

Making Attendance Everyone's Business in Redcar & Cleveland

Solutions Workshop

8th May 2024

Creativity, cultural and joyful activity interventions to help reduce the risk of, and reverse persistent and severe absence in the Borough



This Project is funded by Anglo American and managed by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

To keep up to date on the Project and to access free and useful resources please visit

www.skyblue.org.uk/attendance

How do we maximise creative, cultural and joyful activity interventions that could prevent the risk of and reverse persistent and severe absence?

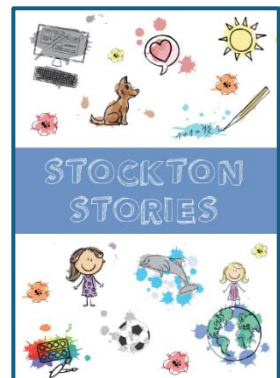
Why are we discussing this?

The workshops delivered as part of this Project in 2023, and more recently in March 2024, identified the potential of ensuring there is joyful, creative and participative activity for children and young people to engage with in order to act as an incentive to attend school well – and potentially reduce the risk of some young people becoming persistently absent where they would miss more than 10% of their education.

We haven't had much opportunity to describe what we mean by these kinds of activity, nor consider the evidence base for such interventions. Here are just some thoughts to get us started.....

Creative solutions linked to children and young people telling their stories their way

- E.g. Creative Partnership Programme such as the type completed by Blue Cabin with 4-5 care experienced children / young people. A film was made that has been name checked by multiple R&C stakeholders as something that was engaging for the small cohort of young people that made it and the impact of its messaging.
- E.g. Films and comics created alongside young people have been suggested as solutions with relevant supplier details put forward.
- Working with specific populations e.g. carers in creative ways to help create campaigns: [We Care You Care - Help and support for all carers living across the South Tees area | We Care You Care](#)¹



EEF's [review of attendance interventions](#)²: **Extracurricular activities:** '....interventions are those that provide additional educational opportunities outside of the regular curriculum. These approaches aim to increase student engagement in school which may then increase overall school attendance e.g. athletic (sport) and non-athletic (music, drama, play activities and other activities). All extracurricular activities were delivered after school. Four of the seven interventions included multiple components.

- One example of an included approach is called OrchKids. In this approach, participants are provided with musical instruments at no cost and receive lessons with certified teachers in small groups. The intervention also includes additional components, including homework support and academic instruction.
- Another example intervention is Playworks, an extracurricular behavioural intervention that seeks to reduce school "aversion" through the removal of bullying. The intervention includes out-of-school-time support and interscholastic leagues that promote skill building in particular sports to students in the upper grades.

Findings and implications: 'Due to the limited strength of the evidence, we have not been able to extract tangible findings on the impact of extracurricular activities interventions on attendance.' (EEF, March 2022)

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKee0FteBdQ>

² [Attendance-REA-report.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](#)

What could we learn locally?

The Woodsmith Achieve Education Programme pilots 2023-2025 may reveal insights about the effects of extracurricular activity on engagement, motivation, willingness to try new things and skills acquisition but is not expected to have a causal impact on attendance rates. A range of fun, exciting opportunities are being enjoyed by small cohorts of Year 8 students at St Peter's Catholic College and Outwood Academy Redcar, and activities are being shaped around young people's preferences by Redcar & Cleveland's Tourism and Culture Team. They have recently also engaged in a project called 'Latitude' which saw them co-produce a film (about anti-bullying) screened at The Regent Cinema – hopefully we can see this later in the Project too 😊

What else do we mean, and think is possible, to increase the 'joy' young people feel, such that instead of choosing not to attend 'school' they want to go.

Adventure? Adrenaline?	Field trips? Visits?	Challenges?	Peer Support Activity?
Fun with family – cooking?	Making films – being heard?	Creativity?	Performance opportunities?
Projects?	Fashion?	Film, photography?	Social action?
Gaming?	Comics	Creative writing	Animations

Local insight and learning to inspire us....

