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Education & Enrichment

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How partnerships between the education and youth sectors can improve the accessibility, quality and impact of enrichment activities.

Report authors:
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# About our partnership
Report Commissioners

NCS Trust is an Arm's Length Body of DCMS incorporated by Royal Charter and established to shape, support, champion and lead a thriving National Citizen Service. Since 2009 more than 800,000 young people have taken part in NCS, completing over 18 million hours of community action, and gaining priceless life experiences. NCS offers a range of experiences to young people that support them to grow their strengths and realise their potential to become exactly who they want to be — through boosting their confidence, getting involved in social action, making new friends from different backgrounds, and learning new skills to become world and work ready.

Every year, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) inspires hundreds of thousands of young people, from all walks of life, to explore who they are, grow in confidence and develop the skills they need to successfully navigate life. In 2022/23, 323,676 young people started their DofE, with participants giving more than 3.5 million hours of volunteering in their communities. The DofE charity is working to give more than one million young people the chance to participate in a life-changing DofE programme by 2026.

About our partnership
Report Researchers
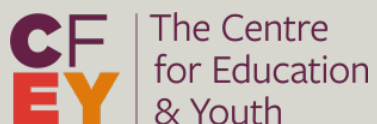
The Centre for Education and Youth (CfEY) is a think and action tank. We work collaboratively with a large active network of organisations and individuals, breaking down divisions and bridging the gaps between the sectors, policy makers and researchers. We shape debate, inform policy and change practices, so that all young people, especially those most at risk of poor outcomes and marginalisation, thrive. Most of all, we are positive about the future and, as a team of teachers and youth workers, believe in the power of brilliant practitioners to realise the potential of all young people.

UK Youth is a leading charity working across the UK. We have influence as a sector-supporting infrastructure body, a direct delivery partner and a campaigner for social change. UK Youth's new 2025 strategy, "Unlocking Youth Work" outlines a bold ambition to impact young lives by unlocking youth work as a catalyst for change. We will work in partnership to build a cross-sector movement, creating a society that understands, champions, and delivers effective youth work for all. With an open network of over 8000 youth organisations and nation partners, we are focused on unlocking youth work as the catalyst of change that is needed now more than ever.

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Contents

Enrichment activities include sports, arts clubs, volunteering, social action and adventures away from home. Evidence shows that enrichment can improve young people's essential skills, health and participation in education. However, evidence also shows wide disparities in access to enrichment. While schools and youth organisations work hard to provide enrichment to young people, they often face challenges in working together to achieve the same goal.

This report was commissioned by the National Citizen Service Trust (NCS Trust) and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) to understand how formal education and youth sector organisations can partner, collaborate and coordinate to improve young people's access to high-quality enrichment opportunities.

Executive summary

Our research used three data collection methods to study education and youth sector enrichment partnerships:

A Rapid Literature Review

We searched and screened the available literature to gather 40 documents relevant to our research questions, which we analysed and synthesised against prior findings on effective partnership practice between education and youth sector organisations. The review also informed our approach towards case study data collection.

Case studies

We selected 11 education and youth sector partnerships from a longlist of 38 candidates. Our sample was selected to represent a range across several variables: geographic location, the pupil characteristics of the education setting, the enrichment activity being delivered and the mechanism of the partnerships' establishment.

For each partnership, we conducted three interviews: one with a school leader or education sector practitioner involved in the partnership, one with a youth or community sector leader and one with a young person participating in the enrichment activity delivered by the partnership.

We also reviewed supplementary documentation provided by the partnerships, such as impact reports and strategy papers.

An advisory group

We set up an advisory group comprising three young people, three education sector representatives, three youth sector representatives and two research agencies specialising in education and youth research.

We involved the advisory group at key junctures of our research to ensure that the research was grounded in, and relevant to, the lived experiences of young people involved in enrichment activities and the practitioners working with them.

Executive summary   KEY FINDINGS

Across our rapid literature review and case studies, we identified five key themes relating to effective partnership practice between education and youth sector organisations, and the barriers and enablers required to support such practice:

1. Local Context

Intermediary brokerage organisations are a key local asset that connects education and youth sector organisations and supports effective ongoing partnerships.

> Formal education and youth sector organisations often face a coordination challenge in creating new partnerships. Initial outreach from high-quality local enrichment provision to education settings get 'lost in the noise' of the large volume of marketing for services that those settings receive. Education settings also struggle with the capacity and capability to quality assure potential enrichment partners.

