Reviewer’s report

Title: A Haven of Green space: Learning from a pilot pre-post evaluation of a school-based social and therapeutic horticulture intervention with children

Version: 2 Date: 21 Mar 2018

Reviewer: Anne Borge

Reviewer's report:
The paper has interesting presentation of the topic and the qualitative measures.

You have to inform in the abstract that you only have 27 children from three Schools. The use of MWIA and the Five Ways to Wellbeing is ok. The qualitative data are ok.

But I have big problems accepting your inclusion of the SDQ. Here are the arguments against using the SDQ.

1) You have only 27 children included in the statistics.
2) You have an overweight of boys in the sample which is not controlled for which we know influences subscales.
4) I have no information about where the figures come from, a subscale, sum scale or which scales in table 5. The figures are impossible to interpret and huge measurement errors are present.
5) 9 pupils at School A have a bad effect of the intervention indicated by score 5, 89 increased 7.33 and we do not know on what scale/scales,
6) 10 pupils at School B with scores slightly improving from 16.4 to 14.4 but why are these scores three times higher than School A?
7) 8 pupils at School C, improves dramatically with scores from 12.2 to 6.88, and why this huge difference from School B and A? A really mix of data unable to understand.
8) At School A different Teachers filled in the SDQ at pre and post, a reliability problem.
It is not recommended to apply the instrument SDQ in this way with tables and figures with no Statistical information about how the data have been treated. This is not how the SDQ should be used. These data are useless and it is not recommended to do analyses on 27 pupils with quantitative statistics.

It is strongly recommend that you remove the Whole SDQ out of this paper. British researchers will be baffled to see this use of the SDQ on print.

You have plenty of good data from the MWIA and the Wellbeing Cards that make better sense. Removing the SDQ makes the content better because as it stands, it gives no meaningful information at all.

SDQ has been used, but you do not at all inform in table 5 where the figures come from. Is it any of the subscales or the sumscores.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**

If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**

If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**

If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**

If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics
Quality of written English

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
Acceptable

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