



SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT

2013



Inspiring Young People to Succeed.



WE MAKE A
DIFFERENCE

FOREWORD

This Social Impact Report is an important development for our charity. We have been inspiring young people to succeed in the classroom - and beyond it - for over a decade and recording the difference we make to young people's lives. This year we felt it was important to share our findings with a wider readership.

Never has the need for SkillForce's work been greater. Over one million young people are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) in the UK. The pressure on them to find meaningful employment, training, or to continue in education is intense – perhaps stronger now than it has ever been. We also know that thousands of Armed Forces personnel will be looking for new careers in the coming months and years. Our charity benefits both, unlocking the skills and experiences of ex-Service personnel to engage hard-to-reach young people and prepare them for the next steps in their lives.

Our Social Impact Report shows how SkillForce makes that difference. It is our first attempt to tell our story in this way and, I feel, is a powerful statement to our supporters, staff and partners in schools about the results we achieve.

Peter Cross OBE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SkillForce is a charity that works in partnership with schools, drawing upon the skills of predominantly ex-Forces personnel, to inspire young people to succeed. Since 2000, SkillForce has changed the lives of 50,000 young people in the UK, engaging the hard-to-reach, developing their skills, and preparing them for next steps in education, work or training.

In the 2011/12 academic year, we worked with over 150 schools in England, Scotland and Wales. The empathy and skills of our instructors engaged young people and, working with the schools, lifted aspirations and levels of achievement. SkillForce worked with nearly 4,000 young people on year-long courses and over 3,000 students on shorter courses.

We achieve four outcomes as a charity:

- ▶ bring the hardest-to-reach back into the fold;
- ▶ engage those who need a more tailored approach and help them find positive next steps in work, training or education;
- ▶ prepare children for the all-important step from primary to secondary education (in pilot this year), and finally;
- ▶ build a bridge for service leavers into a new career in education or with young people.



KEY RESULTS

Our key results from 2011/12 are:

► Fewer students becoming NEET at age 16

Just 0.7% of Year 11 students and 2.4% of S4 students were confirmed as NEET 3 months after completing a SkillForce programme. This is compared to Government published statistics of 6.2% of 16-year olds and 17% of 16-24 year olds in England, and 13.3% of 16-19 year olds in Scotland. The estimated cost to the public purse per NEET young person is £160,600 over their lifetime.

► Accredited Qualifications and Awards



YEAR 11 STUDENTS IN ENGLAND ACHIEVED AN AVERAGE OF **5.01** QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS EACH THROUGH OUR LONG COURSES IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 11/12. IN SCOTLAND, S4 STUDENTS ACHIEVED AN AVERAGE OF **6.08** QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS EACH.

3,921 STUDENTS NATIONWIDE UNDERTOOK A YEAR-LONG SKILLFORCE PROGRAMME

► More students entering Education, Employment or Training

In England, 84% of Year 11s entered Education, Employment or Training after finishing. In Scotland, this figure was 87%.

► Greater confidence and maturity



90% OF STUDENTS SAID SKILLFORCE HAD HELPED THEM TO FEEL MORE CONFIDENT AND **88%** FEEL THEY ARE MATURE FOR THEIR AGE AFTER COMPLETING A SKILLFORCE PROGRAMME.

► More students on Free School Meals entering Further Education

IN ENGLAND, **72%** OF YEAR 11S ON FREE SCHOOL MEALS WENT ON TO FURTHER EDUCATION. THE NATIONAL AVERAGE IS **9%**. OVERALL, A TOTAL OF **80%** OF YEAR 11S WENT INTO SOME FORM OF EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING. IN SCOTLAND, THESE FIGURES ARE **53%** AND **88%** RESPECTIVELY



► Improved attitudes towards school

86% of students said SkillForce had helped them to have a more positive attitude towards school and 77% said they now treat their teachers with respect after completing a SkillForce programme.

► Improved attendance rates

Attendance at SkillForce classes is up to over 90%. The percentage of Unauthorised Absences is reduced to 2.65%.

► High percentage of ex-service personnel



73% OF OUR FRONTLINE STAFF COME FROM A MILITARY BACKGROUND.

► Military Mentors trained and entering education

We trained nearly 100 mentors from the Armed Forces. Almost two-thirds have gone into work with young people and education within a year.

INTRODUCTION

OUR MISSION IS TO INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE TO SUCCEED AND, IRRESPECTIVE OF BACKGROUND OR ABILITY, HELP THEM PREPARE FOR THE NEXT STEPS IN THEIR LIVES.

WORKING CLOSELY WITH SCHOOLS, AND USING THE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES OF PREDOMINANTLY EX-FORCES PERSONNEL, WE HELP YOUNG PEOPLE FIND A WAY TO ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS. OUR APPROACH IS TO ENGAGE, PREPARE AND DEVELOP.

WHY?

We exist because many young people leave school in the UK without the life skills and experiences they need for later life. Our purpose is to give young people - regardless of academic ability, background or school record - what they need to succeed. Our charity also gives service leavers and ex-Forces personnel an opportunity to start a new career in education.

- ▶ **More than 1 million young people in the UK between the ages of 16-24 are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).**
- ▶ **Each NEET young person costs the taxpayer £160,600 in their lifetime.**
- ▶ **Young men who are NEET between the ages of 16 and 18 are four times more likely to be unemployed later in life and five times more likely to have a criminal record.**
- ▶ **Restructuring of the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces means that thousands of Service personnel in the coming years will be looking for new, meaningful careers.**

WHAT DOES SKILLFORCE DO?

- ▶ **More of our students go onto positive destinations (work, education or training), particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.**
- ▶ **We raise levels of attendance and reduce unauthorised absences.**
- ▶ **We improve attitudes and behaviour.**
- ▶ **We work with schools to raise aspirations and levels of achievement (including awards and qualifications).**
- ▶ **By working with the hard-to-reach, our programmes benefit the entire school and its wider community.**
- ▶ **We build trust and respect and become positive role models.**
- ▶ **We give those who have served their country the opportunity to serve their community.**
- ▶ **As a charity, we use fundraising to subsidise the cost of programmes in schools.**

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS?

SkillForce has been working in partnership with schools to improve the performance of young people since 2000. We deliver an alternative curriculum to carefully selected cohorts of students which includes classroom-based lessons, outdoor activities and residential camps.

Our programmes typically take place for one day a week over the course of two school years. We call this our “Long Course”. Through Long Courses we have the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with students and set them up for long-term success. Our success can be largely attributed to our instructors and mentors, the majority of which are ex-Servicemen and women who use their extensive life experience and leadership skills to help pupils stay engaged with education and improve their future employability.

Our staff - by using skills including self-discipline, respect for others, team building, drive and determination - nurture confidence, act as credible role models and improve academic achievement. Having served their country, they are now serving their local communities by making a real difference to the lives of young people.

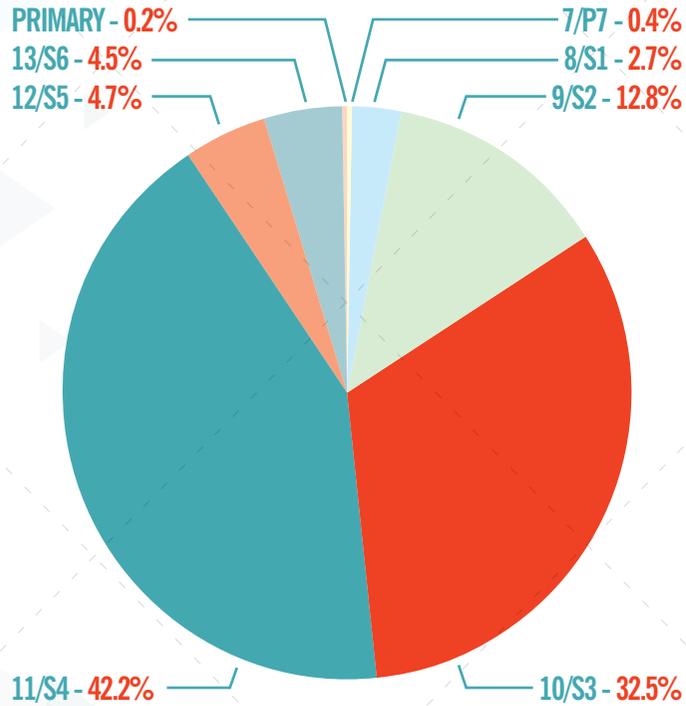
WHO DO WE WORK WITH?

SkillForce works in partnership with teaching staff to identify young people who would benefit most from working with us. The reasons for selection are varied and we rely on the professional judgement of teachers to help with the selection. The young people may need to build confidence and self esteem, address skills gaps or re-engage using a different way of learning.

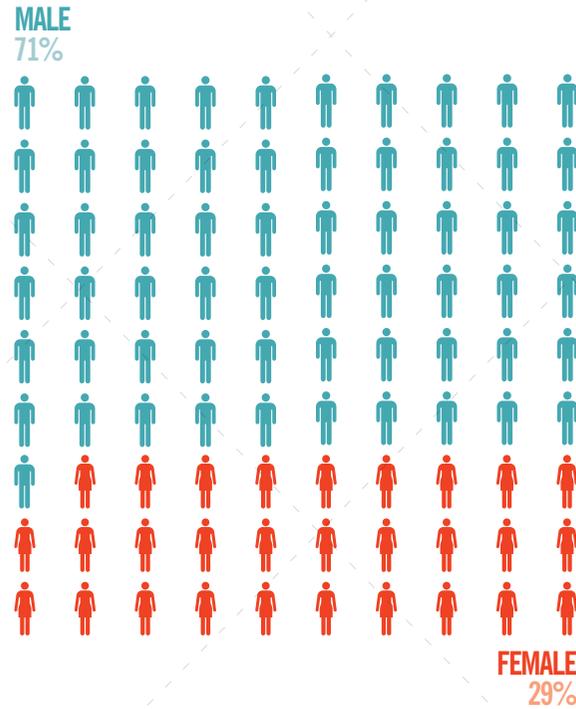
Not all of our young people are at risk of exclusion. We also work with gifted and talented groups, young people with special educational needs and mainstream academic achievers who are looking to boost confidence and self-esteem.

In the 11/12 Academic Year, SkillForce worked with 3921 students on Long Courses with a variety of backgrounds and abilities. The following gives an overview of these students in terms of Year Group, Gender, Ethnicity, Free School Meal status, Special Educational Needs status, and Exclusion Risk. The aim here is to provide context so that the reader can understand SkillForce and the students we work with.

YEAR GROUPS



GENDER



FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM)

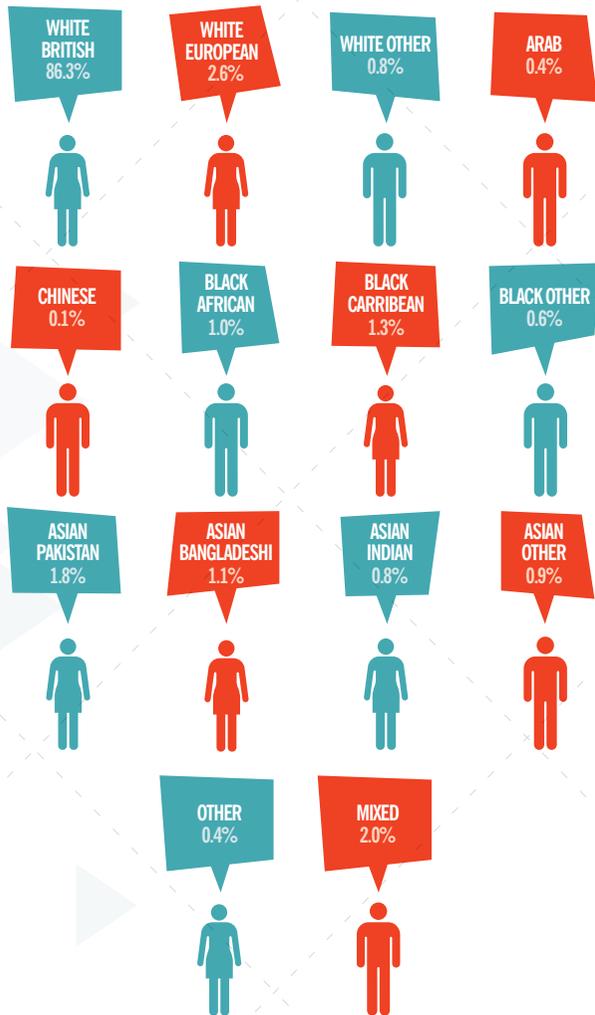
The Free School Meal Statistic is often used as a measure of deprivation or to identify those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Nationally, only 9% of those on Free School Meals go on to Further Education upon leaving school. Our aim with these students is to facilitate aspirations to achieve in education and, after they leave, move onto Employment, Education or Training.