> Effective partnerships often overcome this challenge by drawing on brokerage organisations that are external to both the formal education organisations and formal youth sector organisations. These intermediaries are trusted, 'honest brokers' who use their capacity and capability to quality assure the enrichment provider, partner them with an education setting in need of their services and provide support with ongoing partnership management.

> Examples of brokerage organisations in our case studies include community hubs, local cultural education partnerships (LCEPs) and Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) central teams.

2. Human Resources

Education settings typically lack dedicated partnership management roles, but find configurations that create more staff capacity for this work.

> Managing an effective partnership requires staff capacity. Most education settings in our case studies lack a dedicated partnership management role. Instead, they create capacity for partnership management by folding partnership management into a teaching and learning or pastoral responsibility that a teacher or school leader already has, or through securing senior leadership buy-in to create the time and resourcing for an education setting lead to engage in partnership management.

> Some education settings have dedicated partnership managers. These dedicated partnership managers are able to engage in partnership management activities such as having regular face-to-face meetings, capturing youth voices to tailor the enrichment activity available through the partnership and seeking out new enrichment partnership opportunities.

> By contrast, in almost all our case studies, youth sector partner organisations had dedicated partnership management. Because of their greater expertise in partnership management and enrichment delivery, some youth sector organisations engage in active efforts to improve education-setting staff's capability in both these areas.

Executive summary KEY FINDINGS

3. Ways of Working

Trust between partners is vital for effective enrichment delivery, with trust being developed through clear contracting processes, long partnership duration and regular face-to-face partnership management meetings

> Effective partnerships in our case studies benefit from strong organisational and philosophical alignment.

> Effective partnerships in our case studies had strong organisational alignment, for example through agreed and monitored outcomes for the impact of the partnership on participating young people.

> Alignment of philosophies includes approaches to pedagogy and working with young people, such as an education setting understanding and valuing youth-work-based approaches to working with young people.

> Reaching this philosophical and values alignment was a challenge for some partnerships, as education settings and youth sector organisations often have different priorities and approaches to working. Some youth sector organisations overcame this challenge by working to model and communicate the value of their approach to their education setting partner, gradually securing their buy-in and alignment.

> Trust between partners is a key element of effective partnerships, developed in a range of ways, including through the length of the partnership time, routine meetings and robust and clear contracting processes. As trust builds in a partnership, it often supports the growth of the reach and impact of an enrichment activity.

4. Financial and Material Resources

Education-setting budgets are the main funding source for enrichment partnerships, which can support stable and long-term funding for delivery

> Most of our case study partnerships are primarily funded by the core budget and Pupil Premium of the formal education setting, with some partnerships drawing on other sources of external funding such as grants or MAT support. This has advantages, such as reducing the fundraising workload for a partnership by using established funding mechanisms. However, the currently challenging funding climate for education settings is placing significant pressure on some of our case study partnerships.

> Some partnerships drew on economies of scale or other efficiencies from scale. These included using a MAT central team's resource to support with partnership procurement and management, but also using local council procurement power to access services such as coach travel at a discounted rate.

> Partnerships also engage in resource sharing. Much of this involves sharing physical space, including the education setting's site and local cultural assets such as galleries and theatres. The sharing of capabilities in partnerships also allowed partnerships to bid for further grants to support ongoing partnership working.

5.Power and Equity

Some partnerships employ sophisticated approaches to involving stakeholders in the co-production of their offer, while others struggle to do so because of capacity and capability challenges

> Some partnerships work to create a sense of co-ownership over the enrichment activity between partners. This is often achieved through regular meetings between partners to discuss the design and delivery of the intervention and to reach joint decisions on potential changes.

> Co-ownership can also be achieved with more standardised interventions delivered by national organisations, such as the adaptation of the DofE programme by Ormiston Academies Trust.

> Some partnerships engage in relatively sophisticated approaches towards stakeholder co-production, such as using steering groups composed of local key stakeholders to co-produce the enrichment offer and approaches to its delivery. However, some partnerships face difficulty delivering this co-production due to limited capacity.

> Youth voice is important for tailoring enrichment interventions to improve young people's engagement. Two of our case study partnerships engaged in active and systematic efforts to engage youth voice for this purpose. However, other partnerships described capacity and expertise challenges in delivering effective youth-voice practice, as well as a tension between the youth sector approach of centring youth voice and the more instructor and curriculum-led approach of education settings.

Executive summary   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our analysis of our key findings, we suggest the following recommendations that should be considered to improve young people's access to, and participation in, enrichment through education and youth sector partnerships.

Recommendations for policy makers that could support a higher quality enrichment offer to all young people include:

A framework for effective enrichment provision.

