

# SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT

VOLUME 2



The difference we make to  
the lives of young people...



# PREFACE

I am delighted, in our tenth anniversary celebration year, to introduce this 2014 publication of our Social Impact Report Volume 2, covering our achievements with young people during the academic year 2012/13.

That period has been a year of transition and change for the charity, and importantly for the way we report our outcomes with young people. In order to upgrade our data capture and analysis capability, in this reporting year we have introduced a new knowledge management system and these results are the first to be published using that system.

As we embed our new ways of working and collect better impact data to introduce into the new system, our reporting capability will grow stronger and more meaningful over time. In this transition year, we have started to move towards a more programme-specific approach to our impact analysis and this will continue to be a theme of our future social impact reporting.

I am greatly heartened by the findings contained in this second volume of the SkillForce Social Impact Report and look forward to using the findings to help us develop yet more effective programmes for a larger number of young people, moving ahead.

**Peter Cross OBE**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**



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# INTRODUCTION

## WELCOME TO OUR SECOND SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT

We are an educational charity that works in partnership with schools, by developing personalised learning pathways for our students in order to support them in their academic learning and to reach their full potential. Drawing on the skills and experiences of predominantly ex-Forces personnel to inspire young people to succeed, our provision uses a mix of classroom-based and community-based off-site learning to focus on the development of skills and attributes such as leadership, teamwork, resilience, communication to raise aspirations, confidence and self-esteem; promote a sense of positive citizenship and a 'can-do' attitude to life, learning and employment. Since our inception in 2000 and subsequent move to charitable status in 2004, we have changed the lives of 50,000 young people in the UK, engaging those that are harder to reach, developing their skills and attributes, promoting their sense of wellbeing through clear progress and achievement, and preparing them for their next steps.

The growing evidence to support this approach is recognised in the launch of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Social Mobility, 'Character and Resilience Manifesto'. In February 2013 the APPG held a summit involving professionals from the world of education, employment, politics and the voluntary sector as well as young people. The overwhelming conclusion was that character has a big impact on what a young person can achieve in life. Our own experiences over the past decade or so would also support this concept.

The purpose of this report is to provide evidence and feedback to our supporters and partners on the successes and achievements of the young people who have taken part in our programmes and engaged with us in a positive and enthusiastic manner for which they can be very proud. It will also evidence the wider social and economic impact nationally and locally as our young people progress to become more integrated and effective members of their communities.

Our educational programmes are delivered in Schools and are tailored to meet the needs of the young people that benefit from our programmes. The duration of our programmes can vary from three months to two years.

**OUR MISSION IS SIMPLE: TO INSPIRE  
YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE AT SCHOOL  
AND SUCCEED IN LIFE.**

**'THE RESEARCH BASE AROUND CHARACTER AND RESILIENCE MUST CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND THIS MUST BE A KEY AREA OF FOCUS. HOWEVER WE, AS A CROSS PARTY GROUP NOW BELIEVE IT IS SUFFICIENTLY COMPELLING THAT POLICY MAKERS MUST ACT'**

CHARACTER AND RESILIENCE MANIFESTO — JANUARY 2014



# HOW WE WORK

WE PUT YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF ALL WE DO

WE COOPERATE TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS - OUR OWN, EACH OTHER'S & YOUNG PEOPLE'S

WE INVEST IN & EMPOWER PEOPLE

WE UPHOLD UNSTINTINGLY & EMBED THE **SKILLFORCE WAY** THROUGHOUT OUR WORKING LIFE.



## WE ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

### The SkillForce Way

- ▶ Our professional approach is heavily influenced by our people. SkillForce employs high quality instructors with a wealth of skills and life experience.
- ▶ In many cases this expertise has been earned through service with our armed forces in all parts of the world. Having served their country they are now serving their communities.

## WORKING WITH OUR STUDENTS

### The SkillForce Way Our Instructors:

- ▶ Are positive and empathetic role models.
- ▶ Bring with them the values of a service background. These values (discipline, selflessness, courage, resilience, dedication, loyalty, dependability, respect) are the moral principles that our instructors use to guide and develop our students, irrespective of their background.
- ▶ Instil a positive attitude by engaging, preparing and developing our students. They use activity-based learning in the classroom and activities beyond it to inspire the students and raise levels of achievement.
- ▶ Place the needs and achievement of our students at the heart of our approach and celebrate their success.

## WORKING WITH OUR SCHOOLS

### The SkillForce Way Our Instructors:

- ▶ Have clear lines of communication between SkillForce and our schools and judiciously share information about the students' progress, behaviour and successes.
- ▶ Develop partnerships with key members of staff that leads to SkillForce becoming part of the school community and support our schools teaching and learning goals.
- ▶ Ensure our students gain appropriate accreditation which contributes to the schools achievements. The students' improved motivation and confidence whilst attending the SkillForce programme also helps them to achieve the qualifications they are working towards in school.
- ▶ Support our schools in extra curricular activities.

## WHILST DELIVERING OUR PROGRAMMES

### The SkillForce Way Our Instructors:

- ▶ Use nationally recognised qualifications and awards in England, Scotland and Wales as tools to deliver positive outcomes for the students, in "classrooms without walls".
- ▶ Embed numeracy, literacy and employability skills.
- ▶ Embed the young foundation framework of outcomes for young people (communications, confidence and agency, planning and problem solving, relationships and leadership, creativity, resilience and determination); and in Scotland, the principles of getting it right for every child.
- ▶ Instil a positive ethos through challenging, inspirational and inclusive programmes.
- ▶ Deliver the Prince's Award. Supported by our Royal Patron the Prince's Award recognises the contribution that young people make to their communities. It is a unique opportunity for the young people we work with, recognising excellence and rewarding those who have been inspired to succeed.

The SkillForce Way was developed by our staff and encapsulates, **in their own words**, what we stand for, to ourselves and to the outside world. They epitomise the values and ways of working that are important to us by creating trust and establishing common standards of behaviour that everyone agrees to uphold, consistently and at every level of seniority.

This report details the programmes, tools and experiences used to deliver three outcomes and the resulting impact we have on the lives of young people and the communities in which they live;

- 1 HELP TO RE-ENGAGE THE HARDEST TO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE AND MOTIVATE THEM SUFFICIENTLY BACK IN TO MAINSTREAM EDUCATION;**
- 2 ENGAGE THOSE WHO NEED A MORE TAILORED APPROACH TO LEARNING AND HELP THEM ON TO THEIR NEXT STEPS OF EDUCATION, WORK OR TRAINING, AND;**
- 3 PREPARE CHILDREN FOR THE ALL-IMPORTANT STEP FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY EDUCATION.**

This report also features a key element to the success of our programmes – **OUR STAFF**. Through their own experiences and training, our instructors are able to connect and empathise with the young people we work with, helping to foster mutual respect and develop trusting relationships.



# FOREWORDS

My transition into civilian life after leaving the army with 22 years' service behind me did not go exactly as planned as I only lasted one month into my training as a driving instructor before deciding this was not the career for me. After completing, what I thought was my final 'mirror, signal and manoeuvre' routine into a new venture as a SkillForce instructor I soon settled into a teaching journey in various schools in and around Birmingham working with young people, each with different and sometimes complex needs.

However the role of the driving instructor has not been forgotten, and for the past ten years as an instructor I can liken it to being a passenger in a car taking young people on a journey. I can advise them of which way to go, which direction to turn, introduce new and unfamiliar experiences, and create opportunities whilst at the same time give support and guidance to make the right decisions. I can also sort out the inevitable little prangs or the wrong turns that young people are prone to making whilst on their journey calling on and utilising my previous military experience to deal with such problems and knowing I have the full backing and support of key school personnel.

The most important role as a SkillForce instructor is not just be an advisor, an encourager, a sign poster, motivator or a mentor but to understand the complex needs of a young person's transitions – whether they are physical, psychological or key life transitions such as post 16. It is with this understanding (including how this impacts on transitions) that an instructor can not only plan and deliver relevant and stimulating learning experiences but can also support and motivate a young person throughout a transition so they don't feel like a 'fish out of water'.

Having a strong military ethos is ideally suited as a SkillForce instructor as I am not afraid to take a young person out of their comfort zone, e.g. out of the classroom into the community to tackle some conservation work or to complete a sponsored rowing event to raise money for Sport Relief at the same time testing their physical capabilities or team work skills. This has many benefits to a young person, including firstly, having an opportunity to appreciate their community but also the future requirements and responsibilities put upon them when transitioning from the school environment into the adult world including the world of work and an understanding of being a model citizen.

Secondly it is a chance for a young person to develop their character, resilience and independence by putting into practice new skills and therefore able to understand and manage a key transition such as finding a job or moving onto college. As a SkillForce instructor I find this part of the 'job' the most rewarding as I do see the positive changes in a young person such as the inner drive to be successful – gain that college place or having the confidence to admit mistakes and try their best to improve, overcome fears, have strong positive emotions or simply raise their self-esteem.

Finally, like all roles and responsibilities in the educational world there is no scope to stand still and like any other professional I am always striving to improve, be more flexible, creative and resourceful and therefore cannot emphasise enough the importance of this Social Impact Report which will equip myself to reach out to even more young people and give them the opportunities that I had whilst serving in the armed forces.

## Rob Ford

**SKILLFORCE INSTRUCTOR,  
WEST MIDLANDS**



It was with no small amount of pride that I accepted the invitation to write a foreword for the charity's Social Impact Report. The significance of the gesture has not been lost on me. Not only were my words going to be representative of my fellow peers, but also my country. This somewhat onerous responsibility was relayed to me in such an insouciantly fashion - "Fraser, all we are looking for is three paragraphs to describe what you do and why you do it!"

There have been many occasions over the last 8 years when I have asked myself that last question! So how do you articulate what an Instructor does in three paragraphs? Yes, I could very easily drift into a euphoric eulogy about all the wonderful things that we do. I could troll a myriad of well-meaning but sadly banal and soporiferous clichés such as; "we go the extra mile", "we have a can do attitude", "we see the potential" etc. However, does this actually cast any genuine light onto what we do, for the people who may read this vitally important document?

So here's the epiphany! There is no way I could ever do justice to the incredible people instructing on behalf of this charity. They go in there day after day, week after week year after year, never knowing what challenges they may face. Instructor, mentor, carer, coach, parent or even friend are just some of the roles one has to play on a daily basis within our working day. Do I think we make a difference? No, I know we do! Ask any Instructor and they will be only too happy to recount the many success stories they have had in their time. Why do we do it? We do it because we see first-hand the desperate need our young people have for our expertise and experience. Aneurin Bevan once said "The purpose of power is to be able to give it away" SkillForce Instructors have been empowering a generation for over a decade and their work has only just begun.

## Fraser Ross

**SKILLFORCE INSTRUCTOR, SCOTLAND WEST**



# NATIONAL SUMMARY 2012/13

## OUR PROGRAMMES

We have 10 years' experience of inspiring 50,000 young people across England, Scotland & Wales to achieve at school and succeed in life. Using this experience of working with young people, we tailor our programmes to meet the specific needs of students, schools and colleges. Our programmes are continually being developed and refined in order to ensure that they remain engaging and meet the needs of our young people.

**Primary Transition** prepares younger students for the important step up to secondary education by offering tailor made programmes to support the transition to secondary school in a fun and engaging way. This year we delivered **40** primary transition programmes.

**Back on Track** improves the life chances of young people who are at risk of exclusion and underachievement by promoting the positive behaviour that learners need to succeed in education and in life. This year we delivered **51** Back on Track Programmes.

**Onto Next Steps** enhances learners' employability chances through character development and practical application of learning. This year we delivered **225** Onto Next Steps programmes.

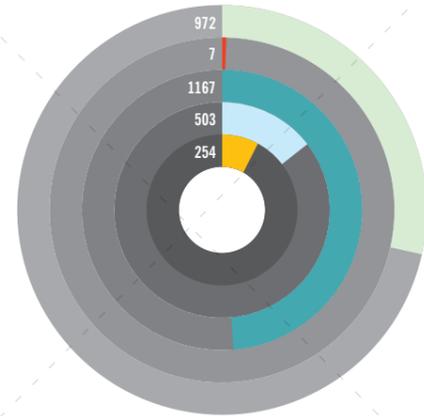
**12** programmes were delivered to young people that were completely bespoke.