FSM STATUS



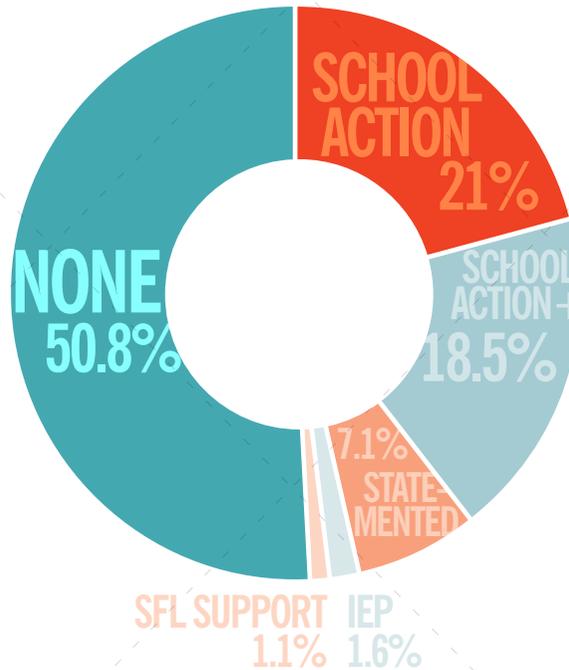
Details of the destinations of our students on Free School Meals can be found on page 20.

ETHNICITY



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

SkillForce often works with students with varying levels of Special Educational Needs. Our instructors and mentors call upon their drive, determination and their ability to nurture confidence, overcome adversity and create opportunities to engage these young people.



EXCLUSION RISK

Young people at risk of exclusion often represent the most isolated and vulnerable students. Students who are permanently excluded from school are often placed in Pupil Referral Units which can cost upwards of £16,000 a year, compared with £4,500 for a place at a mainstream school. In spite of the cost, PRU pupils are often only able to take a limited range of courses. Only 1% of excluded children receive the equivalent of five A* - C grades at GCSE level, compared with 70% of pupils who remain in school. It is our aim for students at high risk of exclusion to continue in mainstream education and gain recognised qualifications and awards to facilitate progression to Education, Employment or Training.

Nearly a third of SkillForce students are at high risk of exclusion.



OUR STAFF

Our staff are predominantly ex-Servicemen and women who use their skills and life experience to nurture confidence, build trust, improve behaviours and act as credible role models for young people. Our non- ex-military staff come from a variety of backgrounds including outdoor pursuits, adventure training, other uniformed professions such as the police, or from education. They embody similar skills and qualities. These skills and qualities include self discipline, self respect and respect for others, team building and working, planning, drive and determination, and a sense of service to others. They are experienced in facing challenges and overcoming adversity, creating opportunities, planning and delivery.

SkillForce instructors come from a wide range of backgrounds, including all ranks - from Major to Corporal equivalent - with all armed forces equally represented according to their respective sizes. Several of our staff were medically discharged from the Armed Forces. To use the Armed Forces' own language, these men and women are Wounded, Injured or Sick (WIS). Our experience is that these instructors make outstanding role models. SkillForce is careful to select and train only those who will be well suited to an educational setting and who will find the work fulfilling.

In total, we have 192 staff members working for SkillForce, of which 66% (127) are ex-military. Of these 192, 160 staff members work directly with young people – either as a Regional Director, Area Manager, Instructor or Mentor. Of these 160, 73% (117) have served in the Armed Forces, with an average duration of military service of 13 years.

- ▶ **Breakdown: Army = 74%; Navy = 6%; RAF = 18%; Marines = 2%**
- ▶ **% WIS (defined as those who were medically discharged) = 7%**

In the 11/12 Academic Year, SkillForce recruited 31 ex-military staff in both instructional and headquarters roles. 6% were WIS (defined as medically discharged) and each new recruit had an average of 18 years' military service.

- ▶ **Breakdown: Army = 68%, Navy = 16%, RAF = 10%, Marines = 6%.**



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT?

SkillForce regularly commissions external evaluation of the charity's work. These reports have found consistently that we have a positive impact on reducing truancy and exclusions, raising educational achievement, increasing post-16 destinations and increasing confidence and maturity.

Despite these external assessments from third parties, we have decided to put in place our own impact analysis in order to extract more data and learning for our organisation. We decided that we wanted to move to better quantitative data capture, as well as qualitative, in order to benchmark progress over a longer period of time (giving others the tools to assess impact more effectively). We have made considerable steps forward in the last 12 months to do this, including recruitment of a full-time data analyst and investment in a new data management system.

We have pledged to measure, analyse and report thoroughly and robustly on the impact we have on the young people we work with, and track their progression. Through this framework, we can confidently support our impact with robust empirical evidence.

In turn, we can also critically look at our own performance, identify any weaknesses, and address how we can make improvements to programmes and delivery to ensure that everything we do is making the most appropriate and effective change in a young person's life.

We know that every young person is an individual, and progression can mean different things to different students. Therefore, impact measurement is broad enough to capture objective outcomes, such as attendance, destinations and attainment, and subjective outcomes, such as behaviour, aspirations and self-esteem. We adopt a variety of ways of measuring our impact depending on what we are aiming to capture. A summary of these methods can be found in the Appendix of this report.

This, our first Impact Report, pulls together all of our impact measurement over the last year and comprehensively documents how we have made a difference for our young people in the 2011/2012 Academic Year.

The report summarises the difference we have made for our students against three outcomes (Back on Track, Onto Next Steps and Primary Transition). We do this by analysing post-16 destinations, attendance, attainment, aspirations, changes in attitude and confidence. We have also included data against our fourth outcome as a charity – being a bridge between the military and the education sector. Finally, we have information about some of SkillForce's own programmes, the SkillForce Prince's Award, and our passionate and committed staff, trustees and partners.



A photograph of a woman in a pink polo shirt leaning over a desk to assist a young man in a black hoodie who is sitting at a computer. The woman is smiling and looking at the screen. In the background, another young man is visible, and the setting appears to be a modern classroom or computer lab with large windows and bookshelves. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal banner containing the title text.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE
PART ONE - BACK ON TRACK

SkillForce knows that it is harder to reach some students because of poor behaviour or poor attendance. We offer a number of activity-based programmes and courses to re-engage these young people and bring them back on track. This is the first outcome for our charity highlighted in this report.

During our courses, instructors empathise with the students (many have a similar background) which builds mutual understanding, trust, confidence and respect. We have found that behaviour changes, attendance improves, and academic achievement rises as the young people grow confident in their own ability in a school environment. We have found it is very important to tailor these programmes to the needs of the student and the school.

In the 2011/12 academic year, we introduced a re-engagement programme (known as Zero Exclusion), which was designed to provide intensive support to the most vulnerable and difficult to reach students at high risk of being permanently excluded from school.

The aim of the programme was to re-engage students over a sustained time period by creating and reinforcing trust, self-esteem and self-confidence. Ultimately, the programme was designed to re-integrate students in mainstream teaching. For older learners the focus was placed firmly on progress, accreditation, socialisation and employability.

Classes focus on a mix of alternative accreditation, adventurous training, outdoor challenges, mentoring, self-awareness skills, substance awareness courses, team-working and problem solving.

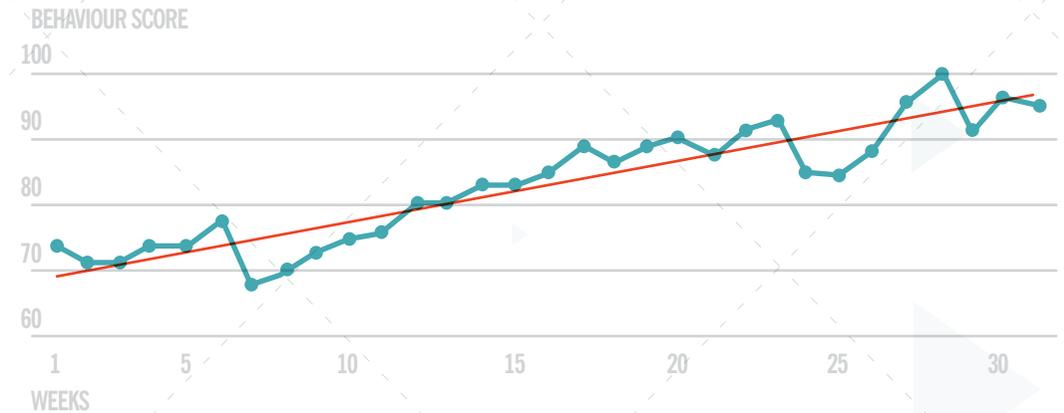
IMPACT ON STUDENTS

When we looked at the impact of the programme on students, we wanted to know if it had been successful in preparing students for re-integration into mainstream education. For this reason, we carefully tracked students' behaviour and attendance in SkillForce sessions. This allowed us to calculate a weekly behaviour and attendance score which we could track over time. The following graphs summarise how behaviour and attendance improved week after week.

WE MAKE
THE DIFFER



BEHAVIOUR



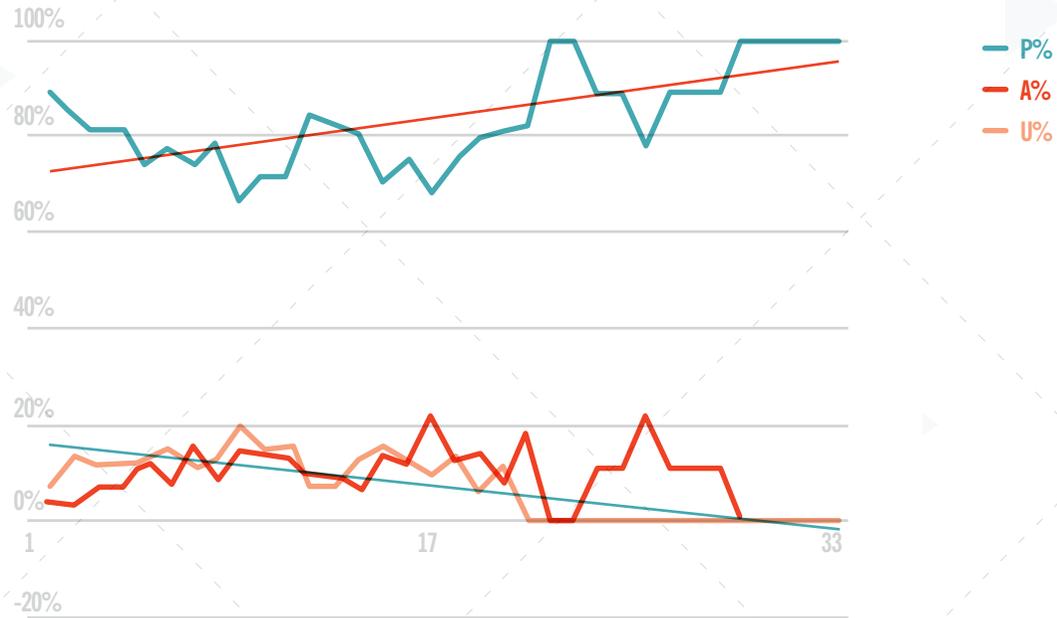
As the graph illustrates, overall behaviour improves significantly over time. Although there is not a simple linear relationship between time and behaviour and our students experience ups and down at all stages of the programme, the trend is extremely positive. We believe students will be ready to re-enter mainstream teaching when they achieve a behaviour score of 90 out of 100 . This allows us to predict that students would be ready to re-enter a formal classroom after 23 weeks on our Re-engagement programme. Given that this programme is aimed at the most vulnerable and isolated students who are likely to be permanently excluded from school, we can be confident that we are having real success in bringing these students back into the fold and getting them back on track.