A new standardised and authoritative overview of best practice and guidance for enrichment provision across the education and youth sectors, including a typology of different types of enrichment (and the evidence supporting their impact), strategies for integrating youth voice into enrichment design and guidance on effective monitoring and evaluation of enrichment programmes.

An updated approach to education sector inspections that includes guidance around and greater prioritisation of the quality of enrichment and partnerships with the youth sector.

Updates to Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework could allow the inspectorate to give higher priority to enrichment and partnerships, with accompanying improvements to guidance and direction for schools on effective enrichment provision.

Teaching workforce training focused on effective partnership working.

This could involve changes to the core content framework for Initial Teacher Training and the introduction of a National Professional Qualification (NPQ) to improve teachers' understanding of effective enrichment provision, youth work and effective partnership working.

An 'enrichment premium' that could create the long-term funding stream needed for improving disadvantaged young people's access to enrichment.

If policy makers want to increase funding for young people's access to enrichment, an efficient and effective way could be through an uplift to the Pupil Premium (an 'enrichment premium'), which is earmarked for expenditure on enrichment.

Executive summary   RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations that could support education and youth sector practitioners in effective partnership working

Where practitioners are operating as enrichment leads, organisations that are funding or hosting the role should consider the following:

Enrichment leads can be most effective if recruited by and situated in brokerage organisations such as local councils, LCEPs, Bridge organisations and services hubs.

Previous experience in the local enrichment landscape and working with schools is useful for enrichment leads, which can be considered when developing role criteria and recruitment.

Standardised responsibilities and workflows for an enrichment lead should focus on quality assurance and brokerage, including developing processes for quality assuring local enrichment providers, acting as a brokering intermediary that supports ongoing partnership management and mapping and connecting enrichment activities to local enrichment assets (such as galleries, performance spaces and sports pitches).

Enrichment leads can engage with local stakeholders and community voices to shape the local enrichment offer, including local education settings, enrichment providers, local government, employers, parents and young people.

Executive summary   RECOMMENDATIONS

More broadly, all education sector practitioners involved in enrichment should consider the following:

More broadly, all education sector practitioners involved in enrichment should consider the following:

- ❯ MATs can use some of their central budget for local enrichment leads at the trust level.
- ❯ Leadership support for a partnership can be used to allocate protected time and create other resourcing.
- ❯ A trust-wide commitment to funding enrichment partnership work to support the formation of stable long-term partnerships.

Youth sector practitioners should consider the following:

- ❯ Youth sector practitioners can use their expertise to introduce the education sector to effective youth-voice practice.

Both education and youth sector organisations should consider the following to improve partnership working:

- ❯ Creating checklists of key questions to be discussed at partnership inception.
- ❯ Agreeing a clear and shared set of outcomes for a partnership.
- ❯ Creating time for regular face-to-face meetings between partners.
- ❯ Creating processes for effective information sharing that improve long-term planning around funding.

Executive summary

Recommendations for researchers to create insights that can grow the accessibility and impact of enrichment partnerships by investigating the following themes:

How do different kinds of education and youth sector partnerships most effectively support disadvantaged young people?

What are the most efficient and effective methods used by education settings for recording and tracking young people's participation in enrichment activities and using the data collected?

How are education and youth sector partnerships working to improve school attendance, young people's mental health and the skills pipeline?

Background to this research

THE CONTEXT

Enrichment and non-formal learning activities include sports, arts clubs, volunteering, social action and adventures away from home. These activities are a source of joy and meaning to countless young people in England. As we summarised in our Enriching Education Recovery report with the National Citizen Service, these activities are also opportunities for young people to develop essential skills, increase their engagement with education and improve their mental and physical health, and they also offer protection from participation in violence (The Centre for Education and Youth and National Citizen Service, 2021).

However, there has been a decline in young people's access to enrichment opportunities in school over the past decade (The Centre for Education and Youth and National Citizen Service, 2021). This has affected disadvantaged young people more than their more advantaged peers, leading to a widening 'enrichment gap' between rich and poor (Fraser and Hawksbee, 2022). This disparity in access to and engagement with enrichment has continued post-pandemic (De Gennaro, 2023).

THE CHALLENGE

Schools and youth sector organisations work hard to provide enrichment activities to young people. However, they face several challenges in coordinating and collaborating on this. Schools may lack the capacity to deliver high-quality enrichment within their current staffing levels. They may also struggle to stay up to date with the enrichment offer of local organisations, relying on word of mouth to form new partnerships. Similarly, youth enrichment organisations can struggle to reach young people who would benefit from their programmes. While they may work with schools to engage young people, they may equally struggle to initiate and build relationships with local schools.