We also offer a suite of **Short Courses** primarily focusing on First Aid, Leadership & Team Building and Wider Key Skills and adult education most notably our **Military to Mentors** programme. This year we delivered **85** short courses throughout the year and **7** Military to Mentors courses for **87** Service leavers of whom 29 were wounded, injured or sick.

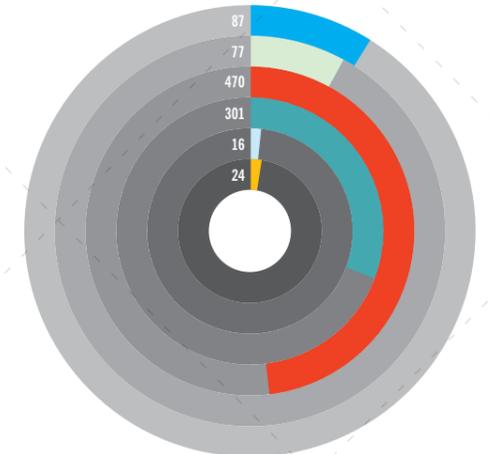
## THE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH WHOM WE WORK

IN THE 2012/13 ACADEMIC YEAR WE WORKED WITH 4392 YOUNG PEOPLE ON OUR PRIMARY, BACK ON TRACK, ONTO NEXT STEPS AND BESPOKE PROGRAMMES.

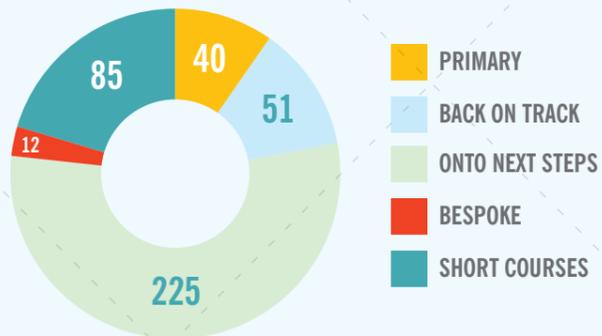
### STUDENT PROFILE IN ENGLAND



### STUDENT PROFILE IN SCOTLAND



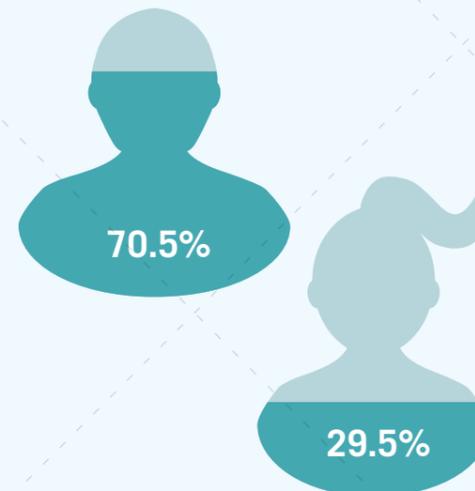
### OUR PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



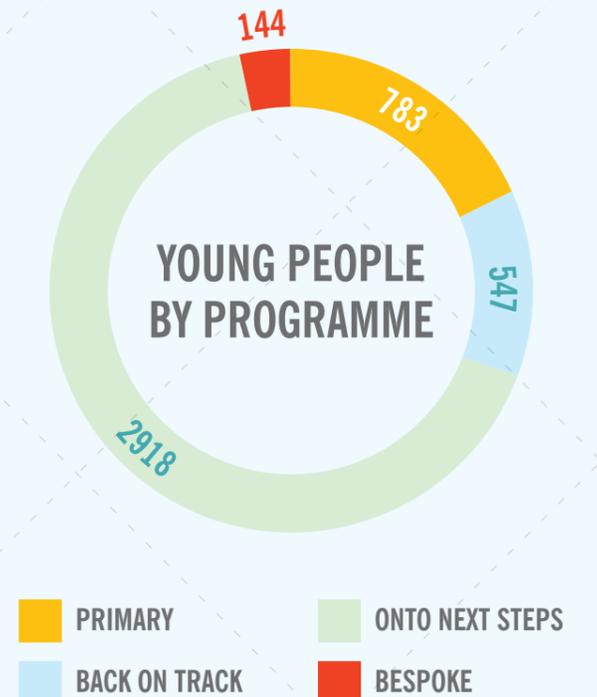
# SEVEN

## 10 WEEK MILITARY TO MENTORS COURSES WERE RUN THIS YEAR FOR SERVICE LEAVERS

### GENDER PROFILE %



### YOUNG PEOPLE BY PROGRAMME



## STUDENTS AT RISK OF EXCLUSION

Some of the young people we work with face challenges that can result in them being permanently excluded from school.

**“CHILDREN EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL AND PERSISTENT TRUANTS ARE AT GREATER RISK OF GROWING UP TO BECOME VULNERABLE ADULTS LIVING ON THE EDGES OF SOCIETY. THEY WILL NOT ONLY BECOME LESS ABLE TO FORM RELATIONSHIPS OR FIND JOBS BUT THEY WILL ALSO GO ON TO MAKE HUGE DEMANDS ON THE NHS, SOCIAL SERVICES AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.”**

**NEW PHILANTHROPY CAPITAL, MISS-SPENT YOUTH 2007**

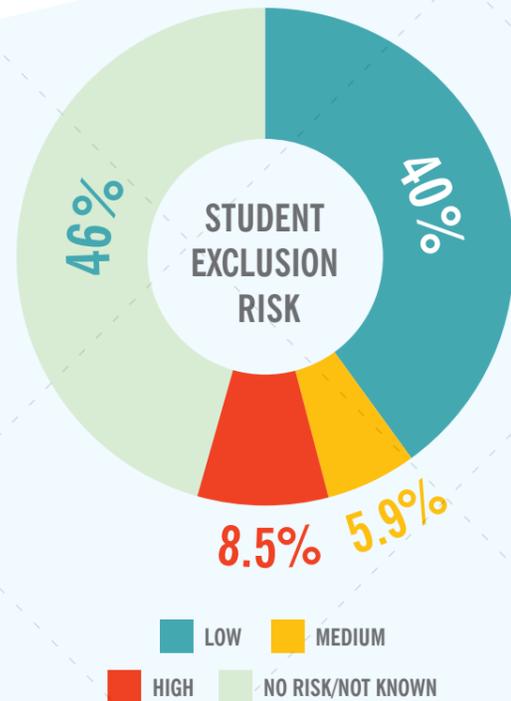
Overall for SkillForce UK, less than 1% of the young people we worked with in 12/13 were permanently excluded. This outcome is encouraging, given the type of students at risk of exclusion with whom we often work. Without our work, the number of students excluded would have been much higher, based on the anticipated trajectory estimated by their schools. For example, of those likely to be excluded UK-wide, our work enabled 93% to remain engaged in school. In the reporting year 2012/13 alone therefore, had each one of them been excluded, this would have equated to a lifetime saving of up to £3.5M (54 x £63,851).

Research by New Philanthropy Capital in 2007 found that the average cost to society for each excluded young person is £63,851<sup>1</sup>. Each year, there are over 10,000 new exclusions from school.

**102 (50.2%)** young people who had some degree of exclusion risk, completed their programme and opted to go on an Apprenticeship, Post 16 further education or training course on leaving school. Based on the research of New Philanthropy Capital this could equate to a saving of **£6.5m** to society (although now it is likely to be more due to year on year inflation).

**97.3%** of all of our leavers with some risk of exclusion went on to positive destinations.

**918** awards and qualifications were achieved by young people who had a high or medium risk of exclusion. This represents **11%** of the total awards and qualifications achieved.



**2370 (54%) OF OUR STUDENTS WERE DEEMED TO BE AT RISK OF EXCLUSION THIS YEAR**

**372 (8.5%) WERE DEEMED TO BE AT HIGH RISK OF EXCLUSION**

**2022 (46%) NO RISK OR NOT KNOWN**

## STUDENTS ON FREE SCHOOL MEALS

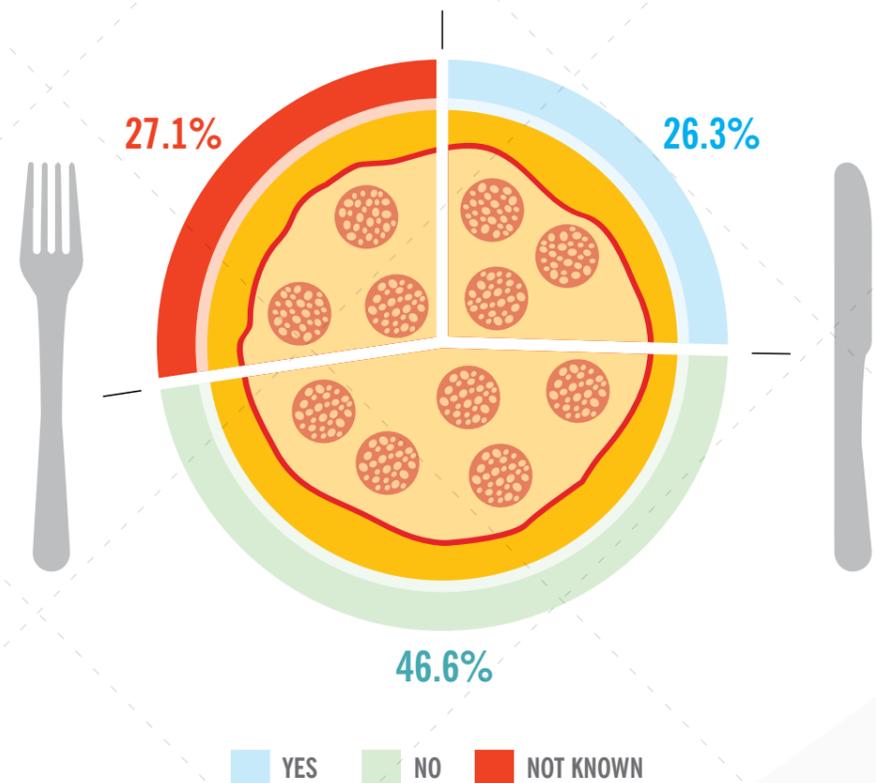
**1155** young people we worked with this year were entitled to Free School Meals (FSM). This equates to **26.3%** of our total number of students. Free School Meal status is often used as a measure of deprivation and usually awarded to those students from less affluent backgrounds.

The Department for Education national statistics for students on free school meals achieving positive destinations when they leave school is 82%<sup>ii</sup>. The number of our leavers this year receiving free school meals was **175 (25.6%)**. Of known data **94%** of these leavers went on to positive destinations.

Of all positive destinations achieved by students leaving compulsory education this year, **52 (25.6%)** were receiving free school meals.

**1455** awards and qualifications were achieved by young people on free school meals this year.

### ALL STUDENTS FSM %



## STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A young person can have special educational needs that make their school years more difficult than those of their classmates which can often leave them isolated, not engaged and lacking confidence. Special educational needs (SEN)<sup>iii</sup> could mean one or more of the following:

- ▶ **learning difficulties – in acquiring basic skills in school**
- ▶ **emotional and behavioural difficulties – making friends or relating to adults or behaving properly in school**
- ▶ **specific learning difficulty – with reading, writing, number work or understanding information**
- ▶ **sensory or physical needs - such as hearing or visual impairment, which might affect them in school**
- ▶ **communication problems – in expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying**
- ▶ **medical or health conditions – which may slow down progress and/or involves treatment that affects his or her education**

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are eight times more likely to be permanently excluded than their peers who do not have these needs. In 2009-10, pupils with statements of SEN were seven times more likely to be excluded than those with no level of SEN. Pupils with SEN who were part of a larger group in the school population, the 18 per cent with SEN but without statements, were nine times more likely to be permanently excluded than those with no SEN. More than two-thirds of all permanently excluded children, according to the same statistical analyses, are proven to have some form of identified SEN.