ATTENDANCE

The following time-series graph shows week-by-week:

- a) The number of half days attended by our students as a percentage of total possible attendances per week (P);
- b) The percentage of half days missed through authorised absences (as authorised by the students' school) per week (A);
- c) The percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absences per week (U).

Similar to the behaviour data, there is not a simple linear relationship between time and attendance. In other words, attendance does not simply improve week-by-week; students experience ups and downs at all stages of the course. Nevertheless, indicated on the graph by the line of best fit, attendance does increase significantly over time. In turn, Authorised Absences and Unauthorised Absences decrease, and by Week 21, Unauthorised Absence falls to 0%. A major challenge with many of the hardest-to-reach students is to just get them into school. In encouraging these students back into classes, as the attendance data suggests, we are helping them.



EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Extract from Evaluation Report by Penny Silvester, former OFSTED instructor, on Zero Exclusion Pilot, April 2012

“The focus on practical activities has been highly effective in engaging learners and had enabled them to develop group work skills. These activities had greatly enhanced the interpersonal skills of the young people. For some learners they had experienced a wide range of outside activities, such as mountain biking and rock climbing, which they had not experienced before and they had overcome their fears. As a result the learners’ confidence had grown and their self-esteem had been raised.”

Extract from Report on Zero Exclusion Programme pilot, July 2012, led by Professor Susan Hallam, Institute of Education, University of London.

“As has been demonstrated throughout this report SkillForce is a highly successful programme which has the potential to turn around the lives of disaffected young people. Students enjoyed the activities, and demonstrated major improvements in attendance, behaviour, punctuality, and the use of bad language with fewer exclusions and confrontations with others.”

“Students reported increased concentration and confidence relating to their school work and a range of benefits enhancing their well-being including confidence, respect for others, team working skills and improved communication and listening skills which improved pupil-staff relationships.”

“For students reaching the end of their school careers, the SkillForce staff played a crucial role in supporting them in planning and enacting a future career or further education pathway giving them prospects for the future. This is remarkable given that the students had little self-belief in the likelihood of future academic success and few aspirations or ambitions when starting the programme.”

“The strengths of SkillForce staff were demonstrated throughout the pilot programmes. Their ‘can do’ and problem solving approaches meant that difficulties in implementation were tackled and new ways of working devised to address issues. The strengths of typical SkillForce programmes in relation to setting boundaries and behaviours having consequences, positive and negative, remained, albeit that more rigorous ‘rules’ had to be devised to manage the behaviour of some extremely challenging young people.”

“SkillForce staff continued to act as role models, treated the young people as adults, with respect, not shouting at them but raising issues of poor behaviour calmly and privately. Staff attempted to understand the underlying causes of the poor behaviour and work with the students to address them. A key factor was the trust developed between staff and the students, many of whom had been let down in the past. SkillForce staff demonstrated an ongoing commitment to support them in turning their lives around.”

A person wearing a red helmet, a light blue tank top, and grey pants is climbing a tall, grey rock wall. The wall is covered in various colored climbing holds. The person is positioned in the center of the frame, facing away from the camera. The background shows a clear blue sky with some clouds and green trees on the left side. The overall scene is outdoors and appears to be a recreational or training activity.

LOOKING AHEAD

After the success of the programme in its first year, we have several more re-engagement provisions planned for the 2012/13 Academic Year and beyond. Our aim is to ensure that the improvements we have seen in behaviour over the course are sustained when students are back in mainstream learning, and that they stay out of the “high risk of exclusion” category. For older students remaining on the programme, until they leave compulsory education, our aim is that they move onto, and stay in, positive destinations, such as Further Education, Employment or Training.



THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE
PART TWO - ONTO NEXT STEPS

DESTINATIONS

SkillForce’s mission is to inspire young people to succeed, irrespective of background or ability, and help them prepare for next steps. As part of this, we aim to facilitate aspirations and achievement and reduce the number of young people becoming NEET at age 16. To ensure we are achieving these aims we carefully track where students are 4-6 months after completing a SkillForce programme.

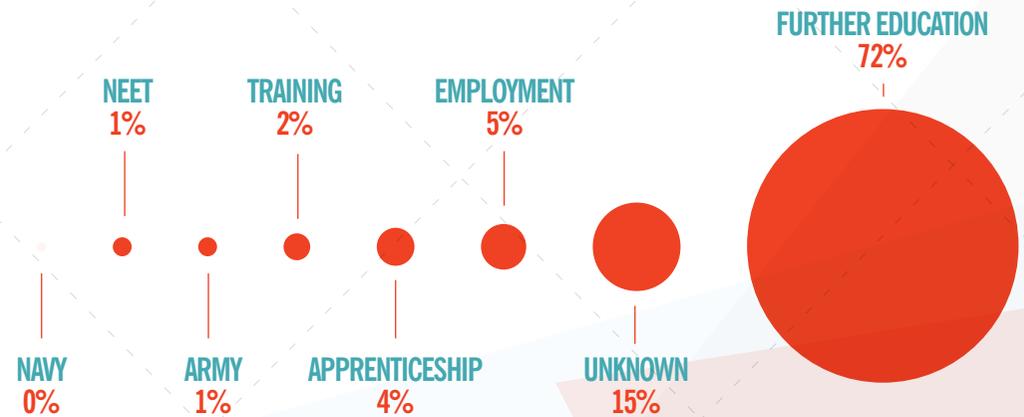
Of those Year 11 students who completed a SkillForce Long Course in the 11/12 Academic Year, 84% were confirmed as moving on to a positive destination in some form of Employment, Education or Training. Of the remaining 16%, 15% were Unknown at the time of the survey and just 1% were confirmed as NEET. We are delighted with these results given that the Department for Education’s most recent NEET statistics suggest that the current NEET rate is 6.2% of 16 year olds and 17% of 16 to 24 years olds. It means we can be confident we are achieving our aims of facilitating aspirations and achievement and inspiring young people to succeed. We would like the percentage of Unknown destinations to be lower, and have taken steps to improve this for next year.

The following table and diagram show the destinations of the Year 11 students.

RESULTS

DESTINATION	COUNT	%
Further Education	607	72.35
Unknown	129	15.38
Employment	41	4.89
Apprenticeship	32	3.81
Training	14	1.67
Army	9	1.07
NEET	6	0.72
Navy	1	0.12
	839	100.00

The following pie chart shows the breakdown of destinations of the Year 11 leavers.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

DESTINATIONS OF STUDENTS ON FREE SCHOOL MEALS

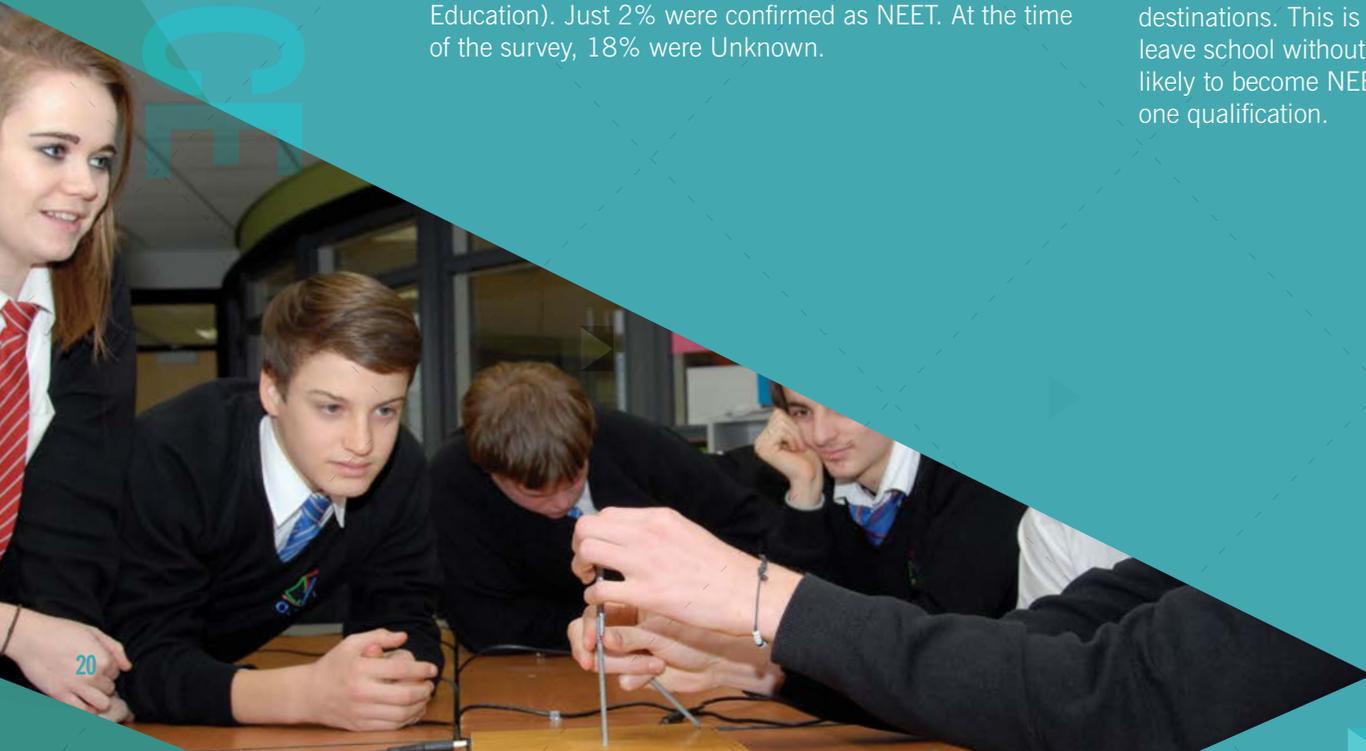
There is a lot of evidence to suggest that students eligible for Free School Meals are more likely to become NEET upon leaving school than their peers. Indeed, nationally published statistics indicate that only 9% of students on Free School Meals go onto Further Education after leaving compulsory education.

However, in the 11/12 Academic Year, 72% of SkillForce's Year 11 Students on Free School Meals went onto Further Education upon leaving school. Furthermore, a total of 80% of students on Free School Meals went into some form of Education, Employment or Training (including Further Education). Just 2% were confirmed as NEET. At the time of the survey, 18% were Unknown.

QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

Whilst studying the SkillForce curriculum students have the opportunity to complete a variety of accredited Qualifications and Awards in areas such as employability and leadership. These Qualifications and Awards provide practical knowledge and skills that will facilitate success in the future and will be important evidence for progression onto Further Education, Employment or Training.

Some of our students are likely to leave school without GCSEs. For these students the Qualifications and Awards they achieve with SkillForce are their only opportunity to gain the tools needed to progress to positive post-16 destinations. This is fundamental, as young people who leave school without any qualifications are four times more likely to become NEET than their peers who achieve at least one qualification.



QUALIFICATIONS GAINED ON LONG COURSES

In the 2011/2012 Academic Year, 839 Year 11 students in England completed a SkillForce Long Course. On average, each student gained 5.01 Qualifications and Awards each. These accreditations mean that the students have a really good opportunity to continue into Further Education or other forms of Training or Employment. (Please see the Destinations page for a breakdown of the progression data for these students).

The following shows some of the key Qualifications and Awards achieved by these students.