Background to this research   THIS REPORT

These, and other, challenges represent concerning patterns in young people's access to enrichment, increasing the barriers that schools and youth sector organisations face in providing high-quality enrichment opportunities. The NCS Trust and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) therefore commissioned this research to understand how formal education and youth sector organisations can partner, collaborate and coordinate to improve young people's access to high-quality enrichment opportunities. This report includes:

A review of the evidence on successful collaboration methods between the formal education and youth sectors that enable better access to enrichment and non-formal learning opportunities.

A showcase of innovative and effective practice in this space, through a collection of case studies that show how different approaches to collaboration and coordination work in practice.

Practical insights and learning from on-the-ground delivery, hearing directly from young people, teachers, school leaders, youth workers and other practitioners.

Common themes of good practice that could be scaled through national guidance and form the basis of future practical demonstration projects.

Methodology OVERVIEW

This research used three data collection methods, which are summarised in Table 1 and then described in more detail.

Table 1 – Overview of methods

Method	Aim
Rapid literature review	❯ To synthesise prior findings on effective partnership practice between formal education settings and the youth sector (and the conditions that enable this practice) ❯ To generate insights to guide the case study sampling and data collection process
Case studies	❯ To showcase examples of innovative and effective practice in school and youth sector partnerships for enrichment provision ❯ To test and further develop the findings of the literature review on effective partnership practice between formal education and youth sector organisations
Advisory group	❯ To anchor the research and reporting process in the insights and interests of education and youth sector practitioners, as well as young people

Methodology

The rapid literature review synthesised evidence already produced or held by the NCS Trust, the DofE, The Centre for Education and Youth, and UK Youth. It also involved an online literature search of academic and grey literature using key search terms. Search terms were selected across three broad categories (the type of activity, the type of education and youth sector setting, and ways of working) to capture the diverse range of evidence related to cross-sector enrichment and non-formal learning (NFL) partnerships. All combinations of the search terms were completed across the six databases (for both grey and academic literature). Further hand searching of recommended literature was also completed, using recommendations from project partners and the advisory group.

The following criteria for literature to be included in the review were applied:

> The title/abstract indicated the presence of two or more organisations involved in providing services that can be reasonably defined as enrichment or NFL activities. These could be from the same sector. Funders or commissioners of research and evaluation were excluded.

> Documents also had to: describe services for the target group (young people aged 11–24); focus on effective partnerships that improved access and impact for young people; be published in or after 2010; appear in the first five pages of search results; and not focus on partnerships occurring in the Global South.

This research project focuses primarily on education and youth sector partnerships for enrichment. However, we included a range of other cross-sector partnerships in the literature review (including school–school, school–university, youth–youth, school–museum and school–community organisation partnerships) to help better understand the range of different partnership mechanisms in place. The reviewers decided to include these wider-ranging cross-sector partnerships due to the scarcity of literature on this topic.

Initial searches returned 60 sources. After a closer review, 20 documents were excluded because they did not meet the criteria set out above, leaving 40 documents remaining for initial analysis. Insights gained from the rapid literature review helped shape the sampling process for the qualitative case studies and the development of data collection tools, such as interview topic guides.

Methodology

CASE STUDIES

We generated a longlist of 38 partnerships as potential case studies, based on the research team's professional networks and existing knowledge of partnership working across the UK. This was supplemented by insights from the NCS Trust, the DofE and our advisory group.

We selected 11 partnerships to become case studies to provide a wide range of insights across multiple variables. These included the type of partnership, type of education setting, enrichment activity, location, pupil characteristics – special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) status, Free School Meals status and ethnicity – and the mechanism by which the partnership was created.

For each partnership, we generally interviewed one or two stakeholders in one of three categories:

A.   A school leader or education sector practitioner involved in the partnership.

B.   A youth or community sector lead or the local authority lead involved in the partnership.

C.   A young person taking part in the enrichment activity.

We used semi-structured topic guides, which were designed for each interviewee type. The questions in these guides were developed to gather information on what each interviewee thought were the critical aspects of their partnership. The open-ended questions allowed the interviewees to build on the findings of the literature review and add new insights beyond the review.

All interviewees provided informed consent for their interview. Before being interviewed, those from the school and youth organisations also provided supporting documentation about their partnership (evaluation findings, memoranda of understanding etc). This allowed us to tailor further probing questions, informed by this documentary data. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and an hour and were conducted remotely. Interviews were recorded, safely stored in encrypted folders and transcribed for analysis.