**“THEY NEVER GIVE UP ON YOU”**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER**  
**SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS INQUIRY**

## ATTENDANCE

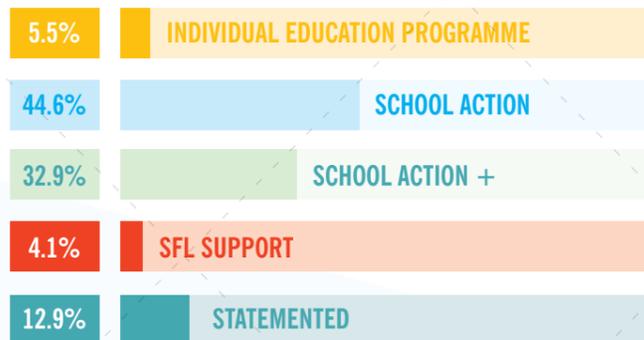
To ensure young people have a chance of reaching their academic potential they must maintain regular attendance at school. Our programmes are designed to re-engage young people by offering a different way of learning and with smaller group sizes than other school classes and usually two instructors per group; we can offer a more intensive and personally engaging learning experience.

Attendance rates for our classes have been high year on year. We have this year run over 50 Back on Track programmes – far in excess of previous years - where the most challenging young people can benefit from our programmes. In view of this it is no surprise to us that our national attendance statistics have fallen compared to previous years. These most challenging young people take time to trust our Instructors, familiarise themselves with a new style of learning and engage in the programme and initially at the start of the academic year attendance rates can dip before reaching an acceptable level.

The retention rate of our young people however was excellent. **95.2%** of all our students fully completed their programmes (ONS, BOT, Primary Transition and bespoke programmes).

**1403 (32%) OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE WE WORKED WITH THIS YEAR HAD SOME DEGREE OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS COMPARED WITH THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 18.7%.<sup>iv</sup>**

### PROFILE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS %



The Department for Education national statistics for students with SEN going on to positive destinations is 84% (Statement), 84% (SA) and 75% with SA+<sup>v</sup>. The number of our leavers this year with an SEN was **340 (49.7%)**. Of the known data **95.2%** went on to positive destinations.

Of all positive destinations achieved by students leaving compulsory education this year, **62 (30.5%)** had special educational needs.

**1984** awards and qualifications were achieved by young people who had a special educational needs.



## AWARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

We are proud that in the academic year 2012/13, **6035** awards and qualifications were awarded to the young people on our Primary Transition, Back on Track, Onto Next Steps and bespoke programmes and a further **2313** as a result of our short courses. This is a truly fantastic achievement and will greatly enhance our students continuing academic achievements, progression in to the workforce or on to further education or training.

We understand the importance to young people of recognising their achievements in a positive and meaningful way, including giving them the opportunity to participate in our SkillForce Prince's Award Scheme and continuing to link our programmes to other nationally recognised awards and qualifications that reflect their learning and progress.



### QUALIFICATIONS/AWARDS ACHIEVED BY PROGRAMME TYPE



551	BACK ON TRACK
283	BESPOKE & PRIMARY
5201	ONTO NEXT STEPS
2313	SHORT COURSES

### A SUMMARY OF THE MOST WIDELY ACHIEVED AWARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS ARE SHOWN BELOW:

- ▶ **1394** students achieved the Heartstart Award
- ▶ **937** students achieved the Wider Key Skill: Problem Solving qualification
- ▶ **878** students achieved the Wider Key Skill: Improving Own Learning and Performance qualification
- ▶ **858** students achieved the Wider Key Skill: Working with Others qualification
- ▶ **647** students achieved their ASDAN Bronze
- ▶ **359** students achieved their Bronze National Navigation Award
- ▶ **317** students achieved their SQA Employability Award
- ▶ **226** students achieved their ASDAN Silver
- ▶ **1444** students achieved a First Aid award
- ▶ **155** students achieved Duke of Edinburgh Bronze
- ▶ **121** students achieved the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness
- ▶ **71** students achieved a BTEC in Public Services
- ▶ Our Onto Next Steps Programme accounted for **62.3%** of all awards and qualifications achieved.

## DESTINATIONS

**684** students who completed one of our programmes this year left full time compulsory education. It can be challenging to track what happens to these young adults once they leave school particularly 4-6 months after finishing their programme – they may have moved away or we may not be working with the same schools and therefore are not able to access school information.

This year we were able to track the destinations of **33% (225)** of our leavers for our Back on Track, Onto Next Steps and bespoke programmes.

### Of those:

**96%** went on to positive destinations – national average for comparison is 89%.<sup>vi</sup>

**97%** of students with some exclusion risk went on to positive destinations.

**95.2%** with special educational needs went on to positive destinations. National average is 84% with a Statement, 84% with School Action and 75% with School Action Plus.<sup>ii</sup>

**94%** with FSM status went on to positive destinations. Department for Education national average is 82% of pupils claiming FSM went on to education, employment or training.<sup>ii</sup>

### THE DESTINATIONS OF OUR LEAVERS ARE SHOWN IN THE TABLE BELOW:

APPRENTICESHIP	ARMED FORCES	EMPLOYMENT	EXCLUDED
3.1%	2.2%	3.6%	1.8%
NEET	POST 16 FURTHER EDUCATION	TRAINING	
2.2%	86.7%	0.4%	



## NEET

The Department for Education identifies these factors that increase the likelihood of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training):

- ▶ **Persistent truancy**
- ▶ **Disengagement between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**
- ▶ **Gender (boys are twice as likely as girls to be NEET at 16)**
- ▶ **Learning difficulties/disabilities (pupils with a learning difficulty or disability are twice as likely to be NEET at 16)<sup>vii</sup>**

Statistics released by the Department for Education in 2012 showed that 16% of 16-24 year olds in England were classified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and therefore had no positive destination<sup>viii</sup>. Further research shows that this group of young people are at least five times more likely to offend and become part of the criminal justice system<sup>ix</sup>. Additionally, 17% of those who are eligible for free school meals are NEET at age 17, compared with 7% of those who are not eligible and this demonstrates that this group of young people are often from socially disadvantaged backgrounds<sup>x</sup>.

**“THE AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL LIFE-TIME PUBLIC FINANCE COST OF NEET WE ESTIMATE AS £56,300”**

**“THE AVERAGE LIFE-TIME RESOURCE COST IS £104,300”**

**RESEARCH CARRIED OUT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK ON BEHALF OF THE AUDIT COMMISSION, PUBLISHED IN JULY 2010.**

Each year, NEET young people cost the UK Tax payer £97,000 and the total cost to the UK economy is £15 billion.<sup>xi</sup> This demonstrates the help that they require and the problems we are seeking to address. We are able to confirm that of the school leavers who participated in one of our programmes and their destination could be tracked, only 2.2% were confirmed as NEET.

**IN THIS ACADEMIC YEAR, WE WORKED WITH 220 SCHOOLS, DELIVERED A TOTAL OF 413 PROGRAMMES AND SHORT COURSES TO 5422 YOUNG PEOPLE WHO NEEDED SOMETHING MORE THAN THEIR SCHOOLS ALONE COULD GIVE. WE ARE PROUD THAT 8348 AWARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS WERE ACHIEVED BY OUR STUDENTS THIS YEAR. THESE ARE VALUED BY EMPLOYERS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES AND WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED WITHOUT OUR SUPPORT. FURTHERMORE 96% OF OUR STUDENTS WHO LEFT COMPULSORY EDUCATION (AND WHERE THEIR DESTINATION IS KNOWN) WENT ON TO A POSITIVE OUTCOME.**



# OUR PEOPLE

In 2012/13 academic year we employed a total of **187** staff of which **67%** were ex Forces. Of these 187, 158 employees were operational staff working directly with young people in schools. Of these **158** employees **77%** had served in the armed forces, with an average duration of military service of 18 years. **8%** of these had been medically discharged and classed as wounded, injured or sick.

We employ high quality instructors with a wealth of skills and life experience. What makes us unique is that in many cases this expertise has been developed through service with our armed forces in all parts of the world. Having served their country, our instructors have now chosen to serve their communities.

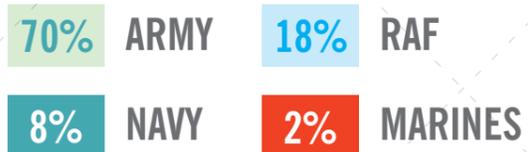
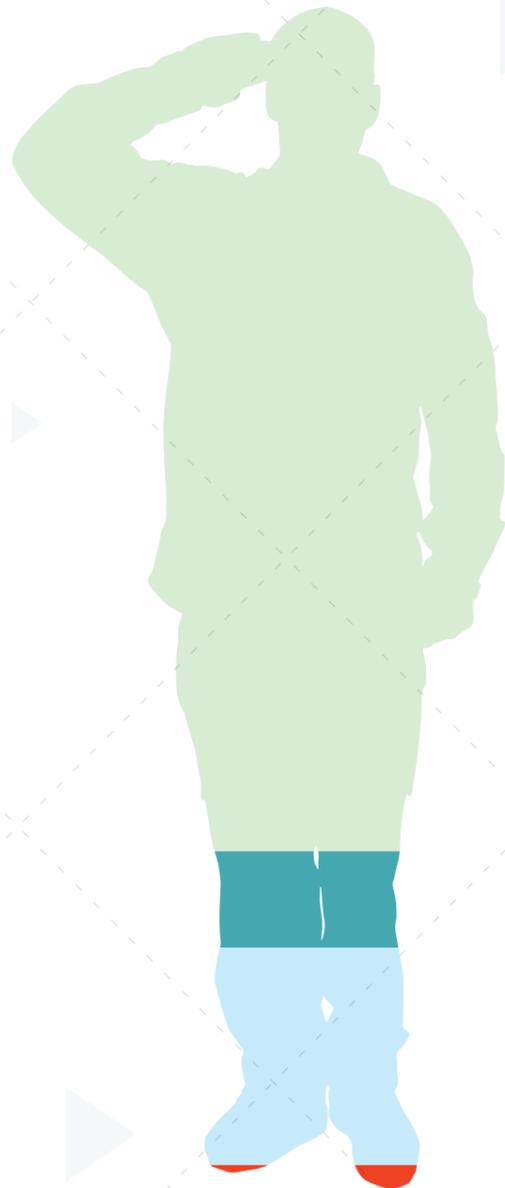
All of our instructors hold recognised teaching qualifications or are working towards them. Many also have coaching, mentoring and outdoor pursuits training.

**Our instructors are positive and empathetic role models who bring with them the values of a Service background. Values such as:**

**DISCIPLINE, SELFLESSNESS, COURAGE, RESILIENCE, DEDICATION, LOYALTY, DEPENDABILITY, RESPECT**

Our instructors create a positive attitude in class by engaging, preparing and developing learners so that they are ready for the challenges ahead. Our lessons are fun and use activity-based learning in the classroom and beyond to inspire and raise levels of achievement.

In scrutinising the data it has also proved to be useful in highlighting areas where performance and outcomes are exceptionally strong which plays a vital role in the sharing of good practice and identifying training needs for the ongoing professional development of our instructors, something we are committed to for the benefit of our staff and the young people we serve.



# OUR PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

We partner with a wide range of education providers to deliver our programmes.

This year we worked with **220** primary schools, secondary schools, academies, independent schools, pupil referral units, colleges and local authorities. A number of providers commissioned more than one of our programmes.

We also work with the Institute of Education at the University of London, the Association of Colleges (who have endorsed us to their members), Education Scotland and we are a recognised centre for the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

Furthermore we partnered with other alternative education providers to deliver successful outcomes for our Military to Mentors programme.

We also seek to build strong relationships in the communities of the educational providers and schools in which we operate. This maximises the impact of our courses, connecting the individual student to their local community. A number of community projects have been completed as an integral part of our curriculum.

Many of our programmes take place in normal school time and usually on school premises. Our programmes work alongside and in support of the national curriculum. This facilitates a highly effective and cohesive partnership approach and supports cross-organisational sharing of expertise and learning that delivers the best possible academic experience for young people.