- ▶ 261 students achieved the ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness at Level 1
- ▶ 163 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award
- ▶ 147 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Service Award
- ▶ 162 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Physical Recreation Award

- ▶ 141 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Expedition Award
- ▶ 472 students achieved their Young First Aider Award
- ▶ 457 students achieved the National Navigation Award
- ▶ 289 students achieved ASDAN Wider Key Skills in Problem Solving at Level 2
- ▶ 306 students achieved ASDAN Wider Key Skills in Working With Others at Level 2
- ▶ 305 students achieved ASDAN Wider Key Skills in Improving Own Learning at Level 2
- ▶ 170 students achieved the ASDAN Certificate in Personal Effectiveness at Level 2
- ▶ 47 students achieved the ASDAN Employability Certificate
- ▶ 5 students achieved the Junior Sports Leader Award
- ▶ 34 students the BTEC Extended Certificate in Public Services at Level 2

QUALIFICATIONS GAINED ON SHORT COURSES

In addition to our Long Course provisions we also provide a range of Short Courses. Short Courses are short-term interventions which give us an opportunity to reach more young people and help them to achieve accredited Qualifications and Awards in a much shorter space of time. Indeed, students of Short Courses spend an average of just 8 days with us. In the 11/12 Academic Year we worked with 3,177 students from all school years, who achieved an average of 2.06 Qualifications and Awards each. These Qualifications and Awards also give students a really good chance of progress on to Education, Employment or Training after completing compulsory education.

The following shows some of the key Qualifications and Awards achieved by these students.

- ▶ 1,382 students achieved ASDAN Wider Key Skills in Problem Solving at Level 2
- ▶ 1,489 students achieved ASDAN Wider Key Skills in Working With Others at Level 2
- ▶ 1,295 students achieved ASDAN Wider Key Skills in Improving Own Learning at Level 2
- ▶ 1,502 students achieved their Young First Aider Award

ATTENDANCE

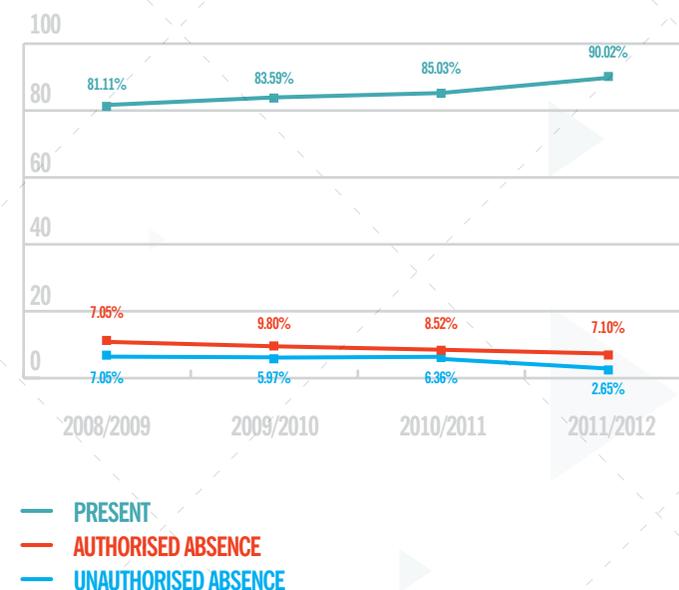
Consistent and regular attendance at school is not only a legal requirement, but an important part of young peoples' educational and social development. It is vital if they are to reach their full academic potential. If students are in school, they are also much less likely to become involved in crime or other antisocial behaviours.

As illustrated earlier, SkillForce work primarily with a distinct demographic of young people, often from disadvantaged backgrounds, with a range of Special Educational Needs or at high risk of exclusion from school. Traditionally, attendance of these groups of students is lower than the national average, and as a result we do observe slightly lower attendance rates than the Department for Education's nationally published statistics (which takes into account all secondary schools in England and Wales). However we have seen significant improvements in SkillForce year-on-year trends, which are expected to continue into the 2012/2013 Academic Year and beyond.

To illustrate this, the following table and graph show how our attendance rates have improved over the last four academic years. The graphics show:

- a) The number of half days attended by our students as a percentage of total possible attendances;
- b) The percentage of half days missed through authorised absences (as authorised by the students' school)
- c) The percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absences.

ACADEMIC YEAR	PRESENT (%)	AUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)
2008/2009	81.11	11.44	7.05
2009/2010	83.59	9.80	5.97
2010/2011	85.03	8.52	6.36
2011/2012	90.02	7.10	2.65



EVALUATION OF ABSENCE DATA

As the graph and data show, attendance rates are improving year-on-year. In turn, Authorised and Unauthorised absence rates are decreasing year-on-year and in the Academic Year 11/12 we achieved attendance rates of over 90%.

As noted, these rates are slightly lower than the Department of Education's nationally published statistics. However, by taking into account the demographic of young people we work with, we can be extremely encouraged by these results and the rate of improvement over the last four years.

Research suggests that attendance rates over 90% give students more than a 50% chance of achieving 5 A* - C GCSEs, which for many of our students would be an exceptional achievement.





THE SKILLFORCE PRINCE'S AWARD

The SkillForce Prince's Award was officially launched by our Royal Patron The Duke of Cambridge in April 2011. The Award recognises the achievements of young people who have excelled on their programme and have made a significant contribution to their local community. All graduates from the 'Community, Character, Contribution' curriculum were eligible to participate in the SkillForce Prince's Award. Young people attaining the award achieved a certificate in community volunteering together with an opportunity to receive a bursary for investment in further education, starting a business or getting experience with a charity.

As part of the SkillForce Prince's Award, students took part in a 24 hour "challenge", in which they had 24 hours to work together to benefit a cause in their community. The challenge was an activity that reinforced the knowledge and skills gained in the three areas of the SkillForce Community, Character and Contribution initiative.

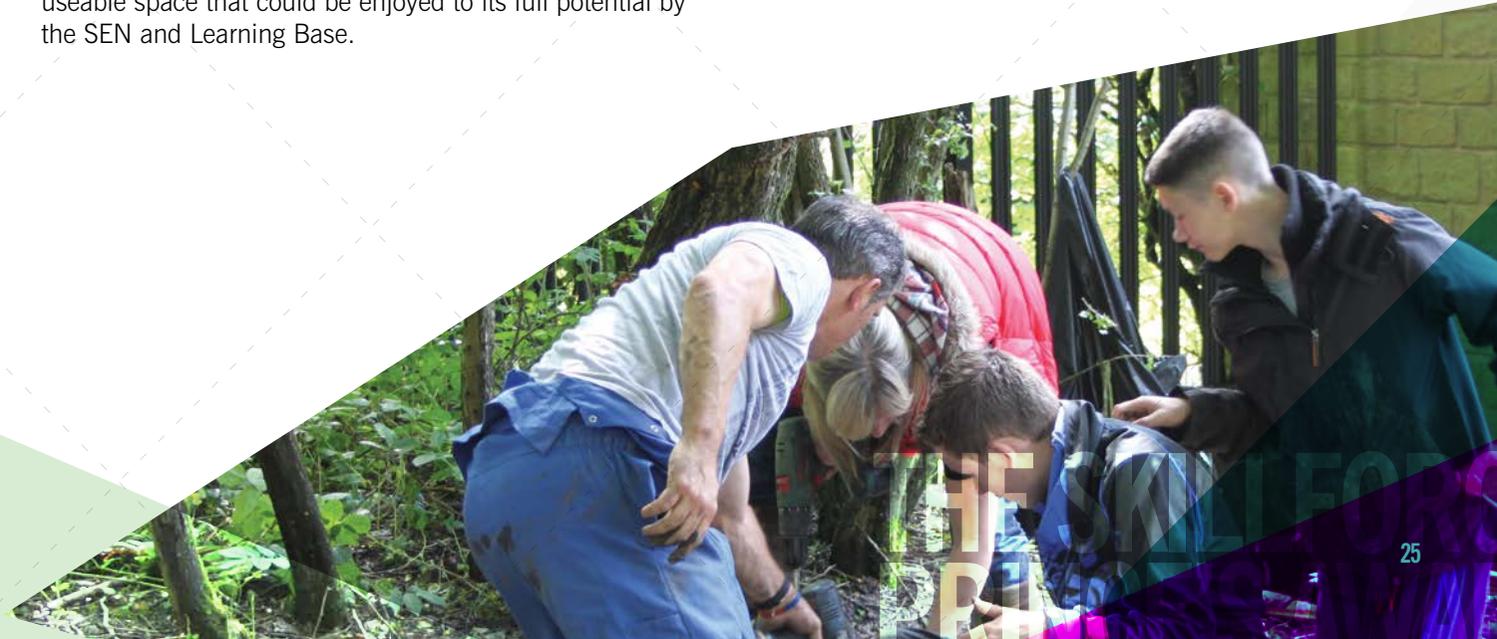
24 HOURS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN 2011/2012

Working over a week, the young people planned, implemented, and evaluated their challenge. Participants raised funds, found resources and demonstrated support for their local community. Young people chose their own cause to support (with the support of our instructors).

The work involved in the Challenge was intended to be demanding. The challengers worked together to develop their plans. They set clear goals, fundraised, communicated and executed what they wanted to achieve, and ensured teamwork and problem solving were carried out in a constructive way. Finally the young people reviewed and presented the outcomes, taking full responsibility for their achievements.

There were four groups that took part in the “24 Hours to Make a Difference” Challenge in the 11/12 Academic Year, located in Lanarkshire, Hampshire, Moray and Oldham. In Oldham, 15 students identified an area of disused land at Saddleworth School that could be significantly improved. They planned to transform the area into a place where Special Educational Needs and Learning Base students could go for outside learning and spend their lunchtimes. Students worked tirelessly over a very wet and windy weekend to create a welcoming and accessible space for the students. The group cut back tree branches, created a large hard standing picnic area, dug out borders to plant flowers and shrubs, swept, cleaned and washed down the existing pathways, weeded, litter picked and generally tidied the whole area. The result was a welcoming, accessible and useable space that could be enjoyed to its full potential by the SEN and Learning Base.

In Hampshire, the students recognised that Fareham North West Community Centre, which was very well-used by the local community and by the students themselves, was showing signs of severe wear and tear and the centre and gardens were in need of refurbishment. The students deep cleaned all rooms in the community centre, repaired furniture and fittings throughout the centre, cleaned light fittings, blinds and windows, washed down the double glazing and facets, re-decorated through the community hall and staff room, emptied stores of unwanted equipment and landscaped and tidied gardens belonging to the centre. The result was a place at the heart of the community that could be enjoyed by local residents, as well as creating a useable and safe space for the students.



“I FEEL PRIVILEGED TO BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE PRINCE. THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CHANGE MY LIFE AND IT HAS INFLUENCED MY CAREER PATH”

GEORGE, LANARKSHIRE

“I ENJOY SCHOOL MORE NOW BECAUSE OF SKILLFORCE. I LIKE THE WAY WE LEARN. I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT TO TRY THINGS”

TEEGAN, GREATER MANCHESTER.

“SKILLFORCE HAS GIVEN ME LOADS OF CONFIDENCE. THE INSTRUCTORS ARE VERY FRIENDLY AND REALLY MOTIVATING”

FREJA, HAMPSHIRE

“WE ARE ALL SO HAPPY ABOUT WINNING THE AWARD AND BEING GIVEN THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY MAKES IT EVEN BETTER,”

RYAN, LANARKSHIRE

THE AWARD WINNERS

Ten students that took part in the Challenge were awarded the first SkillForce Prince's Award. These students travelled from all over the country to St. James's Palace in London to receive their awards from The Duke of Cambridge at a special Ceremony and Gala Dinner. The students met The Duke and had their awards presented to them by His Royal Highness.



**“SKILLFORCE DOES SUCH
REMARKABLE WORK WITH
YOUNG PEOPLE”**

HRH THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, ROYAL PATRON

OTHER MEASURES OF PROGRESSION

SkillForce knows that every young person is an individual, and development and progression can mean different things to different students. Therefore when we look at how the charity has an impact on students we consider objective outcomes such as attainment, attendance and destinations, and also subjective outcomes, such as confidence, attitudes and school.