Methodology   ADVISORY GROUP

We set up an advisory group comprising three young people, three education sector representatives, three youth sector representatives and two research agencies specialising in education and youth research. In the early stages of the research process, the group shaped the research questions, the literature review, the development of research tools and the sampling frame for choosing case study partners. In the later stages, they provided feedback on the interim report and had the opportunity to make in-depth comments on the final report. The final conclusions of this report, and any errors, are the sole responsibility of the authors.

The advisory group ensured that the research was grounded in, and relevant to, the lived experiences of young people involved in enrichment activity and the practitioners working with them. The group also provided valuable validation that the overall research agenda aligned with the education and youth sectors' most important priorities around education and enrichment. The group also played a role in ensuring that the research's learnings are shared in a manner that is accessible to young people and sector practitioners. They will continue to play a key role by sharing the findings of this report with their networks.

Rapid literature review

There are several key terms that would benefit from more precise definitions to support both research and practice in this area. These are:

A. Enrichment and non-formal learning (NFL)

B. Partnerships (and when these are deemed to be effective/successful)

The rapid literature review found that there is a strong crossover between NFL, common definitions of enrichment and the common principles and mechanisms/outcomes of youth work practice. These were used to develop a composite definition for the purpose of this research:

Enrichment and non-formal learning activities are designed to support a young person's social, personal and educational development and skills. Enrichment and non-formal learning can take place outside of compulsory educational provision and be adapted to a variety of settings. They incorporate a range of activities, but the primary objective is to support a young person's development.

Enrichment and non-formal learning activities can include but are not limited to: positive activities, programmes and clubs including sports, arts, debating and public speaking; cultural trips and exchanges; outdoor learning;[1] adventures away from home; extended access to curriculum subject matter (e.g. university laboratories for students studying science, technology, engineering and maths [STEM] subjects); open-access youth clubs; targeted advocacy and support from a trusted adult; volunteering and social action; and employability and life skills training.

This review covered a broad spectrum of partnership types, including formal, contracted and coordination partnership mechanisms. They also included informal information-sharing partnerships that relied on personal relationships rather than formal structures. A useful hierarchy of the spectrum of these partnerships is offered by Cheminais (2009, p. 5) (see Table 2).

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[1] We define outdoor learning as 'experiential learning within an outdoor environment to support a person's personal, social, and educational development; improve their health and wellbeing; and raise environmental awareness. The outdoor space in which learning takes place is an integral part of the learning process' (UK Youth, 2022).

Rapid literature review DEFINITIONS

Table 2 – Types of partnership

Types of Partnership	Description
Coexistence	Clarity between practitioners from different agencies as to who does what and with whom.
Cooperation	Practitioners from different agencies sharing information and recognising the mutual benefits and value of partnership working, that is, pooling the collective knowledge, skills and achievements available.
Coordination	Partners planning together; sharing some roles and responsibilities, resources and risk taking; accepting the need to adjust and make some changes to improve services; thus, avoiding overlap.
Collaboration	Longer-term commitments between partners, with organisational changes that lead to shared leadership, control, resources and risk taking. Partners from different agencies agree to work together on strategies or projects, each contributing to achieving shared goals.
Co-ownership	Practitioners from different agencies commit themselves to achieving a common vision, making significant changes in what they do and how they do it.

Throughout this report, 'partnership' is used as an umbrella term to capture the diversity of coordination and collaboration mechanisms between education and youth sector partners to deliver enrichment and NFL opportunities to young people. 'Effective partnership' describes when two or more organisations have acknowledged that they are working in partnership to increase young people's access to and/or participation in enrichment and NFL opportunities both inside and outside of school.

Rapid literature review SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The rapid literature review found that the conditions for effective cross-sector partnerships for enrichment or NFL can be grouped into six thematic areas. These are presented below, in descending order of frequency in which they appeared in the literature. Each condition was then assigned a rating of 'foundational', 'functional' or 'significant'. These were defined as follows:

Foundational

Without this condition, it is not possible to have an effective partnership. This condition featured in the majority of the literature and it was deemed to be critical to effective partnership working.

Functional

It is possible to have an effective partnership without this condition. However, for the partnership to function 'well' (i.e. sustainably and with capacity for impact, and to achieve its purpose), some combination of 'functional' conditions must be present. This condition was mentioned in a substantial proportion of the literature reviewed, but not all. Therefore, the condition is deemed to be needed for certain types of effective partnership working.

Significant

This condition can help a partnership become more sustainable and tailored to local and/or contextual factors, including considerations of power and equity dynamics. The condition was not widely mentioned in the literature. However, it was positioned as an important feature for effective partnerships, when mentioned.