**“WE HAVE HAD SKILLFORCE AT THE CHARLES DICKENS SCHOOL FOR THE PAST 4 YEARS, FROM OUR EXPERIENCE SKILLFORCE MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE.**

**WE CURRENTLY HAVE 2 PROGRAMMES IN OPERATION AT THE SCHOOL AND WE INTEND TO LOOK AT FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP THE USE OF SKILLFORCE IN THE SCHOOL.**

**SKILLFORCE CHANGES ATTITUDES, RE-ENGAGES AND MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE FOR THOSE STUDENTS WHO TAKE PART. IN THE CURRENT PERIOD OF AUSTERITY WHERE FINANCES ARE TIGHT, SKILLFORCE REPRESENTS TRUE VALUE FOR MONEY”**

**Alan Bailey**

DEPUTY HEAD, THE CHARLES DICKENS SCHOOL



# PRIMARY TRANSITION

The move to secondary school is a time of major change in a young person's life. It's a time when a child will mature from a child into a young adult and face the demands and challenges that secondary education brings. It is important during this transition to build confidence, promote teamwork, and develop self-resilience and self-awareness. Intervention at this stage to cultivate a positive attitude to school life and to motivate to learn is key to preventing many issues, such as, under-achievement, truancy, and disruptive behaviour, which may become a problem at secondary school level.

**"I LOVE SKILLFORCE. IT'S A DIFFERENT WAY OF LEARNING – I WISH I COULD DO IT EVERY YEAR"**

**BAYLEE – ETHOS STUDENT**

We have delivered many primary transition programmes this year all of which have proved hugely successful in supporting young people in making the giant step from primary school to secondary school. The 2012/13 academic year was the first year that our 'Ethos Programme' was piloted in 4 areas across England. Ethos is a progressive and challenging programme based on a number of values derived from our armed forces heritage. Its aim is to harness the professional expertise of former armed forces personnel to work with young people and share learning with teaching professionals on developing approaches to support students behavioural, social and emotional and health needs.

**"THERE IS GROWING EVIDENCE THAT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CAN RESULT IN GAINS SUCH AS: BETTER BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE; REDUCED VIOLENCE AND CRIME; LOWER LEVELS OF STRESS AND ANXIETY; HIGHER MORALE, PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION OF STAFF; AND A MORE POSITIVE SCHOOL ETHOS."**

**GETTING IN EARLY – CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE.**

**The objectives of our Ethos programme are to:**

- ▶ **deliver resilience and self-confidence in a young person in order that they can successfully transition into secondary education;**
- ▶ **develop the individual to be part of a team, innovative of thought, respectful of others and capable of showing leadership skills;**
- ▶ **provide the young person with opportunities to be more active, enjoy outdoor activities and sport as part of a developing healthy lifestyle and positive character traits;**
- ▶ **inspire a young person to raise their aspirations in order to approach Key Stage 4 with raised self-awareness and determination to exceed expectations;**
- ▶ **encourage young people to engage with social action through projects such as 'Making a Difference to Others' and to become active members of their communities to bring about positive change by working together and taking responsibility for their local area.**

Typically we work with a secondary school and the main primary schools which feed it. Our Instructors work with whole classes of primary school children for one afternoon or morning each week and a cohort of Year 7, 8 and 9 at the secondary school for a full academic year.

**"SCHOOLS ARE FINDING THAT A WELCOME SIDE EFFECT OF WORK ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IS ITS ABILITY TO ENHANCE ACADEMIC LEARNING."**

**GETTING IN EARLY – CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

## WHAT OUR YOUNG PARTICIPANTS SAID ABOUT ETHOS

At the end of the academic year 2012/13 we commissioned an external, independent evaluation of our Ethos Programme. The evaluation adopted a mixed-method approach focusing on the perceptions of the Ethos programme of our staff, school staff, parents and students. Questionnaires, site visits, interviews and focus groups were used to gather the base data.

**95% of primary school children indicated that they liked SkillForce and 91% enjoyed the activities. 82% of children indicated that SkillForce had taught them to respect other people more, 91% that SkillForce had helped them to work better with people in a team, 67% that they got on better with their teachers and 77% that they got on better with other children in their class.**

**75% of the children indicated that being in SkillForce had improved their communication skills and 70% that SkillForce had had an impact on their confidence, 47% of the primary school children indicated that joining SkillForce had impacted on them getting their homework in on time, 56% indicated that their school work had improved and 46% that their grades had improved.**



**IT'S ALL ABOUT TEAMWORK**

**SKILLFORCE IS ABOUT CHALLENGING MYSELF**

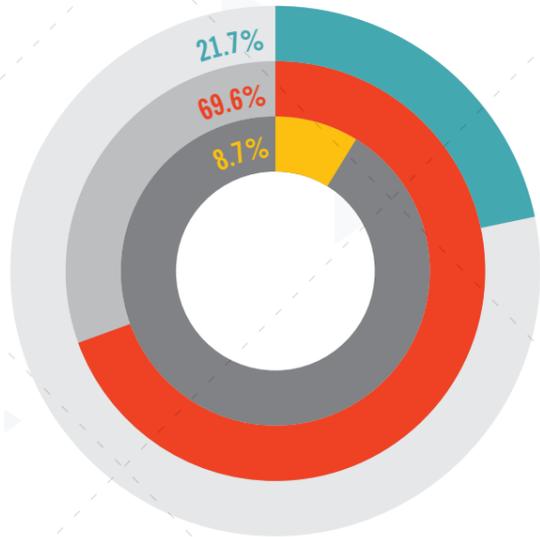
**I ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO SKILLFORCE LESSONS**

**I THINK SKILLFORCE ENCOURAGES AND PROMOTES POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR ACROSS THE WHOLE CLASS**

## WHAT PARENTS THINK

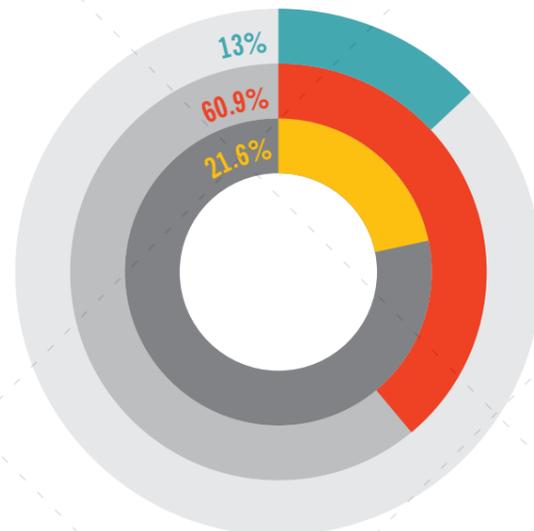
70% OF PARENTS INDICATED THAT SKILLFORCE HAD HAD AN IMPACT ON THE EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF THEIR CHILD, 61% THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN IMPACT ON THE SELF-DISCIPLINE OF THEIR CHILD AND 78% THAT THERE HAD BEEN A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THEIR CHILD'S CONFIDENCE.

### PARENTS PERCEPTION OF THE IMPACT OF SKILLFORCE ON THEIR CHILD'S CONFIDENCE



SHE HAS LEARNED THAT SELF-DISCIPLINE AND TEAM WORK ARE IMPORTANT AND IT IS GOOD TO SHARE AND RESPECT OTHERS

### PARENTS PERCEPTION OF THE IMPACT OF SKILLFORCE ON THEIR CHILD'S TEAM WORKING SKILLS



SHE LOVES SCHOOL BUT ON SKILLFORCE DAYS SHE IS EVEN MORE ENTHUSIASTIC TO GET THERE

■ STRONGLY AGREE   
 ■ AGREE   
 ■ NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE

## WHAT TEACHERS THINK

Feedback from the Institute of Education evaluation report<sup>xiii</sup> indicated that the school staff who participated in the evaluation were very positive about the way that we supported the transition process from primary to secondary school and that the children were reported to have settled in better.

We were seen as complementing the work of the school particularly in terms of the activities. There was provision for all of the children to succeed and the practical approach to learning was distinctive and complementary.

The school staff made recommendations on how we could improve the programme which we will ensure are given priority as part of our own evaluation and programme design moving forward. Suggestions included the children keeping a journal, offering an award for completion of the programme and greater links to activities in the local community/parents/carers.

We have learnt a great deal from piloting the programme in 2013. This evaluation and our own early results have been positive and encouraging. We are now in a position to refine the programme and take it beyond pilot phase to full roll-out.

“THE BENEFITS ARE CLOSELY ALIGNED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS ASSOCIATED WITH TEAM WORK.”

“THEY HAVE LEARNED HOW TO WORK TOGETHER AND LET PUPILS TAKE TURNS. THEY HAVE USED THE VALUES TO AMEND HOW THEY BEHAVE TOWARDS OTHERS.”

“CHILDREN THAT AREN'T NECESSARILY ACADEMIC FLOURISH EMOTIONALLY AND FEEL A SENSE OF 'SELF-WORTH'.”



# BACK ON TRACK

We understand that some people need a tailored approach to engage with education. We also know that it is sometimes harder to reach some students because of challenging behaviour or low attendance rates at school.

We developed our Back on Track programme following our implementation of a highly successful Department for Education pilot project (Zero Exclusion) in 2011/12. This programme can be delivered by two instructors for one or several days each week depending on how much support the students need and the school feels is required.

This year we delivered **51** Back on Track programmes to **547** young people. Susie is one of them.

**THE MAJOR FOCUS OF THE BACK ON TRACK PROGRAMME IS ON UNDERSTANDING, ARTICULATING AND DEVELOPING THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS THAT LEARNERS NEED TO SUCCEED IN EDUCATION AND LIFE. IT IMPROVES IMPORTANT CHARACTER TRAITS SUCH AS RESPONSIBILITY, RESILIENCE AND SELF-MANAGEMENT TO ENCOURAGE ASPIRATIONS BEYOND THE SCHOOL GATES. MOST IMPORTANTLY BACK ON TRACK ALSO HELPS STUDENTS RE-ENGAGE WITH FORMAL LEARNING EITHER IN SCHOOL OR IN FURTHER EDUCATION OR TRAINING.**

## SUSIE'S STORY, YEAR 11 FROM SOUTH SHIELDS, TYNESIDE

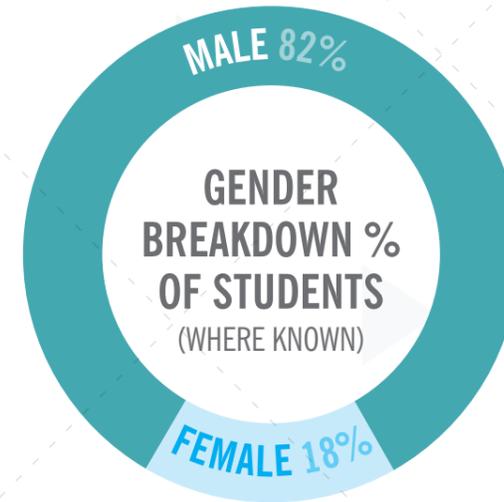
"I didn't get along with my teachers one bit. It was horrible. I thought they looked down at me. I shouted and screamed. In primary it was fine but I hated secondary. I used to kick off, get kicked out. I was hitting teachers. Just horrible and I didn't even care. Then they offered me SkillForce."

"I didn't want to go to SkillForce at first. But now I'm 10 times different. Here they treat you like an adult. Talk to you like an adult. They won't shout and there's a calming effect for me. You get more respect than in school. They earn your respect and we earn theirs. Not like school."

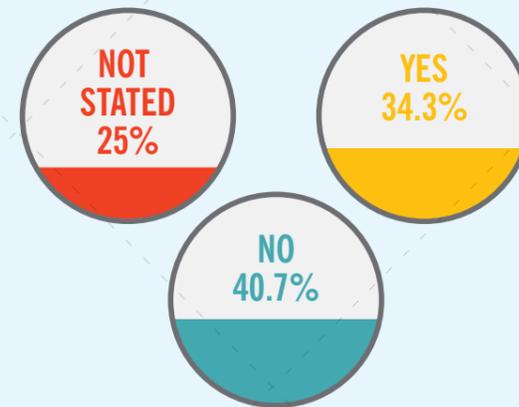
"I thought it would be harder with the Forces guys. But they're nicer than I thought - tough but not hard."

"I've learnt to trust in myself. Believe in myself. It has given me courage to do things and try things and let me get on and make decisions for myself. If I was still in normal school, I would have been kicked out and wouldn't be going to College."