These outcomes have traditionally been harder to measure, yet represent a huge proportion of development. To capture progression in a more holistic sense, a detailed framework has been developed.

For this year, students are asked to complete two surveys: one at the beginning of their SkillForce course to establish a baseline and one at the end of their course. We can then compare the two surveys to quantify how students develop and progress.

These results focus mainly on confidence, attitude, attitudes towards and relationships with school and teachers and how students feel SkillForce has had an impact on their lives. For the 12/13 Academic Year, the framework will be adapted slightly. You can read more about this in the 'Aims for Next Year' section.

CONFIDENCE AND ATTITUDES

When assessing our impact in these areas we focus on maturity, confidence, respect and overall happiness.

With maturity, students will recognise when and how to behave appropriately according to the circumstances and culture they are in. They will recognise the difference between right and wrong, and understand how to be responsible and respectful.

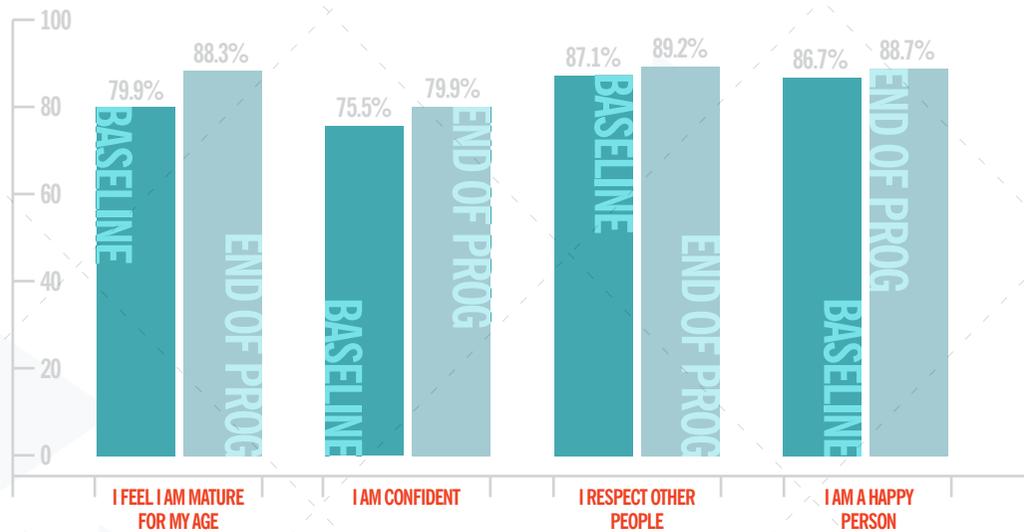
With increased confidence and self-confidence, students will have the belief in themselves to try new things and make new friends. Relationships with adults and their peers will be stronger, their ability to cope when their expectations are not met will be strengthened, and they will continue to be positive and accepting.

Young people who respect others are more likely to exhibit behaviours conducive to effective learning in school. They will be punctual, raise their hand in class, complete homework on time, follow direction, address staff and teachers appropriately and be kind and thoughtful to others. By being respectful of boundaries, property and people, young people have a greater chance of a successful school career and beyond.

Research suggests that what 'happiness' means to young people is complex and multidimensional. We know that the word 'happiness' is synonymous with many other emotions such as 'joy', 'achievement', 'fun', and being 'cool, calm and collected'. By helping to increase the happiness of our students they will enjoy better relationships, feel more positive about their environment and themselves, and enjoy a greater degree of life satisfaction.

To understand how we have influenced these aspects of our students' lives, they were asked to either Agree or Disagree with a series of statements. The following graph shows the statements posed and percentage of respondents that 'Agreed'. The Baseline and End of programme values are shown for comparative purposes.

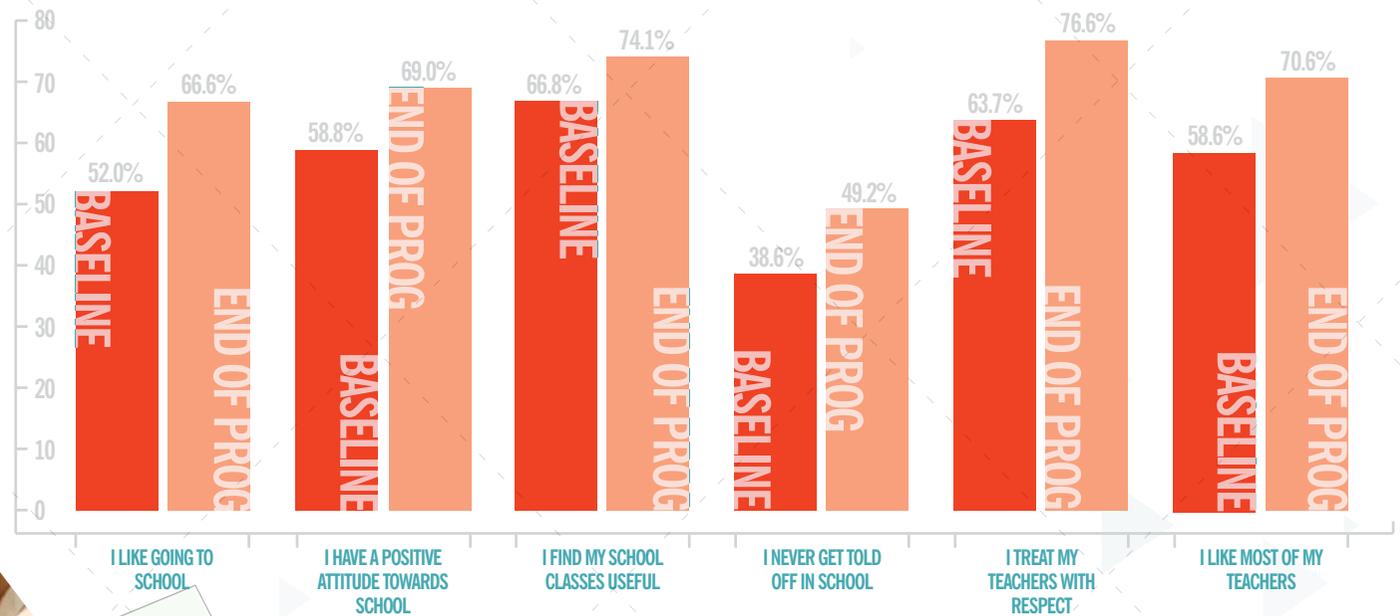
EVALUATION OF THE HOLISTIC APPROACH DATA



The results suggest that, on the whole, a relatively large percentage of young people agreed with each statement at the beginning of their SkillForce programme – a higher percentage than expected. Nevertheless, for each aspect – maturity, confidence, respect and happiness – a greater proportion of young people believed themselves to possess these qualities after completing their SkillForce programme. The biggest improvement is in how young people perceive their own maturity – at the end of the programme 88.3% considered themselves mature for their age. 79.9% felt that they were confident, 89.2% felt they had respect for other people and 88.7% agreed they were a happy person after completing a programme.

ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL

Often, the students we work with have a difficult time in their mainstream school classes or difficult relationships with their teachers. The effect can be that students do not achieve their academic potential or progress onto positive destinations. To gauge the impact SkillForce has on students' attitudes to school we asked students to rate a series of statements with regards to how they felt about their wider school environment. The following graph shows the percentage of students who agreed with the statements put to them:





EVALUATION OF DATA ON ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL

The results of the questions asked relating to attitudes towards school suggest that young people are less positive about school than they are about their own qualities. However, we do see greater overall improvement in attitudes towards school through the SkillForce provision. On average, 11.6% of young people feel more positive about each aspect after completing their SkillForce programme.

The greatest increases are seen in enjoyment of school and relationships with teachers - 14.6% and 14% extra, respectively, increasing to 66.6% and 70.6%.

ATTITUDES TO SKILLFORCE

We also asked students to rate how they felt about several aspects of their SkillForce experience. We followed a similar framework for our questions, however this time we asked specifically how the young person's SkillForce provision had influenced each aspect. Students were asked to rate whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. The following graphics show the percentage of respondents that agreed with the statements put to them. These questions were put to the students at the end of their SkillForce programme.

SKILLFORCE HAS HELPED ME TO BE MORE MATURE
84.1%

SINCE JOINING SKILLFORCE I RESPECT PEOPLE MORE
85.3%

SINCE JOINING SKILLFORCE I AM A HAPPIER PERSON
83.8%

SKILLFORCE HAS HELPED ME TO FEEL MORE CONFIDENT
90.2%

EVALUATION OF DATA OF ATTITUDES TO SKILLFORCE

The results are overwhelmingly positive and encouraging. A massive 90% of students felt that SkillForce helped them to become more confident. 85% feel that SkillForce has helped them to respect people more. 84% believe SkillForce has helped them to be more mature. 84% agree that, since being involved with SkillForce, they are happier. Through improving each aspect we expect to see greater academic success, better relationships with teachers, adults and peers, improved behaviour and greater overall life satisfaction. These results are fantastic and reinforce that the charity is meeting its aims and making positive changes in the lives of young people.

HOW HAS SKILLFORCE HAD AN IMPACT ON ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL?

Finally, we asked students to rate how they felt SkillForce had impacted upon their attitudes towards school and how they felt about their SkillForce experience as a whole. We asked students to agree or disagree with the following statements. The following graphics show the percentage of respondents that agreed with the statements put to them. Again we asked students to agree or disagree with a series of statements. These questions were put to the students at the end of their SkillForce programme.



EVALUATION OF DATA OF SKILLFORCE IMPACT ON ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL

The responses were overwhelmingly positive and encouraging. Overall, 86% of students felt SkillForce had helped them to have a more positive attitude towards school; this will give them a much greater chance of academic achievement and educational success. 92% enjoyed their SkillForce classes and 94% felt they had been useful. Finally, a huge 94% felt they had good relationships with their SkillForce Instructors.



THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

PART THREE - PRIMARY TRANSITION

Our third outcome for young people is being piloted in 2013. It is mentioned briefly in this report because we are putting in place the evaluation tools now in order that we can measure our Social Impact next year.

PURPOSE OF PRIMARY TRANSITION PROGRAMME

The step from primary to secondary school can be daunting. In a single summer, children leave a small, family-like environment with one or two teachers and return to a bigger, more complicated timetable, with many teachers and competing demands.

It is a time when confidence can fall away and progress can dip. We know schools and teaching staff do all they can to help. We have developed a programme (called Ethos, and in pilot in 2013) to offer support at the all-important transition from primary to secondary school. We strongly believe that early engagement helps prevent future problems with behaviour, attendance or poor performance. Our pilot programme is working with Key Stages 2 and 3.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

We will work with a secondary school and the main primary schools which feed it. SkillForce instructors work with whole classes of primary school children one afternoon or morning a week, and a cohort at the secondary school at other times.

In a fun and engaging way, the instructors are helping prepare the young people with exercises and challenges which build confidence, teamwork, self-resilience and self-awareness. In the new autumn term, when the children step up into the secondary school, our SkillForce instructors will be there to help them meet the challenges of new routines, timetables and ways of learning.

We have put a range of evaluation tools in place to measure success and positive outcomes for the young people and look forward to presenting the results in our next Impact Report.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

PART FOUR - A BRIDGE FOR MILITARY INTO EDUCATION

MILITARY TO MENTORS

SkillForce has employed over 600 ex-Forces personnel since it was founded, including Wounded, Injured and Sick personnel. We are an approved provider for Career Transition Partnerships and Enhanced Learning Credits (schemes that HM Armed Forces use to support personnel moving onto next steps and new careers).

Our charity sees itself as a valuable bridge between the Armed Forces and the education sector. This is the fourth outcome we work towards. We are keen to develop this strand of our work, and have established strong working relationships over many years with the Ministry of Defence, Department for Education, Help for Heroes and The Royal British Legion in order to help servicemen and women take a step towards working in education or with young people.

Our most recent initiative has been the Military to Mentors programme.