Rapid literature review SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Conditions that appeared most frequently in the reviewed literature were deemed to be 'foundational' for effective cross-sector enrichment and NFL partnership working. These included conditions associated with the closely linked themes of **human resources** and **ways of working**.

The next two thematic areas, **financial and material resources** and **time**, were deemed to be of 'functional' importance. Without conditions related to these themes, it is still possible to have a partnership with a successful working relationship to deliver enrichment or NFL activities. However, evidence from the rapid literature review indicates that these 'functional' conditions must be present to build sustainable and impactful partnerships.

Conditions associated with **local context** considerations (e.g. existing partnership working infrastructure) and **power and equity** were important features of some partnerships, but these themes were not prominent in the literature. The conditions are best positioned as 'significant' conditions as they are helpful (and, in some cases, necessary) for effective partnerships but are not yet widely implemented in practice in enrichment partnerships.

The rating of these conditions was primarily based on how frequently they were cited in the literature, with some consideration of their impact (where mentioned in the literature). It is worth highlighting that frequency is not necessarily an indication of importance or best practice. The literature pointed to a combination of these conditions at play in the most effective examples of partnership working. The case study element of this research was designed to explore the preliminary assumptions made from the rapid literature review.

Rapid literature review   SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Table 3 – Main themes identified in the rapid literature review

Main themes in descending order of frequency	Emerging conditions	Questions derived for case study data collection interviews	Rating
Human resources	› Dedicated staff roles › Leadership buy-in and distributed leadership › Staff capacity › Staff capability	› Where should dedicated partnership coordination roles sit (within education, youth organisations or an external intermediary)? › What is the value of additional dedicated enrichment delivery staff? › What skills and experience are required for staff to thrive and have impact in partnership coordination roles?	**Foundational**
Ways of working	› Trusting working relationships › Organisational alignment › Formalities – agreed structures and processes	› - Which models and structures of cross-sector working are effective for education–youth sector partnerships providing educational enrichment – looking particularly at distributed leadership and power-sharing approaches?[2] › What is needed to build trusting working relationships between cross-sector partners?	**Foundational**
Financial and material resource	› Adequate, long-term funding for all associated costs › Resource sharing	› How do different funding models affect the dynamics and sustainability of education–youth sector partnerships? › How do education and youth sector partners maximise existing resources in delivering enrichment activities? › How can features of partnership working lead to sustainable funding?	**Functional**

[2] A distributed leadership model emphasises the importance of interconnectivity and teamwork rather than top-down leadership.

Rapid literature review SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Time
- Longer duration of partnership
- Regular, protected time to build relationships

> How long does it take for the sharing of best practice to support sustainable relationships?

Functional

Local context
- Event and crisis led
- Partnership working infrastructure

> To what extent do the local context, and factors associated with power and equity, influence the dynamics and effectiveness of education–youth sector partnerships?
> How does the local infrastructure impact partnership development and maintenance?

Significant

Power and equity
- Hierarchy of sectors/services
- Youth engagement

> How should young people be engaged in education–youth sector partnerships?
> How does young people's participation in education–youth sector partnerships affect the dynamics and effectiveness of the partnership to achieve its enrichment/NFL objectives?

Significant

Foundational conditions: human resources

The conditions associated with human resources must be considered as foundational for effective cross-sector partnership working. Human resources here are understood as the people who make up an organisation (including paid staff members and volunteers), their time and their skills. Partnerships, at their core, are about people working together. So, it was unsurprising that the conditions associated with the wider theme of human resources appeared most frequently across the literature under review, with more than half of all sources citing their importance.

The importance of dedicated staff roles was the most frequently appearing condition within human resources, and often served as a prerequisite to wider staff capacity and capability (Ofsted, 2011; Nathan, 2015; Department for Education, 2020; National Youth Agency, 2023). A research report from the Department for Education (2017) into extended activity provision in secondary schools found that a 'dedicated coordinating role proved invaluable' (p. 11). The literature highlighted the importance of senior staff (leadership) being committed to partnership working (O'Connor, 2012; Little and Jahromi, 2019; National Charter School Resource Centre, 2021; UK Youth, 2023a).

Also related to human resources was staff capacity and time for both delivery and coordination (Department for Education, 2017, 2022; Livingstone and Doherty, 2020) and staff capability to engage with and sustain enrichment-orientated partnership working (Golden et al., 2011; Allen et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2020).

Foundational conditions: ways of working

People working together from different organisations, with different priorities and strategic focuses, presents several possible barriers, challenges and sites of conflict. This was acknowledged in the literature, with attention to ways of working cited as a key enabler of successful partnerships by more than a third of the sources under review.