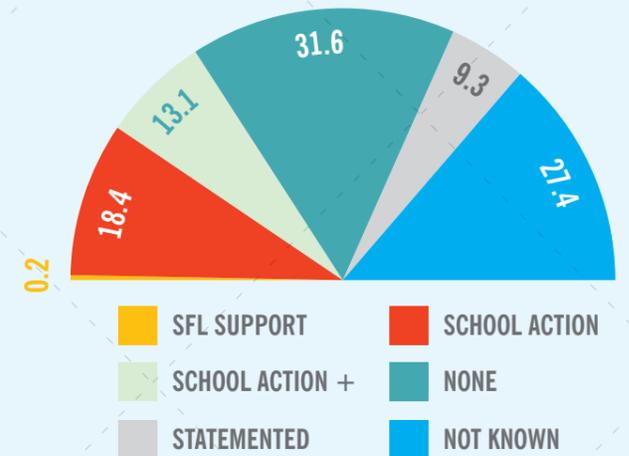
"My grandma and grandad are really proud of us and how far I have got, because of what I was like when I was at school. I know now I can do lots of things."



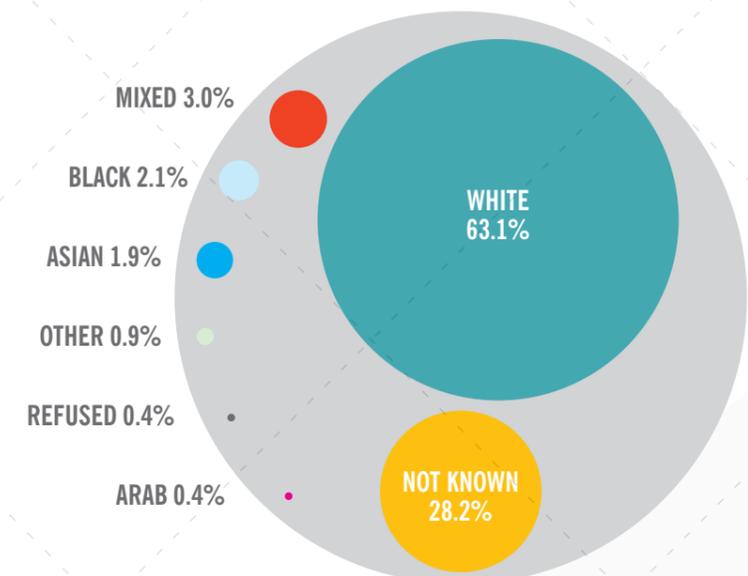
### FSM STATUS % OF STUDENTS



### SEN STATUS % OF STUDENTS



### ETHNICITY % OF STUDENTS



## BEHAVIOUR MONITORING

A comparison was then made between the scores at the start and end of the programme. A sample of six of the programmes achieving exceptional behaviour improvement results with the most challenging young people on Back on Track programmes are:

- ▶ Clyde Valley High School showed a **40.1%** improvement in behaviour across all students in the group.
- ▶ Mirus Academy students showed a **29%** improvement in behaviour across all students in the group.
- ▶ Clacton Coastal Academy showed a **25.5%** improvement in behaviour across all students in the group.
- ▶ Failsforth Academy students showed a **24%** improvement in behaviour across all students in the group.
- ▶ Midpoint Pupil Referral Unit students showed a **21%** improvement in behaviour across all students in the group.

“SkillForce’s Back on Track programme is having such positive impact on our students from all the schools across the Exeter Local Area Provision. We have seen in our students’ greater confidence, increased desire to succeed, and more positive attitude generally towards their education since their involvement with SkillForce. The students are more determined and have greater engagement than previously across most, if not all subject areas. The students are now seeing their overall school life experience in a more positive light due to their involvement on the Back on Track programme, for a relatively short period of time. Back on Track has been invaluable in reducing our exclusion figures at KS3 over the last two years and engendering greater self-belief in our students. We are particularly pleased with the bespoke nature of the course developed with our context in mind.”

**Ian Duffelen**

CHAIR OF EXETER LOCAL AREA PROVISION

Behaviour was monitored each session against the following and given a numerical score:

ACCEPTS DIRECTION

ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY

STAYS SEATED

ARRIVES ON TIME TO CLASS

USES RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE

BEHAVES SAFELY

MAINTAINS SELF-DISCIPLINE

CONTROLS EMOTIONS

ABIDES BY RULES

ENGAGES WITH THE WORK, FULLY, QUICKLY AND SAFELY

LISTENS TO INSTRUCTIONS

LISTENS TO INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

I THINK THAT THE INSTRUCTORS AT SKILLFORCE ARE AMAZING. WHEN I COME TO SKILLFORCE I AM ALWAYS HAPPY TO BE HERE

THE WORK WE DO IS INTERESTING AND FUN, IT IS VERY ENJOYABLE. WE ARE PUSHED TO AIM HIGH IN OUR WORK. I LIKE THE WORK WE DO BECAUSE IT CAN HELP US LATER IN LIFE

SKILLFORCE IS DIFFERENT BECAUSE IT MAKES US THINK MORE ABOUT OUR SURROUNDINGS AND WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW AS WELL AS OUR FUTURE

We found that although behaviour can fluctuate throughout the duration of the programme for numerous reasons (external factors outside of the learning environment can have an impact) that overall there was an improvement from when they first started on our Back on Track programme to when the programme ended. Given the challenging nature of Back on Track students we are pleased with the results.<sup>xiii</sup>



## SURVEY DATA – BACK ON TRACK

Our Back on Track survey aims to measure the positive behavioural change, attitudes towards school and character based outcomes such as self-confidence, self-esteem, resilience and aspirations. The surveys are completed by the student at the start of the programme and again at the end of the academic year. A sample of the questions and their % improvements in some of these changes are shown below:

**I CAN TALK TO PEOPLE QUITE EASILY**

33.3%↑

**I COMPLETE THE WORK THAT IS SET IN CLASS**

30%↑

**I FEEL GROWN UP**

21.4%↑

**OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO ME**

23.1%↑

**I HAVE GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH MY TEACHERS**

33.3%↑

**I CAN DO THINGS AS WELL AS MOST OTHER PEOPLE**

27.3%↑

**I CONCENTRATE ON MY WORK IN SCHOOL**

8.3%↑

**OVERALL I HAVE A LOT TO BE PROUD OF**

14.3%↑

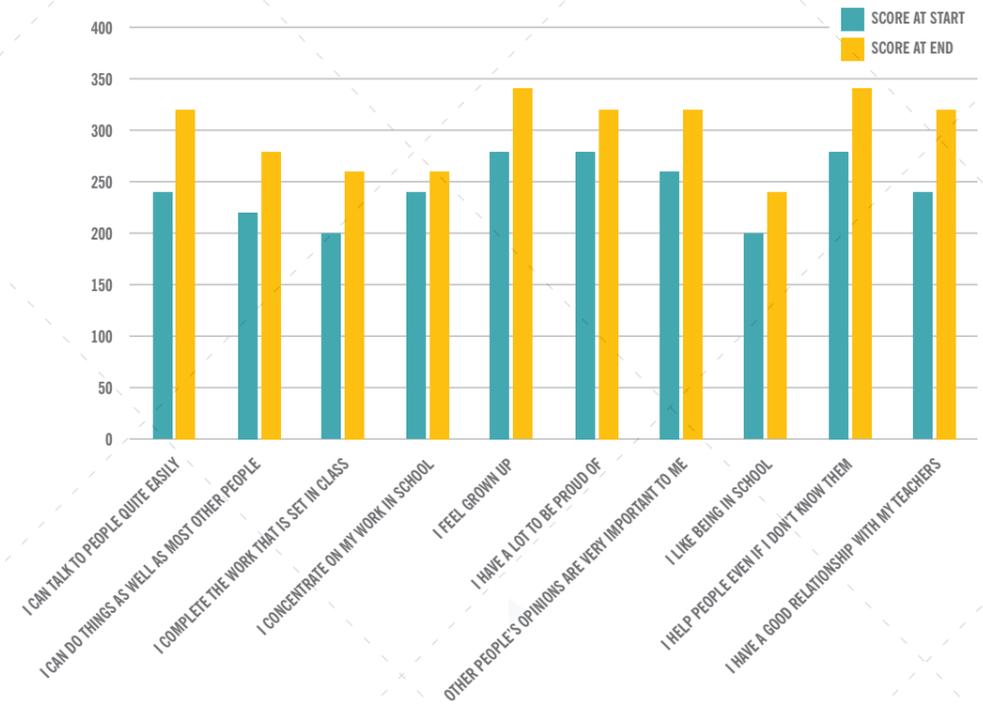
**I LIKE BEING IN SCHOOL**

20%↑

**I HELP PEOPLE EVEN IF I DON'T KNOW THEM**

21.4%↑

## COMPARISON OF SELF ASSESSED PERCEPTIONS AT START AND END OF PROGRAMME



## THE EVIDENCE SUGGESTS...

WE ARE PROUD OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS.

WE GET ON WELL WITH EACH OTHER AND ADULTS.

WE CAN COMMUNICATE CONFIDENTLY WITH ADULTS AND EACH OTHER ABOUT WHO WE ARE IN THE WORLD.

WE ARE READY TO START TACKLING THE WORKPLACE AND PLAY OUR PART AS CITIZENS IN SOCIETY

**WE HAVE THE TOOLS TO SUCCEED!**



## AWARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS ACHIEVED ON BACK ON TRACK PROGRAMMES

Although not a primary deliverable of the Back on Track programme, **551** awards and qualifications were achieved by our Back on Track students this year. This represents **6.6%** of all awards and qualifications achieved.

## DESTINATIONS OF OUR BACK ON TRACK LEAVERS

One of the key deliverables of our Back on Track programme is to successfully re-integrate the students back in to full time education in school. Of those who were due to leave school at the end of the Back on Track programme we were able to successfully track the destinations of **36** students. We found that 33 of them were continuing in Post 16 further education which is a tremendous result and overall **97.3%** of those we were able to track went on to positive destinations. The Department for Education national average is **89%**.<sup>xvi</sup>

- ▶ **Of those Back on Track students that had some risk of exclusion 97.3% achieved positive destinations**
- ▶ **95.5% of those with special educational needs achieved positive outcomes, as did 93% of those on free school meals**

## THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE – BACK ON TRACK

These indicators point towards a positive trend in the development journey of these students, as they take their first critical steps from school towards employment and further education.

They evidence a growing emotional maturity, an increase in respect for self and others, a greater sense of pride in self-achievement and uplift in their ability to communicate positively about themselves and their place in the world.

Especially encouraging in this teenage group who can be often regarded as quite self-centred young people, is the evidence from the survey responses of their heightened awareness of the needs of others, and a confidence that they feel that can contribute positively to the wellbeing and the lives of others – even unknown others.

Looking ahead, we are pleased to be able to commit to invest funds in the next academic year - from our Department for Education Grant – to work with the Institute of Education to formally evaluate the impact of our Back on Track programme.

This will allow us access to key impact evidence that will enable us to understand in depth, through the eyes of an external objective research partner, how we can further develop and improve the impact of our work with this group of students into the future.

# ONTO NEXT STEPS

Our mission is to inspire young people to achieve at school and succeed in life. Irrespective of a young person's background or ability, we strive to help them prepare for their next steps. We aim to boost their aspirations and achievement and subsequently reduce the number of young people becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) at age 16.

Our Onto Next Steps programme enhances students' employability through character development and practical application of learning. Whilst participating in an Onto Next Steps programme self-confidence increases and key skills valued by employers develop such as team-working, problem-solving and leadership. Students also develop the ability to understand, reflect upon and articulate their own skills and qualities in order to be able to present themselves positively at significant transition points. The programme is designed specifically to help students progress into Further Education, training or employment.

The three key outcomes are therefore:

- ▶ **improved attendance**
- ▶ **improved attitude leading to**
- ▶ **increased attainment.**

Onto Next Steps is flexibly designed to meet the needs of the students and the school and can last for a few months or for a full academic year and beyond.

We use recognised qualifications and awards in England, Scotland and Wales as tools to deliver positive results for our students. We also have our own curriculum, **'Community – Character – Contribution'**, to complement the school's existing curriculum through community social action projects. Those students completing the **'Community – Character – Contribution'** curriculum are eligible to enter for our SkillForce Prince's Award.



## THE SKILLFORCE PRINCE'S AWARD

The SkillForce Prince's Award was presented for the first time in the 2011/12 academic year and was officially launched at that time by our Royal Patron The Duke of Cambridge to young people that had shown significant character or made a major contribution to the community in which they live.