In July 2011, the Department for Education commissioned SkillForce to find and develop 100 ex-Service personnel as mentors to young people. As mentors, the trainees would work with young people on a one-to-one basis and, by providing even more intensive support, inspire, motivate and help mentees to make the best of their education and maximise their potential. Mentors challenge the mentees' behaviour and attitudes, and assist them in taking responsibility for others and their environment for the greater good of the community.

As part of the Military to Mentors training course, trainee mentors undertook four weeks of formal learning, qualifying them in a range of subjects including Mentoring for Young Learners (ILM), PTLLS (City & Guilds), Conflict Resolution & Personal Safety (CIEH) and Child Protection (NSPCC). Trainees also experienced six weeks of working directly with young people in schools or other youth projects – either with SkillForce or with our training partners; Endeavour and Knowsley Skills Academy - practicing the skills they had gained during their training by providing supervised mentor-support to those young people who had the potential to benefit from the extra and more intensive support.



THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

When we looked at the impact that the trainee mentors had on mentees, we focused on relationships built between mentor and mentee, improvements in the mentees' confidence, optimism and how they felt about mentoring as an approach. We asked mentees to rate whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. The following presents a summary of the results relating to relationships. All percentages represent the percentage of students agreeing with each statement:

97% I GOT ON WELL WITH MY MENTOR
 MY MENTOR HELPED ME TO
 WORKOUT THINGS I NEED TO
 I FELT LISTENED TO BY MY MENTOR
 MY MENTOR GAVE ME SUPPORT
 AND ENCOURAGEMENT

98% I FELT
 VALUED
 BY MY
 MENTOR

Secondly, we asked students to rate how they felt about aspects of their confidence and optimism. The following presents a summary of these results:

91% I UNDERSTAND
 MYSELF AS
 A RESULT OF
 MENTORING

92% I FEEL MORE
 CONFIDENT
 ABOUT
 MYSELF

89% I FEEL MORE OPTIMISTIC
 ABOUT MY FUTURE

97% I UNDERSTAND HOW
 TO SET MYSELF
 ACHIEVABLE GOALS

Finally, we asked students to rate how they felt about mentoring as an approach. The following presents a summary of these results:

95% **HAVING A MENTOR
HAS BEEN A VALUABLE
EXPERIENCE FOR ME**

**I WOULD
RECOMMEND
MENTORING TO
MY FRIEND** **92%**

KEY RESULTS

We found that:

- ▶ 97% of the mentees surveyed felt listened to by their mentor.
- ▶ 97% felt that their mentor gave them support and encouragement.
- ▶ 98% felt genuinely valued by their mentor.
- ▶ 92% felt more confident about themselves as a result of the mentoring sessions.
- ▶ 89% felt more optimistic about their future.
- ▶ 95% of the mentees asked thought that having a mentor had been a valuable experience for them.





IMPACT ON MENTORS

In addition to inspiring and motivating mentees, the Military to Mentors programme is also designed to equip delegates with the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to take them into formal employment within the education sector or with Young People in other capacities. Of the graduates tracked who completed a programme in the academic year 11/12, 47% are now working directly with young people – many with SkillForce itself and our training partners. Some have even been directly employed by the schools in which they did their placements. 17% are in other forms of employment, 10% are completing their resettlement period with the Armed Forces, 13% were unknown at the time of the survey and the remaining 11% are actively seeking employment within the education sector.

LOOKING AHEAD

The success of our programmes in 11/12 has led to us training another 100 ex-Service personnel in the 12/13 Academic Year. In December 2012, 15 mentors completed the Military to Mentors programme, with six more courses beginning between January and April 2013. We will continue to monitor and track the impact on mentors and mentees and are confident in achieving even more positive results.

SKILLFORCE IN SCOTLAND

SkillForce has operated as a charity in Scotland since 2004. Our work there is built around the Scottish education system, and therefore warrants special mention as its excellent outcomes and impacts are delivered and measured in a different way than in England and Wales.

In Scotland, we have three teams: Moray, Lanarkshire and Edinburgh and Forth Valley. The outcomes they achieve are closely akin to a) bringing the hard-to-reach back on track, and b) preparing post-16 students for next steps in work, education or training.

As with the rest of this report, the information to be presented will include qualifications and awards achieved by students, destinations of the S4 Leavers, attendance, and the more holistic outcomes such as confidence, attitudes and the overall SkillForce experience of our students.



QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

Qualifications and Awards gained on Long Courses

In the 2011/2012 Academic Year, 333 S4 students completed a SkillForce Long Course. On average, each S4 student gained 6.08 Qualifications and Awards each. These are exceptional achievements by our students and mean that they have a really good opportunity to continue into Further Education or other forms of Training or Employment. (Please see the Destinations section below for a breakdown of the progression data for these students). The following shows some of the key Qualifications and Awards achieved by these students.

- ▶ 240 students achieved the ASDAN Bronze Award
- ▶ 184 students achieved the ASDAN Silver Challenge Award
- ▶ 112 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award
- ▶ 217 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Skills Award
- ▶ 208 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Physical Recreation Award
- ▶ 136 students achieved The Duke of Edinburgh Expedition Award
- ▶ 275 students achieved their Young First Aider Award
- ▶ 267 students achieved the Heartstart Award

DESTINATIONS

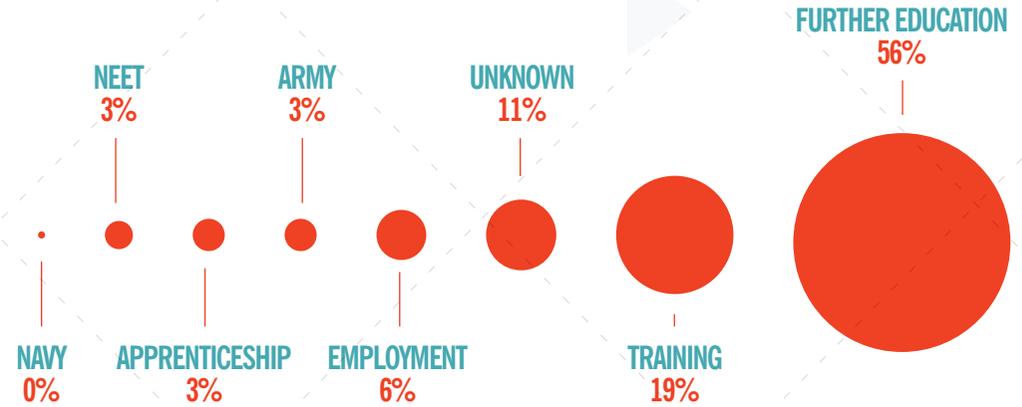
As noted earlier when discussing the destinations of the English Year 11 students, SkillForce track the destinations of our S4 Leavers 4-6 months after completing a course. Of the S4 students who completed a SkillForce Long Course in the 11/12 Academic Year, 87% were confirmed as moving onto a positive destination in some form of Education, Employment or Training. Of the remaining 13%, 11% were Unknown at the time of the survey and just 2% were confirmed as NEET. We are absolutely delighted with these results, especially given that the Scottish Government's most recent NEET statistics suggest that 13.3% of 16-19 year olds are NEET.

Although we would like to see the percentage of Unknown destinations reduced, as is the case in England, we have taken proactive steps to reduce this figure going forwards.

RESULTS

The following table and diagram show the breakdown of S4 destinations.

DESTINATION	COUNT	%
Further Education	186	55.9
Training	64	19.2
Unknown	35	10.5
Employment	19	5.7
Apprenticeship	10	3.0
Army	10	3.0
NEET	8	2.4
Navy	1	0.3
	333	100.00



DESTINATIONS OF STUDENTS ON FREE SCHOOL MEALS

There is a lot of evidence to suggest that students eligible for Free School Meals are more likely to become NEET upon leaving school than their peers. Indeed, nationally published statistics indicate that only 9% of students on Free School Meals go onto Further Education after leaving compulsory education. However, in the 11/12 Academic Year, 53% of S4 students on Free School Meals went onto Further Education upon leaving school. Additionally, a massive 88% went into some form of Education, Employment or Training (including Further Education). Just 2% were confirmed as NEET and, at the time of the survey, 10% were Unknown.

ATTENDANCE

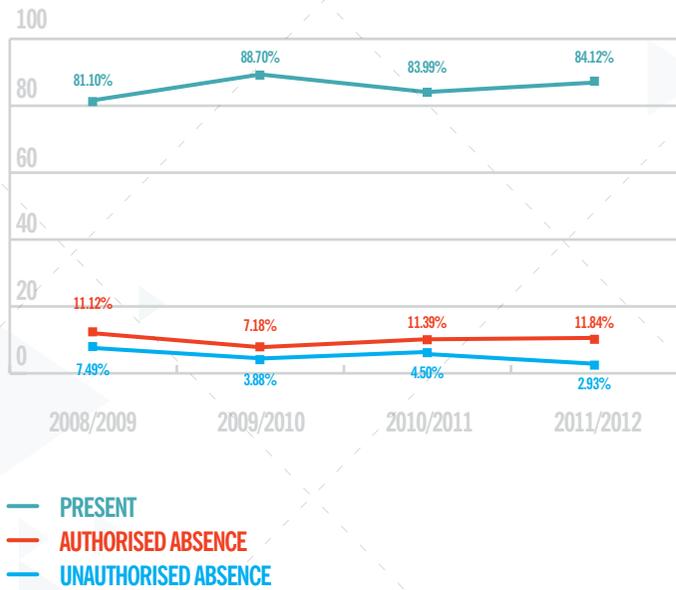
Consistent and regular attendance at school is not only a legal requirement, but an important part of young people's educational and social development. It is vital if they are to reach their full academic potential. If students are in school they are also much less likely to become involved in crime or other antisocial behaviours.

As illustrated earlier, SkillForce works primarily with a distinct demographic of young people, often from deprived backgrounds, with a range of Special Educational Needs or at high risk of exclusion from school. Traditionally, attendance of these groups of students is lower than the national average, and as a result we do observe slightly lower attendance rates than the Scottish Government's nationally published statistics (which takes into account all secondary schools in Scotland).

The following table and graph illustrates the performance of attendance rates over the last four academic years. The table and graph show:

- The number of half days attended by our students as a percentage of total possible attendances;
- The percentage of half days missed through authorised absences (as authorised by the students' school);
- The percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absences.

ACADEMIC YEAR	PRESENT (%)	AUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)
2008/2009	81.10	11.12	7.49
2009/2010	88.70	7.18	3.88
2010/2011	83.99	11.39	4.50
2011/2012	84.12	11.84	2.93



As the graph and data show, attendance rates have proved variable over the last four years. In 2011/2012 the 'Present' percentage is not quite as strong as 2009/2010, however, more encouragingly, has improved when compared to 2008/2009 and 2010/2011. Unauthorised absence rates are lower in 11/12 than they have ever been, suggesting that the lower Present percentage is as a result of Authorised Absences and therefore absence is for valid, unavoidable reasons.

However, in performing this analysis and evaluating our findings, we have reviewed our method for data collection and identified certain weaknesses. We have now proactively taken steps to correct this imbalance and, from the 2012/2013 Academic Year, have changed the way we collect attendance data to ensure robustness in our conclusions.

We have also taken a critical look at our own performance and noted that attendance is slightly lower than we expected, despite the identified issues in data collection. In our constant drive to improve ourselves and ensure our programmes are as engaging and effective as possible we can use these findings to drive internal improvement and implement actions to improve attendance.