The frequency and depth of discussion regarding ways of working in partnership led us to consider this theme as 'foundational'. The specific conditions that sit within this theme included the following:

> Building mutual trust and respect in working relationships (Russell et al., 2016; Little and Jahromi, 2019; Ravenscroft, 2020).

> The alignment of purpose or operational objectives (Russell et al., 2012; Ravenscroft, 2020; National Youth Agency, 2023).

> Having more formal structures and processes, such as assigning roles and responsibilities or having formal agreements and contracts, which can help to make the partnership 'real' for involved parties (Hermens et al., 2015) and more sustainable (Department for Education, 2017).

Functional conditions: financial and material resources

Conditions associated with financial and material resources were highlighted in a fifth of the sources under review. The literature provided some evidence of partnerships that did not need additional financial or material resources, making these 'functional' rather than 'foundational' conditions. The literature review indicated that providers with tighter or reduced budgets managed to provide access to enrichment and NFL opportunities by maximising existing resources and infrastructure to create efficiencies. However, this often resulted in a reduced offering, impacting wider access and participation. For example, in the Department for Education's evaluation of summer schools, a sizeable minority of schools (20%, n=555) said they could have delivered the enrichment and NFL activities without additional funding. These schools would typically focus on specific pupil cohorts, run programmes for shorter periods or run them for fewer pupils. While presenting obvious barriers to widening access, this shows that enrichment and NFL provision partnerships can be delivered by adapting existing delivery rather than needing additional resources (Department for Education, 2022).

In the current context of serious budget constraints for the education sector and deep funding cuts in the youth sector, this is a promising finding that merits further exploration. Therefore, understanding how enrichment partnerships can be deployed to maximise existing resource provision was a key line of enquiry in the case study research phase.

Conditions associated with this theme fell into two broad areas: adequate funding for the partnership (Sizmur et al., 2011; Harland and Sharp, 2015; Cramman et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2020; The Centre for Education and Youth and National Citizen Service, 2021; Renaisi, 2023) and resource sharing (Stonehill et al., 2010; Gorard et al., 2016; McConnon et al., 2017; Tan et al., 2020; Moreno et al., 2021). The literature highlighted the importance of the financial and operational stability of involved organisations.

Functional conditions: time

There are three specific conditions relating to time that are highlighted in the literature: the time it takes to develop and duration of effective partnerships to deliver enrichment, and the timing of enrichment and NFL activities to ensure effective delivery. Discussed in a fifth of the reviewed literature, conditions related to time are considered 'functional'. This theme is closely related to the financial and material resources theme.

The review found that long-term partnerships and time to build relationships (Hermens et al., 2015; Russell et al., 2016; UK Youth, 2023b) allow positive ways of working to be established and embedded, and open space for evaluation and learning to take place in a meaningful way, in turn leading to the evolution, sustainability and improvement of the enrichment partnership (Nathan, 2015; Department for Education, 2017; Livingstone and Doherty, 2020; Tan et al., 2020). However, there were also examples in the literature of partners who found that more flexible, short-term agreements worked for them, due to having limited capacity for more embedded, long-term partnerships (Tan et al., 2020).

Significant conditions: local context

Partnership working does not exist in a vacuum. The literature highlights the relevance and impact of local, national and international contexts in provoking, sustaining or undermining partnership working. These include crisis events and long-running social issues (such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and the legacy of austerity policies), which can incentivise or disrupt partnership working. Specific local contexts, such as the infrastructure available to support partnership working (e.g. through local government or private funding initiatives), also have an impact. These points demonstrate the importance of local context in partnership work, making it a 'significant' condition of impactful educational enrichment and NFL partnerships (McConnon et al., 2017; McBride Murry et al., 2021; Moreno et al., 2021).

Significant conditions: power and equity

While power and equity featured minimally in the literature reviewed, there were some important examples of how they were significant for effective partnership working for enrichment. This point was further emphasised by young people in the advisory group who thought that consideration of this theme was best practice and it was further explored in the interviews with young people for the case studies.

Careful consideration needs to be given to power and equity both within partnership relationships and between enrichment providers and participants/young people (Livingstone and Doherty, 2020; Ravenscroft, 2020). The power dynamics at play between different sectors is considered in some of the literature, although it is rarely explicitly discussed. For example, the prestige associated with partnering with higher education providers was observed to support the professional development of teachers (Glover et al., 2016) and the imbalance of decision-making powers between local authorities and third sector organisations was noted to create challenges within partnerships (Russell et al., 2012).