Working over 24hrs to complete a "Challenge" (24 Hours to Make A Difference – 24TMAD) young people work together for the benefit of a charity close to their community – using skills gained from studying our curriculum '**Community – Character – Contribution**'. The challenge reinforced the knowledge and skills gained during the course of their studies and they were put to good use in the planning, execution and evaluation of their chosen projects.

Those students who had the following were eligible to participate:

- ▶ **successfully studied our 'Community – Character – Contribution' curriculum**
- ▶ **achieved a minimum of 90% attendance to our sessions throughout the academic year**
- ▶ **received positive reports from school and our staff**
- ▶ **demonstrated an understanding of the community in which they live and were willing to give up 24 hours of their time for a charitable cause**

This year **11** schools and **126** young people participated in the challenge – more than double that participated last year. The projects chosen included:

- ▶ **Refurbishment of James St Youth Centre**
- ▶ **Restoration of Community Gardens at Hammer Edge Road**
- ▶ **Refurbishment of Quarterdeck Youth Centre**
- ▶ **Restoration of War Graves in Walmer Parish Church Yard**
- ▶ **Renovation of gardens at Lord Wilson EBD School**
- ▶ **Refurbishment of public access areas at Upton Country Park**
- ▶ **Refurbishment of Bradford On Avon Youth Centre**

This is a fantastic achievement by all of the participants and we are planning to expand the Prince's Award again next year so that more young people and local communities can benefit from this excellent work.

This year we delivered **225** Onto Next Steps programmes to **2918** young people. Hannah and Calvin are two of them.

**THROUGH THE SKILLFORCE  
PRINCE'S AWARD WE WANT  
TO DEVELOP THE COMMUNITY  
LEADERS OF THE FUTURE.**

**Peter Cross**  
CEO SKILLFORCE

## HANNAH

When I was in Year 9, I was always getting in trouble, which made school life hard for me. Since I started SkillForce I started to enjoy school a lot more because I started to get the respect that I thought I deserved at school from my SkillForce instructors, which made me think a lot more about the way that I spoke and treated my other teachers and now I don't get into trouble.

I had already been told about SkillForce by a few of my friends in the year above me, and they had said it was brilliant and very worthwhile to take as an option.

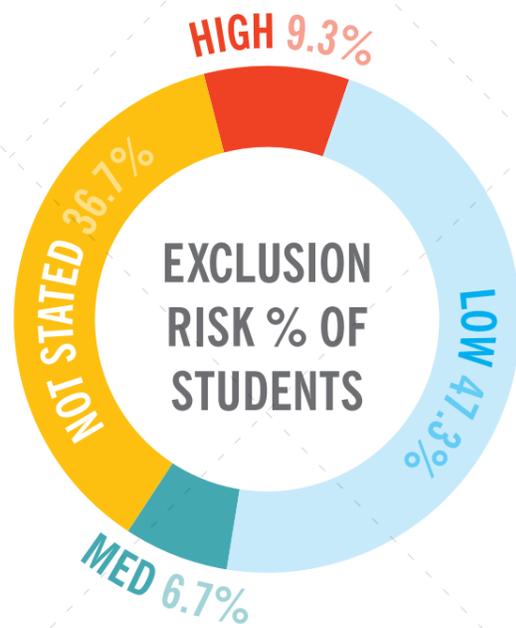
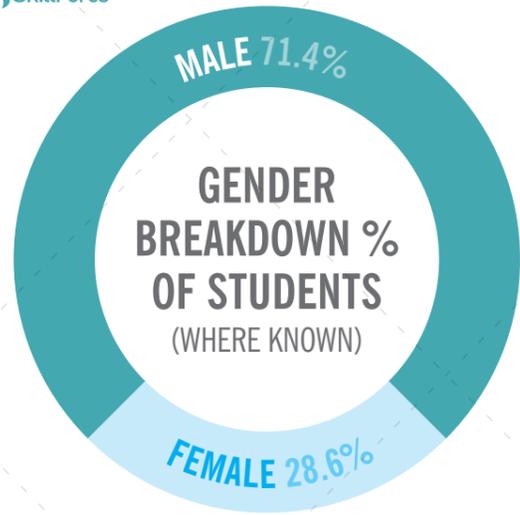
At first I was very nervous about it, but my SkillForce instructors were very welcoming and treated me with lots of respect. My SkillForce instructors always succeed in making me laugh. I can talk to them with confidence about anything and they always support me in the best way they can.

Now at school I don't get in to trouble and try my best in everything. I think school is alright. I have changed so much. SkillForce has really brought me out of my shell and I am now very confident within myself and I am more than happy with the way the course has changed me. My overall view of SkillForce is that it is good because it's fun, we can learn in lots of ways different to other lessons. We also go on trips. After school I am going to College to study hairdressing.

## LIAM

My name is Liam and I am 14 years of age. I started on a SkillForce programme and was given the choice to take part as I was getting in lots of trouble around the school, I was getting lots of detentions and had been excluded. Since joining SkillForce I think my attitude has got better. I don't get as angry and frustrated anymore and I am doing much better in my other classes. I can focus more and know how to deal with situations better. I feel that my confidence has improved and I am getting better at doing and taking part in things. I am getting better but I know I can still improve more. SkillForce so far has helped me realise that I can control myself in situations, which has helped me become a better student.





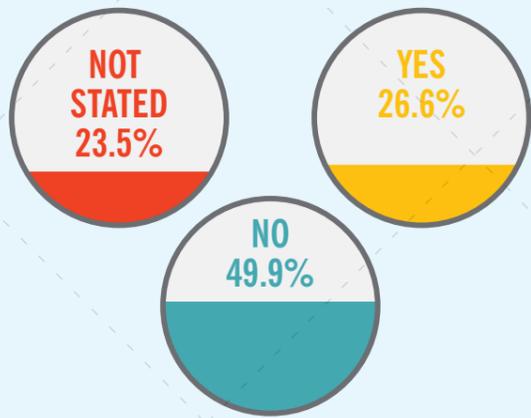
## THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE – ONTO NEXT STEPS

### SURVEY DATA

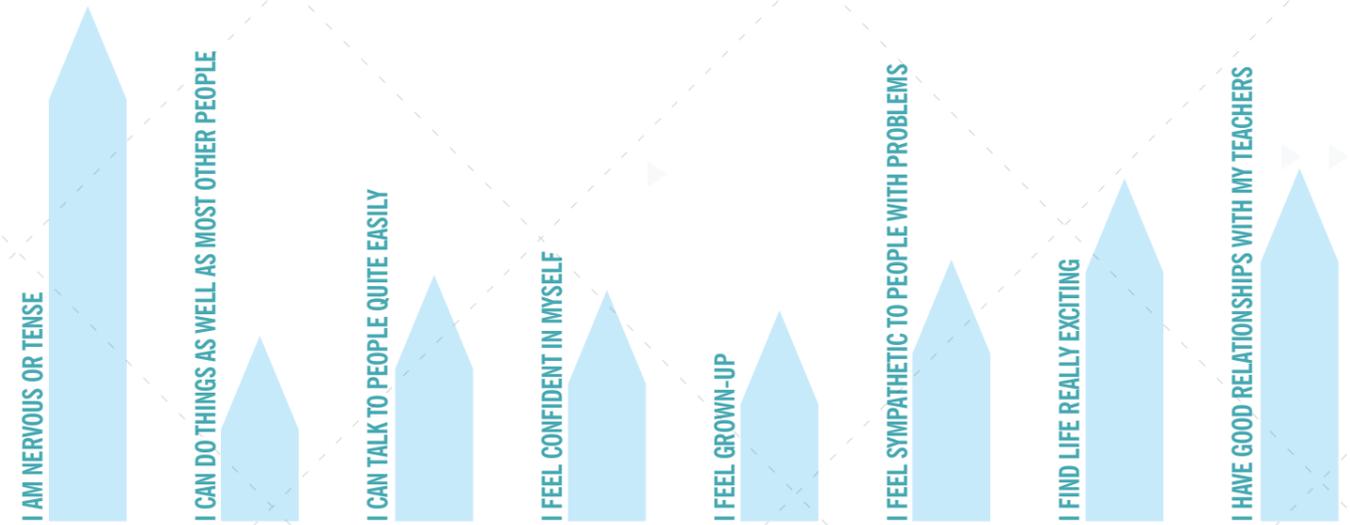
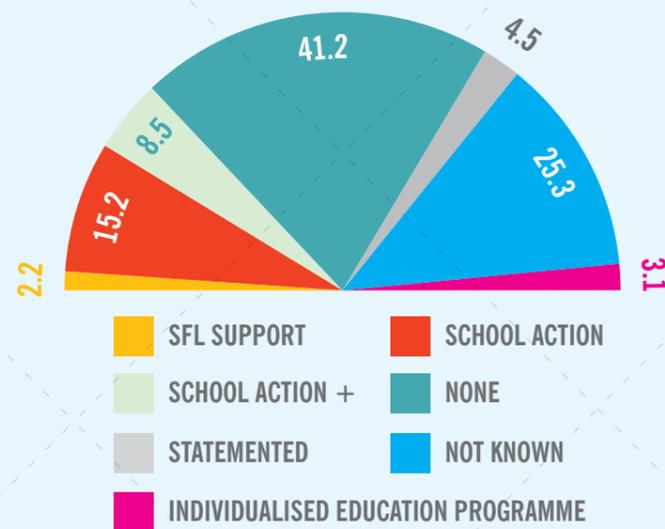
Our Onto Next Steps student self-assessment survey aims to measure the positive behavioural change, attitudes towards school and character-based outcomes such as self-confidence, self-esteem, resilience and aspirations. The surveys are completed by the student at the start of the programme and again at the end of the academic year.

Our Onto Next Steps students who responded to the surveys have reported measurable improvements in describing the beneficial impact of our work with them in school in many of these key areas. A sample of the questions and their reported improvements in some of these changes are shown below:

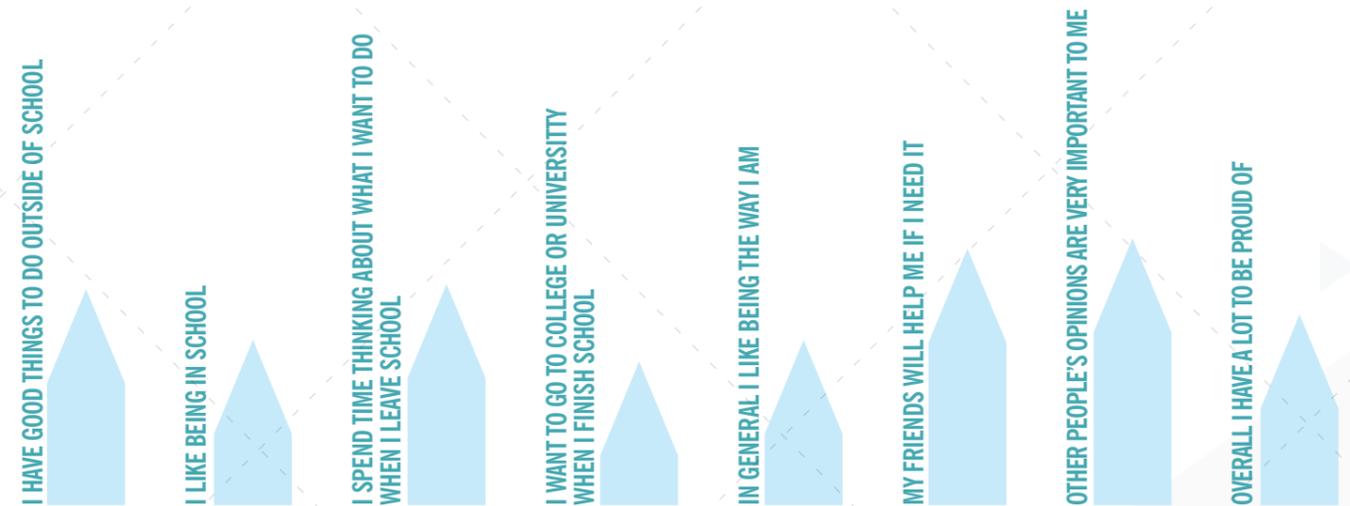
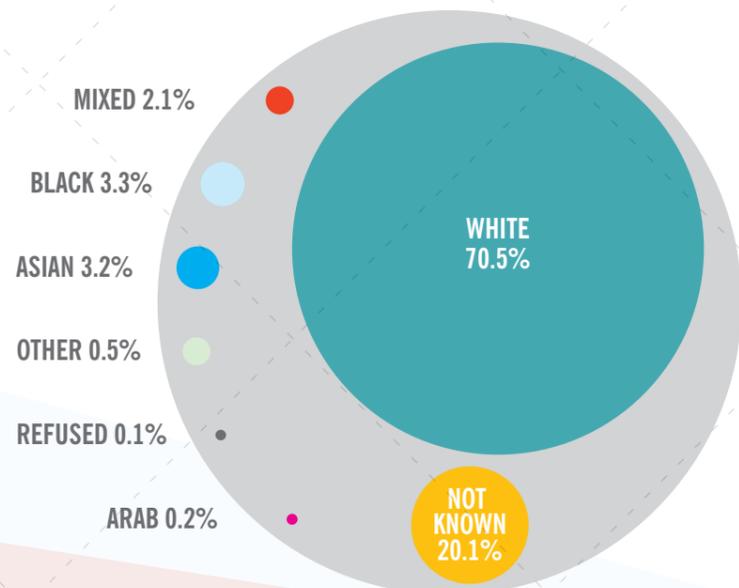
### FSM STATUS % OF STUDENTS



### SEN STATUS % OF STUDENTS



### ETHNICITY % OF STUDENTS



THE FEEDBACK FROM THE PUPILS WAS EXTREMELY POSITIVE. THEY SAID THEY REALLY LIKED THE PRACTICAL TASKS AND THAT IT HELPED THEM WORK IN A TEAM LIKE THEY HAD NEVER DONE BEFORE. THE MAIN WORD TO COME FROM THE SESSION WAS FUN!