Researchers from Teesside University are sharing outcomes from a series of creative workshops with young people in the South Tees region, including comics, creative writing, and animated and documentary films. An event (in May 2024) explores how creative arts approaches can capture young people's perspectives on health and wellbeing. This project is a collaboration between Teesside University, the Health Determinants Research Collaborative and Tees Valley Education Trust. It is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

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Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council Culture & Tourism are involved in myriad creative activities that we can learn from over the course of the Project. Many of the themes in the 'boxes' above on this page are derived from some of the things that Lisa's team have recently found young people involved in the Achieve Education Programme would like to explore, discover or experience as part of their 'Creative Consultation' approach to listening to young people and co-designing activity with them.

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Suggestions from delegates attending the 20th of March 2024 'solutions' workshop session

Suggested Solution(s):

Creativity, cultural and joyful activity interventions

1: Thinking about this solution, and referring to the theory of change diagram, if done well, which outcomes would it most contribute towards?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of belonging • Self-determination • Self-achievement • Trusted person • Strength / motivation • Pride in self / community / school • Happy children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building confidence/ friendship • TRIBE • Additional benefits – income generation 'giving back' • Engaging others – parents etc / community |
|---|--|

2: Are we already doing this solution anywhere 'well' in Redcar & Cleveland?

Where is it working well and why?	Where are there gaps that you think this solution would ideally fill?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement through personal interest – improving attendance on those days • Primary school examples • The film made by Year 8s in two of the Borough's secondary schools as part of the Achieve Education Programme • Creative play • OPAL (constructive play) • Building our Future • Forest School • Duke of Edinburgh • Risk Roadshow (primary and secondary) • Youth Enterprise • Youth service and Tuned In (for anxious young people) • Reading programmes supported by people who have retired • Northfield School, Billingham • Programmes running with Ischy Din – screenwriter working with CYP on film making linked to Tees Valley creatives • Family Dining Project in Bradford – no further details • Passmores School, Harlow, Essex. Long opening hours and broad extracurricular offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break / lunch activity for secondary schools (KS4) • Animation and gaming for 13-14 year olds • Dungeons & Dragon, Warhammer etc (place-based) • Transport • Scheduling considerations i.e. Friday when absence is typically highest • Funding • Youth workers • Crafting • Space – area in school for the activities • Staffing (peer run clubs) • Joyful curriculum • PTAs back in secondary schools (who has one) • We need mapping/discovery/gap analysis • Find out what CYP actually want/value • Explore what currently happens during secondary school lunch breaks – many of which have been cut in length

3: Which people/organisations in the wider system i.e. not just schools or colleges, but across any of the services, in communities, at home – need to be involved in this solution?

- VCS organisations
- Palace Hub
- Specialist grass roots organisations
- Youth service
- Parents, grandparents, people who retired
- Children and young people
- Businesses
- Public health (HAF)
- Creative industries
- Universities
- Post-16 support
- Local theatres (outreach)
- People working with animals
- VCS e.g The Imaginarium in Redcar
- Scouting/Girl Guiding

4: What is your recommended action plan for this solution?

<p><i>How do we get started / build on what we've got?</i></p> <p><i>If we think more of this type of solution is needed how do we make it happen?</i></p>	<p><i>Can we make change using the resources 'we' already have in the system i.e. can we improve things by doing things differently with what we've already got? Do we need additional resource to make a step change in the outcomes to reduce the risk of / persistent / severe absence?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance survey • Capture wider examples of best practice • Send out request through cultural team / CVS – anyone wishing to donate time • Student leaders / development programme • Ask the young people and children (focus groups), youth service, school council • Ask schools – what are the barriers and opportunities, are you interested? • How to deliver the curriculum in a different way • Can we build on existing school business / enterprise? • What are the skills of governors that we are not using (map) – skills audit • Pilot project re an 'Alternative Friday Offer' – high quality vocational/sporting activities to improve Friday attendance • Link creative offer into transition work. Use what secondary schools can offer in arts/creative space to build excitement - perhaps some joint Y6/7 activities/visits • Summer schools – HAF opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to say yet as there is much more discovery to do first it would seem • One group suggested the need to get adults (parents / family members) into schools more often for positive things (plays, celebrations, classroom visits, sports events etc) – more in line with a primary-school-style approach to family engagement in the school. • Middlesbrough football club?