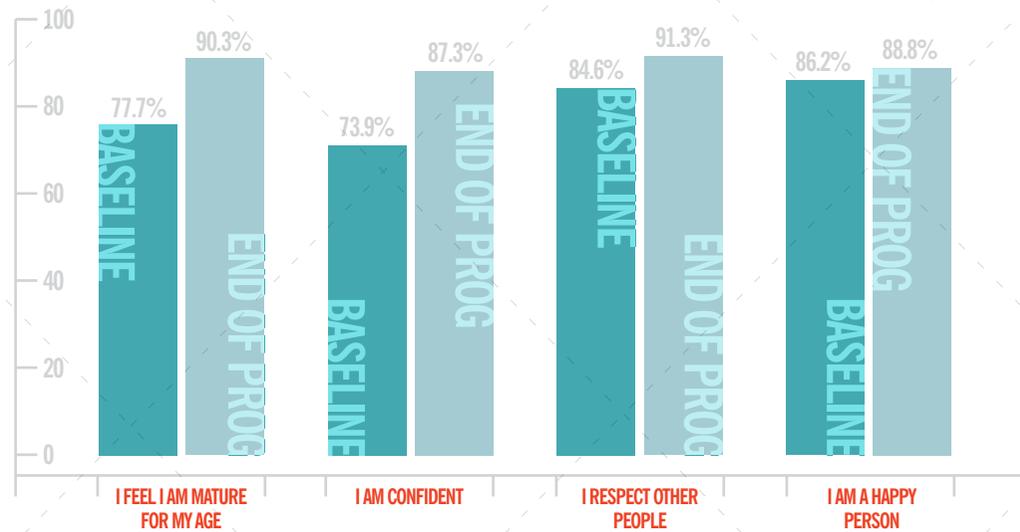
OTHER MEASURES OF PROGRESSION

As with the students in England, we also consider subjective outcomes when thinking about progression - qualities such as confidence, attitudes and school experience. For this year, students are asked to complete two surveys: one at the beginning of their SkillForce course to establish a baseline and one at the end of their course to gauge progression. We can then compare the two surveys to quantify how students develop.

These results focus mainly on confidence and attitude, attitudes towards school, relationships with teachers and how students feel SkillForce has impacted their lives.

CONFIDENCE AND ATTITUDES

When assessing our impact in these areas we focus on maturity, confidence, respect and overall happiness. Students were asked to either Agree or Disagree with a series of statements. The following graph shows the percentage of respondents that 'Agreed' with the statements posed. The baseline and end of programme values are shown for comparative purposes.



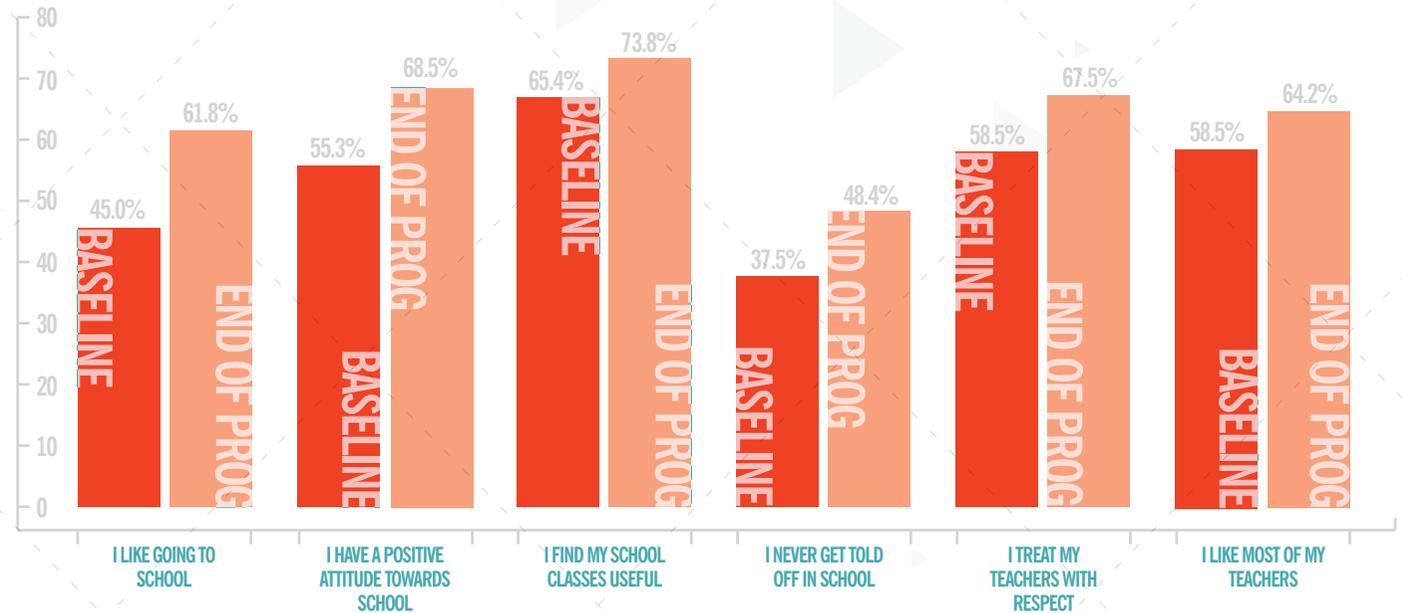
EVALUATION

The results suggest that, on the whole, a relatively large percentage of young people agreed with each statement at the beginning of their SkillForce programme – a higher percentage than expected. Nevertheless, for each aspect – maturity, confidence, respect and happiness – a greater proportion of young people believed themselves to possess these qualities after completing their SkillForce programme.

The biggest improvement was in how the young people perceived their own maturity. At the end of the programme, 90% considered themselves mature for their age. 87% felt that they were confident. 91% felt they had respect for other people. Finally, 89% agreed that they were happy.

SCHOOL

Often, the students we work with have a difficult time in their mainstream school classes or difficult relationships with their teachers. The effect can be that students do not achieve their academic potential or progress onto positive destinations. To gauge the impact SkillForce has on students' attitudes to school we asked students to rate a series of statements with regards to how they felt about their wider school environment. The following graph shows the percentage of respondents that 'Agreed' with the statements posed. The baseline and end of programme values are shown for comparative purposes.



EVALUATION OF THIS DATA

The results suggest that young people are less positive about school than they are about their own qualities. However, we do see greater overall improvement in attitudes towards school through the SkillForce provision. On average, 11% of young people feel more positive about each aspect after completing their SkillForce programme. The greatest increases are seen in enjoyment of school and attitudes towards school. After the SkillForce programme, an extra 17% and 13% respectively, agreed with the statements, increasing to 62% and 69% of students.

SKILLFORCE SCOTLAND'S IMPACT ON CONFIDENCE AND ATTITUDES

We also asked students to rate how they felt about several aspects of their SkillForce experience. We followed a similar framework for our questions, however this time we asked specifically how the young person's SkillForce provision had influenced each aspect. Students were asked to rate whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. The following graphics show the percentage of respondents that 'Agreed' with the statements posed. This time, there is only an 'End of Programme' percentage, because students were only asked these questions on completion of a programme.

SKILLFORCE HAS HELPED ME TO BE MORE MATURE
90.1%

SINCE JOINING SKILLFORCE I RESPECT PEOPLE MORE
85.1%

SINCE JOINING SKILLFORCE I AM A HAPPIER PERSON
87.8%

SKILLFORCE HAS HELPED ME TO FEEL MORE CONFIDENT
91.4%

EVALUATION OF THIS DATA

The results are overwhelmingly positive and encouraging. A massive 91% of students felt that SkillForce helped them to become more confident. 85% feel that SkillForce has helped them to respect people more. 90% believe SkillForce has helped them to be more mature. 88% agree that they are happier after being involved with SkillForce. Through improving each aspect we expect to see greater academic success, better relationships with teachers, adults and peers, improved behaviour and greater overall life satisfaction. These results are fantastic and reinforce that the charity is meeting its aims and making positive change in people's lives.

SKILLFORCE SCOTLAND'S IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL

Finally, we asked students to rate how they felt SkillForce had impacted upon their attitudes towards school and how they felt about their SkillForce experience as a whole. We asked students to agree or disagree with a series of statements. The following graph shows the percentage of respondents that 'Agreed' with the statements posed. There is only an 'End of Programme' percentage, because students were only asked these questions on completion of a programme.



EVALUATION OF THIS DATA

Again, the responses were overwhelmingly positive and encouraging. Overall, 87% of students felt SkillForce had helped them to have a more positive attitude towards school; this will give them a much greater chance of academic achievement and educational success. 96% enjoyed their SkillForce classes and 96% felt they had been useful. Finally, 96% felt they had good relationships with their SkillForce Instructors.



COMMUNITY, CHARACTER, CONTRIBUTION

The SkillForce Community, Character and Contribution, or C3, forms the basis of many of our Long Courses. The program launched in over 60 schools in September 2011 to reach over 1,600 young people. Delivered through in-school and extra-curricular activities, it is designed to develop leadership, community awareness and community contribution. The SkillForce curriculum also supports the aims of the English education system and complements our approach in Scotland.

The program aims to create **Community** leaders that not only understand and care about the communities they live in but are committed to contribute to that community. By developing a sense of responsibility they learn to see the value in helping create a positive future for everybody. Students work on understanding the needs of others, learn how to work in teams and complete modules including relationships and leadership. This learning area also covers

outdoor activities and education on local and global issues. By working with a young person to develop their **Character**, their confidence and self-belief build too. From this, young people start to create for themselves the life they want to live and become positive role models themselves. This learning area teaches the young people how to make informed decisions and choices by understanding the options and opportunities available, and helps the students to set personal goals and work towards them in a safe and secure environment. Modules include healthy living, money management and rights and responsibilities as well as coping with change and identifying preferred career options.

Finally, **Contribution** encourages individuals to put their ideas into action, raises their aspirations and inspires them to make a contribution to the school, their families and the communities they live in. It helps them turn their aspirations into achievements and become a responsible local, national

and global citizen. This learning area also encourages young people to adopt an entrepreneurial spirit and to use their initiative in identifying and making use of resources to realise their ambitions for themselves and their communities.

There are a range of qualifications that are achieved through the Community, Character, Contribution program. These include certificates in employability and skills from ASDAN to Sports Leadership, Community Leadership and The Duke of Edinburgh Award.

All graduates from the program are eligible to participate in the SkillForce Prince's Award. Young people attaining the award achieve a certificate in community volunteering.

OUR AIMS FOR 2013 / 2014

We're extremely proud of our achievements over the last year and the ways in which we have helped young people to Engage, Prepare and Develop.

In producing this report, we have identified our strengths, our successes, and areas in which we can improve and develop. We have set ourselves challenging goals to build upon our success and improve in our weaker areas.

Over the next Academic Year we are aiming to:

- ▶ **Reach more young people by expanding our programmes focusing on the step from primary to secondary school (a key time when progress can suffer).**
- ▶ **Grow and strengthen the programmes we deliver for young people at secondary level to make school leavers even more attractive to employers and education-providers.**
- ▶ **Increase our baseline target for 2013/14 to work with 5,300 young people.**
- ▶ **Build on the success of the SkillForce Prince's Award (through our Royal Patron, The Duke of Cambridge). We want to make it a recognised standard for excellence for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. This will inspire more young people to succeed.**
- ▶ **Develop our capacity as a trainer of trainers. We want to become the provider of choice for ex-Services personnel wanting to explore career opportunities in education.**
- ▶ **Introduce a new Knowledge Management System - a system for collecting, storing and extracting data - to facilitate greater reporting capabilities, year-on-year comparisons, and more rigorous impact analysis.**

► **Improve our impact and outcome analysis by:**

- Adopting more stringent tracking processes of our leavers to reduce the percentage of 'Unknown' destinations.
- Tracking destinations of our leavers in the long-term – where are they in 1, 5 or even 10 years time?
- Attendance: we will record our students' Unauthorised Absence percentage in the year prior to them joining SkillForce in order to compare it to their attendance in the time they spend with us.
- Recording behaviour weekly on all our programmes, not just Re-engagement, so we can track our students' progress more closely.
- Considering the impact our students have on their wider community, particularly in the context of our Prince's Award, and how the 24 Hours to Make a Difference Challenge is positively benefiting local communities.
- Adapting our framework for measuring holistic progression. This includes expanding the elements we measure to include relationships, aspirations, emotional health and resilience. We will also use larger sample sizes so we can be confident that the results are robust and fully representative, survey parents and Link Teachers to gauge holistic progression from a wide variety of stakeholders, and the framework will be structured to consider the magnitude of development over time.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING NEXT YEAR'S SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT AN EVEN MORE RIGOROUS AND CHALLENGING ASSESSMENT OF THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE TO YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVES AND AN EVEN BETTER TOOL FOR SELF-EVALUATION AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT

A photograph of two men sitting at a table in what appears to be a meeting or classroom setting. The man on the left is wearing a dark blue polo shirt with a light blue collar and a name tag that says "NOEL". The man on the right is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and a green and white striped tie. They are both looking at each other and smiling. There are papers and pens on the table in front of them. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and office equipment.