**Lucy Preston**

LINK TEACHER, GEORGE GREENS SCHOOL, NEWHAM

As many of our students are on two year long course programmes, we will be reporting more fully next year on the impact of Onto Next Steps over that timeframe.

SKILLFORCE HAS HELPED ME A LOT WITH STRESS AND HAS HELPED BUILD MY CONFIDENCE. PAUL AND IAN (SKILLFORCE INSTRUCTORS) HAVE BOTH HELPED ME REALISE THAT I CAN PUSH MYSELF AND I CAN ACHIEVE THINGS PEOPLE NEVER THOUGHT I COULD. I WILL ACHIEVE AND I WILL HAVE A GOOD FUTURE.

SKILLFORCE HAS CHANGED MY LIFE. IT HAS HELPED ME DEVELOP MY SELF-CONFIDENCE AND TEAM BUILDING SKILLS. IT HAS TAUGHT ME NEW SKILLS THAT CAN HELP ME GET A JOB AND HELP OTHERS. IT HAS ALSO SHOWN ME I CAN PUSH MYSELF AND IMPROVE.

## AWARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS ACHIEVED

5201 awards and qualifications have been awarded to our Onto Next Steps students this year. This represents 62.3% of all awards and qualifications achieved.

## DESTINATIONS OF ONTO NEXT STEPS STUDENTS

Many of our Onto Next Steps students are not of school leaving age when they complete our programme and have therefore continued in compulsory education. Of those that were of school leaving age, we were able to successfully track the destinations of 111 students. We found that 96 were going on to Post 16 education and overall 93.7% of those we were able to track went on to positive destinations. The national average is 89%.<sup>xvii</sup>

Of those Onto Next Steps students that had some risk of exclusion:

- ▶ 97.1% achieved positive destinations
- ▶ 95.2% of those with special educational needs achieved positive outcomes, as did 94.4% of those on free school meals

## ALL PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Our three core programmes – Primary Transition, Back on Track and Onto Next Steps - form the backbone of our delivery to young people in school and will continue in the next academic year 2013/14. In addition we have created in partnership with the schools we work with, a range of bespoke programmes and activities to meet the specific needs of their young people.

Looking ahead, for the coming academic year, our programme development goals are:

- ▶ To refresh and update our three core programmes
- ▶ To evaluate the success of our Primary Transition pilots and the impact of Back on Track
- ▶ To consider how we can respond to the raising of the statutory school leaving age from 16 to 18.

We envisage that the demand for bespoke programme design tailored more closely to the needs of our students will increase. This will entail a more modular and flexible approach to delivery for the year ahead.



# SHORT COURSES

1030 young people participated in a total of 107 short courses run this year delivering a variety of awards and qualifications.

Many awards and qualifications are available for young people on a short course. These can greatly enhance a student's employability prospects or support their transition in to Post 16 education.

Some of the most popular awards and qualifications are shown in the chart below. A short course can, depending on the duration and ability level of the students, offer the opportunity to deliver multiple awards and qualifications.



- WKS IMPROVING OWN LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE
- WKS PROBLEM SOLVING
- WKS WORKING WITH OTHERS
- FIRST AID
- HEARTSTART



# SPECIAL PROJECTS - MILITARY TO MENTORS

This year we continued our highly successful Military to Mentors (M2M) programme which we piloted in the 2011/2012 academic year on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE). In the pilot year we were able to successfully train 100 ex-Service personnel to become mentors to young people. Again with the continuing support of the Department for Education, the Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes, this year we were able to train a further 87 mentors, of which 29 were Wounded, Injured and Sick.

The focus of the M2M programme was to train suitable Service leavers as mentors, leading towards a recognised educational qualification or equivalent, to work with young people.

The outcome we set out to achieve was for each of the trainees to have the chance of finding a new career working in education or with young people, using the skills and experiences they gathered in the Services, and applying this military ethos to the benefit of young people, schools, and their communities. In particular, the programme was to teach techniques and practices that:

- ▶ raise aspiration and will help young people achieve a good education – academic or vocational;
- ▶ understand the needs of pupils, including social and emotional;
- ▶ address how to tackle conflict or poor behaviour;
- ▶ consider equality and diversity;
- ▶ develop lesson planning and curriculum management;
- ▶ manage risk and risk awareness;
- ▶ enforce child protection standards.

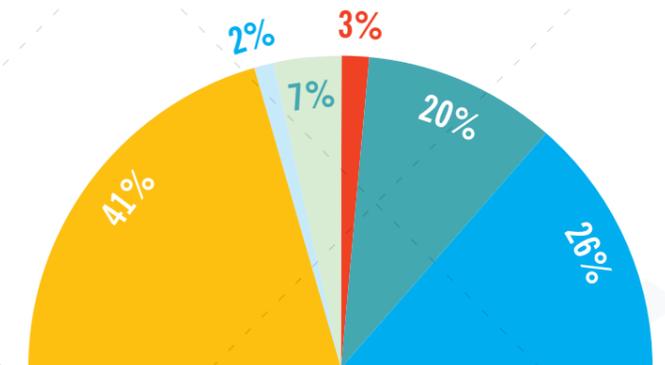
The programme comprised of a four week programme of learning and a six week placement in schools working with young people.

Military to Mentors had a 89.6%<sup>xiv</sup> pass rate across all modules within the programme.

60% of those employed have been recruited by SkillForce, 30% have been employed by schools and colleges directly and 10% have been employed by other charities working with young people.

The project was managed and delivered largely by us with support from Endeavour and Knowsley Skills Academy who provided additional placement opportunities based on the trainees geographical location. In year two we also delivered a significant proportion of the training in-house.

## POST COURSE DESTINATIONS OF 12/13 MENTORS %

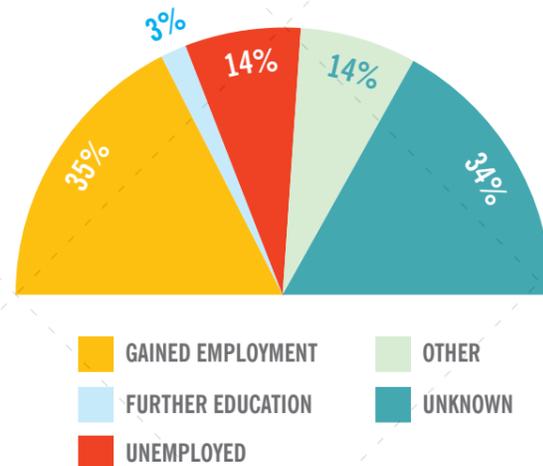


- GAINED EMPLOYMENT
- RESETTLEMENT
- FURTHER EDUCATION
- UNEMPLOYED
- OTHER
- UNKNOWN

# SPECIAL PROJECTS - UGANDA

Three months after the programme completed, **36** of the trainees are now employed working with young people with either ourselves, our partners or in the wider education sector. Additionally, **3** have gone on to further study with the aim of working with young people in the future. **39** graduates have already achieved positive destinations representing **44%** of those who completed the Military to Mentors programme. There are 23 graduates who have not responded to the survey and it should be noted that **63%** of those that did respond had achieved positive destinations within three months of completing the programme.

POST COURSE DESTINATIONS OF 12/13 WOUNDED, INJURED OR SICK MENTORS %



Whereas in year one only 11 of 94 trainees were classed as Wounded, Injured or Sick (WIS) in year two a total of **29** of 87 were classed as WIS, representing **33%** of all trainees compared to 12% in year one.

Three months after the programme completed, **10** of the WIS trainees are now employed working with young people and one has gone on to further study with the aim of working with young people in the future.

A total of **11** WIS graduates have achieved positive destinations representing **38%** of those who completed the Military to Mentors programme. There are **10** graduates who have not responded to the survey and it should be noted that **58%** of WIS that did respond had achieved positive destinations within three months of completing the programme.

Leanne Green joined the Royal Navy in 2008 as a Communications and Information Systems Specialist serving on-board HMS Liverpool and HMS Defender. During her time in the armed forces, she represented the Navy at rugby but unfortunately sustained a leg injury which led to her medical discharge in 2013. Leanne attended the Military to Mentors course at Tedworth House supported by Help for Heroes and since graduating has commenced employment as an Instructor with our Hampshire team, a role that was subsidised by the Royal British Legion award.

We are also approved providers for Career Transition Partnerships (the Services' resettlement partner) and Enhanced Learning Credits. This means that more Service leavers will be able to work with us to find opportunities in education or to work with young people.



**"I have always had an interest in working with children/young adults, so when I found out about the 'Military to Mentors' programme, I knew that it would be a great course to help kick start my career into education. I have thoroughly enjoyed the course, especially the mentoring side, and working at the Priory High School, Portsmouth as part of my placement. Military to Mentors has equipped me with the right skills and qualifications needed for a career in education, and I look forward to furthering my studies on the back of this programme."**

On 11th September 2012, ten young people from schools in Oldham, Lanarkshire and Fareham were received by our Royal Patron, HRH Duke of Cambridge KG, at St James Palace to be the recipients of our very first Prince's Award.

In recognition of their achievement, the young people had been generously supported by the Tomlinson Family Trust who offered each Award winner a bursary that could be spent either on furthering their education through college or apprenticeship or to facilitate spending time helping one of the Prince's other charities in Africa.

The Henry van Straubenzee Memorial Fund (another of Prince William's patronages) kindly agreed to host a visit to work in two of their schools in Uganda and put together a programme for the young people that would allow them to spend their time both working on projects that would improve the facilities of the schools and in learning something about the lives of ordinary Ugandans.

To our delight, seven young people chose to use this incredible opportunity to travel to Africa and work to improve the lives of others. Accompanied by two of our instructors, Natasha Berry and Paul Craig, they set out on an adventure of a lifetime. The words of the young people participating can far better express what this experience has meant to them and what they have gained from being so far away from home and in such different conditions.

Working with the Henry van Straubenzee Memorial Fund on a variety of important community projects, our award-winning students made a great success of living and working in very basic conditions and supporting the work of the Fund in bringing better educational opportunities to the children of Uganda.

Our students helped build much needed fuel efficient ovens in the kitchens of two schools, decorating classrooms and assisting with sports activities with the younger students. Through a very generous donation made by the Tomlinson Family Trust, these students and instructors have benefited from a truly memorable once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Our most grateful thanks go to the Tomlinson Family Foundation for their hugely generous support; to Claire and Alex van Straubenzee for being such willing and enthusiastic hosts; to their Project Manager, Malcolm Burrige, for going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that this was truly the trip of a lifetime; and to the headteachers, staff and students of Kiwale and Kisadhaki schools who made everyone feel so welcome.





