Groups were asked to write 4 words but many wrote more. They were very keen. Due to the number of students and the number of post-its we did not get through many and therefore a discussion about jobs was not reached. But some interesting discussions came out of the debates over gender qualities.*

*At the end of each discussion we took votes on the number of student that felt the quality was Male, Female or Neutral. It was nice to hear how many of the students felt that these qualities were neither male or female but were neutral because different people are different and not because of their gender but their personality.*

**Chemist: Work safely**

When word was first drawn one boy said:

“Female, definitely!” - boy

A girl also retaliated with:

“Neutral because it doesn’t really matter” - girl

Most boys agree that girls were safer than boys, but one boy did say that it depended on the task:

“Boys would be safer on certain jobs. Such as cutting down a tree” – boy

“But that is not a safe job anyway”- girls response to this

Votes:

M = 0

N = 14

F = 7

**Astronomer: Punctual**

This was a lively debate.

“Neutral. It depends on personality, if you are a laid back person you might be late more” – girl

Women: “men don’t care about being late” – boy

Men: “On a first date a man will always be early but the woman will always arrive late” – boy

A discussion continued into how it depended on the situation. If you were older and more experienced and going to work you are less likely to be late (higher consequences) but in school or with friends being late is not as important so is more likely. One girl felt that this is most common in boys who are late for school but not for work.

Vote:

M = 3

N = 12

F = 17

**Inventor – Positive Thinking**

This was undecided and fell into Neutral mainly because the group were not sure.

Male: “Women over think things” so find the negative things more often - girl

Female: “A lot of men are not very positive” – girl

“It depends on personality… if you are an optimist or a pessimist” - girl

“If you enter the lottery you know you might not win so you are negative” – girl

“If I was asked to run a marathon I would NOT be positive but if it was a sprint I would be” – girl

Votes:

M = 8

N = 20

F = 1

**Inventor – Take criticism well**

This led to a very lively debate between the students who nearly all though that boys take criticism better than girls.

Male because if it is said to a female it is more likely to cause an argument” - boy

“Women are more sensitive” - girl

“If you tell someone they need to shower and they are a girl they will cry and shout at you” - boy

“It’s a personality things, it is how you are bought up” - girl

We asked them all the think about how they would react if we came in and criticised them individually and almost all the boys said they would respond well but only two girls also thought they would.

Teacher has said that in her experience boys are better at taking criticism but girls hold grudges

“I can shout at boys and the next day they will still hold doors open for me and say hello, but if the same situation happened to a girl I would get ‘the look’ all the way from year 7 to 11!” - Teacher

M = 22

N = 4

F = 1

In response to the one male voter who said girls would react better than boys one girl said:

“Are you kidding?” – girl

**Geologist – Strong**

Context was considered important here with many people saying that they though that men were physically stronger but women were emotionally stronger. The class were torn between male and neutral.

“In the Olympics when men do deadlifting they lift more than women” - boy

“Depends how lazy you are… if you are more active you are stronger” - girl

“Women look for stronger men to date so men need to be stronger but men do not care about that in a woman” - boy

“men are built stronger but I know very strong women”

“It is not all about size of muscles” - girl

I think this statement was a very telling one from one girl. It was really nice to hear this said so well.

“It used to be a stereotype that men did all the work but now women do too so it is neutral now” – girl

Votes:

M = 15

N = 13

F = 0

**Vet: Caring**

Most people felt that this was neutral. But a few boys felt that women were more caring.

“Most women have a motherly instinct that make them more caring” - boy

“I am NOT caring” –Boy

Vote:

M = 1

N = 13

F = 7

**Vet: Not afraid to do the right thing**

This opened a very good discussion, which touched also on ethics. There was a lot of strong opinions for both male and female but eventually they seems to decide this was hard for everyone regardless of gender and it fell into neutral.

“If you go to a funeral women cry more”… “if it is a life/death situation they wont pull the plug” - boy

“That is because men are told they can’t cry” – girl in retaliation to above comment

“Women show affection for animals. So would they be able to stand there and kill a horse if that’s what it takes?” – boy (this was followed by “and look into its dead eyes”)

“Men think they can make things better but women think about the options” - girl

“Anyone can make the right decision” - boy

Votes:

M = 6

N = 17

F = 2