CONCLUSION

Our results show that 2011/2012 has been a great year for inspiring young people and helping them to Engage, Prepare and Develop. More students than ever progressed onto Further Education, Employment or Training; fewer students became NEET; attendance rates surpassed 90%; on average, students achieved 5 Qualifications or Awards each in England and 6 Qualifications and Awards in Scotland; more than 90% of students felt SkillForce had given them confidence and over 85% had a more positive attitude to school.

In addition, we have seen unprecedented success with the roll out of two new projects: the re-engagement programme (Zero Exclusion), putting the most vulnerable and difficult to reach students back on track by improving behaviour and helping them re-integrate into mainstream education and; Military to Mentors, which builds a bridge for Service leavers into a new career in education or working with young people.

In 2012/2013 we are expanding our remit to provide a programme designed to aid the transition between Primary and Secondary education, a key time when progress can suffer. By helping prepare the young people with exercises and challenges designed to build confidence, teamwork, self-resilience and self-awareness, we will give them the tools needed to succeed in secondary education, and be there to help them meet new challenges.

Finally, we are committed to inspiring young people with the help of more rigorous and impactful evaluation and analysis. New methods of measuring, collecting, storing and reporting on our data mean that we are in our strongest-ever position to quantify and communicate the difference we make, as well as being able to take a critical and in-depth look at our own performance.

THE 2012/13 ACADEMIC YEAR IS SET TO BE AN EXCELLENT YEAR FOR SKILLFORCE, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO PRESENTING OUR RESULTS IN OUR SECOND SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT IN EARLY 2014.

APPENDIX I: REFERENCES

- Attendance and Attainment Factsheet [online] Available from www.blackhill-st-marys-rc.durham.sch.uk [accessed on 10th January 2013].
- Audit Commission "Against the Odds: Targeted briefing – young people with Special Educational Needs", Audit Commission, 2010.
- Barnardo's "Second Chances: Re-engaging young people in education and training", Barnardo's, 2009.
- Burns, J. (2012) "Young jobless NEETs still top one million" BBC News [online] 22nd November 2012. Accessed 1st December 2012. Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-20444524>.
- Coles, B., Godfrey, C., Keung, A., Parrott, S. and Bradshaw, J. (2010) "Estimating the life-time cost of NEET: 16-18 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training", University of York.
- Department for Children, Schools and Families "Measuring Progress at Pupil, Schools and National Level", Department for Children Schools and Families, 2009.
- Department for Education "NEET Statistics – Quarterly Brief – Quarter 3 2012", Department for Education, 2012.
- Department for Education "Special Educational Needs in England", Department for Education, January 2012.
- Hallam, S., Rogers, L., Rhamine, J. (2010) "Staff perceptions of the success of an alternative curriculum: SkillForce" (London: Institute of Education).
- Hansard HC Deb 17th March 2010, vol 507, col 907W.
- New Philanthropy Capital "Getting back on track: Helping young people not in education, employment or training in England", New Philanthropy Capital, 2009.
- North Lincolnshire Council, "Every Minute Counts", Education Welfare Service, North Lincolnshire, 2010.
- Office for National Statistics "Measuring National Well-being – Children's Well-being", ONS, 2012.
- Ofsted "Measuring happiness", Ofsted, 2012.
- Ofsted "Pupil Referral Units: Establishing successful practice in pupil referral units and local authorities", Ofsted, 2007.
- Reidy, T. "Excluded pupils find few opportunities outside mainstream state school" The Guardian [online] 2nd December 2012. [Accessed 21st January 2013] Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2012/dec/02/excluded-pupils-few-chances-outside-school>.
- Results from SkillForce Long Course Holistic Progression Surveys, June 2012.
- SkillForce Development, [no date] SkillForce Development Website [online], [Accessed multiple times].
- Sodha, S. and Guglielmi, S. (2009) "A stitch in time: tackling educational disengagement: Interim Report" Demos [online], [Accessed 18th November 2012] Available from: <http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/a-stitch-in-time-tackling-educational-disengagement>.
- Taylor, C. (2012) "Improving Attendance at School", Department for Education.
- The Scottish Government "High Level Summary of Statistics data for Labour Market Trends" [online], Accessed 21st May 2013, Available from <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/TrendData>.
- The Value of SkillForce, 2005.
- University College Union "Young people not in Employment, Education or Training", University College Union, 2010.

APPENDIX II: OUR EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

- On the Re-engagement programme Instructors complete weekly behaviour monitoring forms for every student on the course. Ten aspects of good behaviour are rated according to whether the student 'always' exhibits each measure, 'mostly' does, 'sometimes' does, 'rarely' does or 'never' does. Each rating is assigned a score out of 100. If the student 'always' achieves a specified measure they are awarded a score of 100; 'mostly' scores 75; 'sometimes' scores 50; 'rarely' scores 25 and if a student 'never' achieves the measures of good behaviour they are awarded a 0. An average of these scores is then taken to give one behaviour score out of 100 per week of the course.
- To determine how students developed in soft, difficult-to-measure ways, we used an online, bespoke survey which was completed within the first four weeks of the SkillForce programme beginning and the last four weeks of students' time with us. In England, the survey was completed by 594 students at the beginning and 199 students at the end. In Scotland, 318 students completed the survey at the beginning and 165 did so at the end.
- We surveyed the Headteachers and Link Teachers of our schools in Scotland in the 3 months after students completed their programmes in Summer 2012 to measure of learning and engagement outcomes.
- We commissioned a comprehensive external evaluation of our Re-engagement pilot programme in the Summer term of 2011/2012 to provide a robust and transparent look at the success of the programme.
- To capture attendance rates of our students, instructors take registers for every SkillForce session. They record whether a student is Present, Absent for a valid, authorised reason (as authorised by the students' school), or Absent for unauthorised reasons (capturing truancy). We then store and analyse this information centrally and use it to calculate and aggregate Present percentage, an aggregate Authorised Absence percentage and an aggregate Unauthorised Absence percentage.
- To capture the destinations of our Year 11 and S4 Leavers, we carefully track where our students are 4 to 6 months after completing a SkillForce programme. This is captured locally in collaboration with students' schools. This data is then analysed centrally and used to calculate the percentage of leavers that entered Employment, Education or Training upon leaving SkillForce. Occasionally we have students who we cannot track after leaving a programme for various reasons, though an attempt is made to establish the destination of all students. We class these destinations as 'Unknown', and they always appear in the presentation of our results.
- Qualifications and Awards achieved by our students during their time with us are recorded locally by Instructors and managed by Area Managers. Again, we analyse this data centrally and show the number of Qualifications and Awards achieved by each student, on average.

APPENDIX III: THE SKILLFORCE TEAM

Trustees:

Lord Freeman
 Lord Moonie
 Andrew McCully OBE
 Jan Richardson MBE
 David Courtley
 Gary Lewitt
 Greg Parston
 Gavin Sanderson
 John Graham
 Michael Hatchwell
 Maureen McCreath
 Michail Zekkos
 Roy Bliss
 Shelley Collins

Senior Leadership Team:

Peter Cross OBE, Chief Executive Officer
 David Huxley, Finance Director
 Rob Shearing, Business Development,
 Marketing & PR Director
 Elizabeth Manning, Fundraising Director
 Lucinda Elliott, Programme Design
 & Innovation Director
 Claire Streets, Support Services Director
 Steve Handford, Quality and Training Director
 Simon Hall, Operations Director

Royal Patron:

HRH The Duke of Cambridge KG, KT

Patrons:

General The Lord Ramsbotham GCB, CBE
 General The Lord Dannatt GCB, CBE, MC

Ambassadors:

Air Vice-Marshal Tony Stables CBE
 Lord Ashcroft KCMG
 Alfie Boe
 Blondel Cluff
 Clive Hexton
 Edward Parker
 John Gullett
 Kate Adie OBE
 Keri-Anne Payne

APPENDIX IV: OUR DONORS

100 Women in Hedge Funds

ABF The Soldiers' Charity
 Anglo American PLC
 CHK Charities Ltd
 Coeur Blanc Event
 Coface
 Comic Relief Sport for Change
 Dr Guthrie's Association
 Enlight
 ForceSelect Foundation
 Garfield Weston Foundation
 GS May Family Fund
 Help for Heroes
 Heron International
 Jack Riley Trust
 John Lyon's Charity
 Leng Charitable Trust
 Lord Bamby's Foundation
 Man Group PLC
 Mars in the Community
 Nexen Petroleum UK Ltd
 Private Equity Foundation
 Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust
 Royal British Legion
 Telegraph Appeal

The A W Lymn Centenary Foundation
 The Dulverton Trust
 The Englefield Trust
 The Freemasons' Grand Charity
 The George Oliver Foundation
 The Gerald Palmer Eling Trust
 The Henry Smith Charity
 The Herbert & Peter Blagrave Charitable Trust
 The Hobson Charity Limited
 The Lake House Charitable Foundation
 The Linbury Trust
 The Worshipful Company of Merchant Taylor's
 The Michael Marsh Charitable Trust
 The Moffat Charitable Trust
 The Peter Courtauld Charitable Trust
 The Poppy Factory
 The Worshipful Company of Saddler's
 Charitable Fund
 The Statham Family Charitable Trust
 The Stone Foundation
 The William Wates Memorial Trust
 The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers
 Vitrol Charitable Foundation
 Walking With The Wounded

Ways you can help

SkillForce is looking for individuals, grant-makers and businesses who believe as passionately as we do about inspiring young people to succeed. Charitable donations and grants are critical to our success in delivering programmes that achieve measurable outcomes. Time can often be as valuable as money: volunteers are very welcome to help us run a specific event or project, such as a residential. A member of our Fundraising Team can discuss your particular interests and how you can make a real difference to young people, our ex-service staff, and the communities where they live. Please call us anytime on **01623 827631** or email fundraising@skillforce.org

APPENDIX V: CONTACT US

Head Office

SkillForce (Development) Ltd
Edwinstowe House
High Street
Edwinstowe
Nottinghamshire
NG21 9PR
Telephone: 01623 827651
Fax: 01623 827607

London Office

SkillForce
The Marine Society
202 Lambeth Road
London
SE1 7JW
Telephone: 0207 6547083

SkillForce Development (A company limited by guarantee)

Registered Company Number 4991442
UK Registered Charity Number 1105022
Scotland Registered Charity Number SC036035

E-mail: enquiries@skillforce.org

www.skillforce.org

 @SkillForceUK

 Find us: 'SkillForce'

APPENDIX VI: SKILLFORCE IN YOUR SCHOOL

For information about how to get involved with SkillForce, please visit our website www.skillforce.org or contact the relevant Director below:

North (Newcastle, Manchester/Liverpool & North Wales, Oldham, Bradford):

Katie Walmsley – 07726 601971

South (Thames Valley, Bath/Wilts & South Wales, Devon/Cornwall, Dorset/Solent, Oxford):

Ru Hayes – 07962 621 675

South East (London, West Kent, East Kent, Sussex, Essex/Herts):

Mick Walker – 07766 676 962

Midlands (Birmingham/West Midlands, East Midlands, East Anglia):

Karen Kay (Acting Regional Director) – 07788 784711

Scotland (Forth Valley/ Edinburgh, Lanarkshire, Moray):

Gayle Adnyana – 07827 343227



www.skillforce.org

**WE MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**