I have learned a lot from this trip, in particular not to take simple things like running water or electricity for granted. I also learned a lot about myself. I will be doing all that I can to ensure that I try to continue to raise awareness of the work being undertaken and doing my bit from home to try and support it. Thank you again for this amazing opportunity and I hope that when you see the work that we have undertaken that you are as proud of it as we are.

**Ryan**

From the trip I have learned the kids over there appreciate everything you give them whether it was painting on a wall, giving them a sweet or giving them a piece of clothing. The children walk and cycle for miles for water. The kids were brilliant it must be very hard living in a place like that and doing what they do at such a young age. What I've learned about myself is I appreciate everything a lot more than I used to.

**Jamie**

Uganda 2013, I never actually thought I would ever go to Africa to do charity work. It has always been something I would love to do, and when I heard we had the three choices I was absolutely amazed - there was no competition. It had to be the trip to Uganda. We finished the nursery and the kitchen and water tank and I honestly felt so happy we had done something that would help so much.

**Noah**

I felt very sad to leave Uganda because it was great putting priceless smiles on kids' faces and the atmosphere every day was spectacular, I really felt the trip was worthwhile and it made a big difference to both my life and also theirs. I have learned from being in Uganda to appreciate things more and try to enjoy my education more because they walk 3km a day to get to school and they cherish every minute and most of the people in my school can't wait until the final bell so they can go home.

**George**

Just by adding a little colour, educative words and easy sums just put a smile on all the teachers and pupils faces. We also had the chance to take part in a little bit of teaching, this was a really good opportunity to find out how different it is in Africa, most of the students in Britain think that school is a bad thing, but it's a completely different aspect. Over there, all the students are very punctual and extremely energetic, their attitude is a lot more positive towards school. All these activities and work made such a difference to my views on college and work! I came back to England knowing I could go back to college with a big smile and make a much bigger effort.

I enjoyed every minute of the trip and would love to do some more charity work in the future, it was such an eye opening amazing experience and I'd be more than happy to volunteer again. I've had more thoughts and I'm thinking of getting in touch with the other Scottish students that I stayed with, doing some fundraising and hopefully travel over and help out again!

**Lee**

I have met some wonderful people that I could never forget and made thousands of incredible memories that I will treasure for the rest of my life. I would like to thank you for letting me have this opportunity, it has really opened my eyes and I could never repay you for such brilliant time and so many wonderful experiences I can only say thank you from the bottom of my heart it has truly been amazing.

**Teegan**

My trip to Africa was just absolutely amazing. I met some awesome people and saw some things that I never thought I ever would. I never thought I would've enjoyed as much as I did. It was by far the best two weeks of my life, and I would do it all again tomorrow if I had the chance. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

**Charlotte**

# SPECIAL PROJECTS - YEAR 9 RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMMES

The Royal Foundation of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry supported us in piloting an intensive residential programme for young people, aged 13/14 who are at risk of exclusion. The transformational course is designed to prepare young people for their GCSE years by increasing their self-confidence, self-esteem and aspirations for their future.

The first residential programme took part in the summer of 2013 and was delivered to 45 young people from across the country:

- ▶ **100% of those young people who attended the residential and follow up sessions remained in mainstream education within 6 months of the programme.**
- ▶ **90% of those young people who took part rated the programme as 'good' or 'excellent'.**

The Royal Foundation grant is also providing funding to enable us to train staff in transformational coaching. This is having a significant impact on the quality of intervention our staff are able to make.

**“BEING GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO COACH THE YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE ROYAL FOUNDATION RESIDENTIAL IN JULY 2013 WAS NOT ONLY AN HONOUR AND A PRIVILEGE IT WAS A REAL JOY TO WITNESS THE TRANSFORMATION IN THE WHOLE GROUP FROM THE FIRST DAY'S ARRIVAL OF FEAR, EMBARRASSMENT AND LOW CONFIDENCE, TO THE CONFIDENT, BEAMING AND POSITIVE INDIVIDUALS WE SAID GOODBYE TO ON THE FINAL AND FIFTH DAY”**

**“THE YOUNG PEOPLE RESPONDED WELL TO BEING LISTENED TO, HEARD, OFFERED CHOICES AND GUIDED TOWARDS COMMITTING TO SOMETHING THAT THEY CHOOSE. THEY RISE TO THE CHALLENGE WHEN THEY FEEL SUFFICIENTLY SUPPORTED TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THEIR COMMITMENTS, IT EMPOWERS THEM AND OPENS UP THE REALM OF INFINITE POSSIBILITIES EXIST FOR THEM AS WELL”.**

**Joyce Reid**  
SKILLFORCE AREA MANAGER

The residential course, combined with the follow-up coaching has made a significant difference to young people to help them develop their own personal action plan for realising their full potential.

# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2013/14

In the 2013/14 academic year we have committed to ensuring that our young people receive the best possible educational experience as a result of benefiting from our programmes. Our focus therefore will be:

- ▶ Ensuring that our quality of provision remains high, underpinned by a robust quality framework and greater investment nationally in this area
- ▶ Aligning our programme design and impact evaluation survey methodologies with the 7 core characteristics common across the Young Foundation Youth Social Action Framework, CBI Employability skills and the DfE framework. The equivalent alignment activity for Scotland against the Scottish Qualification Agency and CFE framework will be conducted
- ▶ Extending the eligibility again in 2013/14 of the SkillForce Prince's Award to a wider group of young people, starting in September 2013 with students enrolled upon Onto Next Steps and Back on Track programmes
- ▶ To develop and launch a SkillForce Junior Prince's Award
- ▶ Developing a growth plan for our Primary Transition programme

One of the key areas for focus for the forthcoming year will be to strengthen our evaluation methodology using the Young Foundation Framework and subsequent data sets. We will do this in a number of ways:

- ▶ By re-evaluating our student surveys ensuring that they provide age appropriate questions
- ▶ By ensuring that we only capture data that is relevant to the type of programme being delivered and supports the programme deliverables
- ▶ By identifying a sample of students for each programme type at the beginning of the academic year and tracking their individual journeys to provide stronger case study evidence
- ▶ By ensuring that independent evaluations are carried out for all of our programmes
- ▶ By working intensively with a selection of schools that are representative of all of our programmes to provide in-depth data prior to students commencing our programmes
- ▶ By ensuring that gaps in our data management are kept to a minimum wherever possible

Some of these key areas may take longer than an academic year to implement however work is already underway and progress will be demonstrated in our next Social Impact Report for 2013/14 (Volume 3).

# OUR EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

As a learning organisation, we are committed to ensuring that our evaluation approach is as robust as we can make it and that we learn from whatever the results tell us. Our focus is always to ensure that we are doing what we said we would do and that our students are learning what we set out to teach. The data gathered<sup>TM</sup> from our approach is then used to inform future programme development, enhancement and improvement.

We use various methods to capture this information:

METHOD	APPROACH	PURPOSE
Collate background information for all enrolled students (baseline)	Provided from school records and inputted by Instructors	To enable analysis of impact achieved by programmes and by student characteristic
Record all qualifications being delivered against programmes and enrolled student	Instructor	To enable analysis of qualifications and pass rate by programme type and student characteristic
Baseline surveys for young people at the start of a programme	Self Assessed	To enable us to track the improvements made against a range of questions from the beginning to the end of the programme
End surveys for young people as the programme is drawing to a conclusion	Self Assessed	
Baseline surveys for school staff at the start of a programme	Completed by school staff	To gather school perceptions of the participants, groups and SkillForce at the beginning and end of the programme
End surveys for school staff as the programme is drawing to a conclusion	Completed by school staff	
Baseline surveys for parents at the start of a programme	Completed by parents	To measure parents/carers perception of how their children have progressed on our programmes
End surveys for parents as the programme is drawing to a conclusion	Completed by parents	
Behaviour monitoring weekly for the duration of the programme for Back on Track programmes	Completed by SkillForce Instructors	To evidence the impact on behaviour of participants for specific behavioural programmes
Sessional attendance monitoring for all programmes	Completed by SkillForce Instructors	To monitor attendance across all programmes which is a required function for Instructors to provide to schools. We can produce accurate statistics on attendance as a result on any SkillForce programme
Monthly monitoring of data collection	Data Analyst	To ensure completeness and accuracy of information held to ensure reliable and credible data analysis
Independent evaluation of specific programmes	Independently produced	To provide independent analysis of our programmes to ensure validity of our own findings
Case studies	Provided by SkillForce staff working directly with young people	To demonstrate specific impact on the lives of young people and provide a personal perspective



# OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to thank the following supporters who each donated in excess of £10,000 to support our work with young people in the 12/13 academic year:

100 Women in Hedge Funds

ABF The Soldiers Charity

Anglo American PLC

Audi Polo Charity Day

BGC International

BL&G

Charities Aid Foundation

Charities Trust

Charlotte Heber-Percy Charitable Trust

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The Royal Foundation of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry

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Walking With the Wounded

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We are 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 activity. 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 in which they live. Please call us on **01623 827651** or email [fundraising@skillforce.org](mailto:fundraising@skillforce.org)

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## END NOTES

<sup>i</sup> Miss-Spent Youth June 2007 – New Philanthropy Capital

<sup>ii</sup> Department for Education, SFR31/13, Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils by Characteristics 2010/11 (latest release July 2013)

<sup>iii</sup> Our future reporting will reflect the widening in this reporting period of the definition of SEN to include specific reference to Disability (SEND) that arose from the 2011 Green Paper by the Department for Education. Support and Aspiration: a New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability. A Consultation. London: DfE (online).

<sup>iv</sup> Department for Education, SFR 42/2013, CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS 2013: AN ANALYSIS 23 October 2013 (England)

<sup>v</sup> Department for Education – SFR 31/2013: Destinations of Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Pupils by Characteristics, 2010/11

<sup>vi</sup> Department for Education, OSR19/2013, Destinations of Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 pupils. 2010/11 (latest release June 2013)

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.usethekey.org.uk/sample-articles/raising-the-participation-age-responsibilities-for-schools>

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d001082/index.shtml>

<sup>ix</sup> New Philanthropy Capital; Getting Back on Track; a guide for Funders and Charities – Copps and Keen – 2009, page 9

<sup>x</sup> New Philanthropy Capital; Getting Back on Track; a guide for Funders and Charities – Copps and Keen – 2009, page 8

<sup>xi</sup> <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/cc?key=0AonYzs4MzIZbdGQxT3c30GpjdU5BLTE4QnhlQVdPWmc>

<sup>xii</sup> Institute of Education- evaluation of SkillForce Ethos Pilot Primary Transition

<sup>xiii</sup> We don't have the full base data to assess week by week the trends in behaviour. This overall conclusion was the case last year. 40% improvement is based on first 3-4 sessions averaged, compared to the last 3-4 sessions averaged.

<sup>xiv</sup> M2M2 End of Programme Report February 2014

<sup>xv</sup> The selection of suitable students to participate in our programmes is primarily the decision of the schools. For instance our Back on Track programme is designed to re-engage young people at risk of exclusion, although the final selection decision rests with the school or organisation on which young people would most benefit.

<sup>xvi</sup> Survey Data – Onto Next Steps. I am nervous or tense – 8.3%; I can do things as well as most other people – 1.8%; I can talk to people quite easily – 3.0%; I feel confident in myself – 2.7%; I feel grown-up – 2.3%; I feel sympathetic to people with problems – 3.3%; I find life really exciting – 4.9%; I have good relationships with my teachers – 5.1%; I have good things to do outside of school – 2.4%; I like being in school – 1.4%; I spend time thinking about what I want to do when I leave school – 2.5%; I want to go to college or university when I leave school – 1.0%; In general I like being the way I am – 1.4%; My friends will help me if I need it – 3.2%; Other people's opinions are very important to me – 3.4%; Overall I have a lot to be proud of – 1.9%.

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY NOTES

Data collected relates to the 2012/2013 Academic year.

N.B. Analysis and findings in this report are based on SkillForce long course and do not include short course participant data unless specifically stated.

The majority of case studies and quotes have been used verbatim unless spelling and grammatical errors have a detrimental effect to the message intended.

“WE SEE POTENTIAL IN YOUNG PEOPLE THAT OTHERS DON'T & BELIEVE IN THEM IN WAYS THAT OTHERS CAN'T”

JAN RICHARDSON MBE JP, TRUSTEE FOR SKILLFORCE



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