A further limitation of the literature was the small number of examples of partnership working that engaged young people as anything other than participants. Meaningful youth participation requires the active involvement and real influence of young people in the decisions that affect them (Checkoway, 2011). It refers to young people's right to be involved in decisions regarding the design and delivery of activities.

Case studies OVERVIEW

Our 11 case studies capture a wide range of formal education settings and youth sector organisations, working in partnership to deliver high-quality, impactful enrichment to young people. In Table 4 we present a high-level summary of these partnerships. This is followed by a detailed breakdown of each partnership and the factors that make them effective.

Name and location	School name and characteristics	Enrichment partner name and activity	Partnership type* and coordination mechanism
1. Open Theatre *West Midlands*	Uffculme School *All-through special school with an entirely SEND pupil intake*	Open Theatre Performing Arts	Collaboration Partnership initiated and led by Open Theatre
2. St Helens LCEP *North West*	Queens Park Primary *Primary school with high levels of Free School Meal (FSM) pupils*	St Helens Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) A range of arts-based enrichment	Collaboration Partnership supported through the local council, with the LCEP acting as a brokerage organisation
3. Children's University *West Midlands*	The Coleshill School *A secondary school with cultural enrichment as a Pupil Premium priority*	Children's University Multiple – including sports, arts, volunteering and debating	Cooperation Framework for listing high-quality enrichment providers and tracking young people's participation in enrichment activities

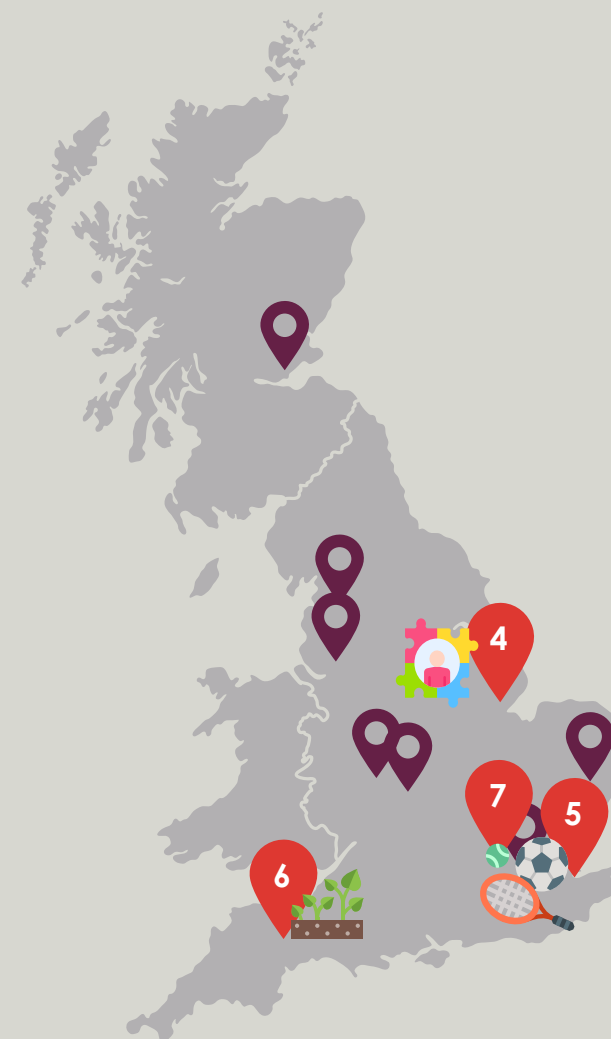** For more information on partnership types, refer to Table 2 on p. 21*

Case studies OVERVIEW

Name and location	School name and characteristics	Enrichment partner name and activity	Partnership type* and coordination mechanism
4. Mind, Body, Spirit *East Midlands*	Banovallum School *Secondary school with a local children's centre on site*	YMCA Lincolnshire Social and Emotional Learning programme	Cooperation Partnership initiated and led by YMCA Lincolnshire
5. Oasis Community Hub – Isle of Sheppey *South East*	Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey *Secondary school serving an area of high deprivation*	Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) and Oasis Community Hub Sports	Collaboration Local Oasis Community Hub led by youth workers
6. Young Somerset *South West*	Court Fields School *Secondary school that provides some alternative provision*	Young Somerset Outdoor learning	Coordination Partnership initiated and led by Young Somerset
7. Football Beyond Borders *London*	Highgate Wood School *Secondary school with a commitment to relational, child-centred practice*	Football Beyond Borders Outdoor learning	Coordination Partnership initiated and managed by Football Beyond Borders

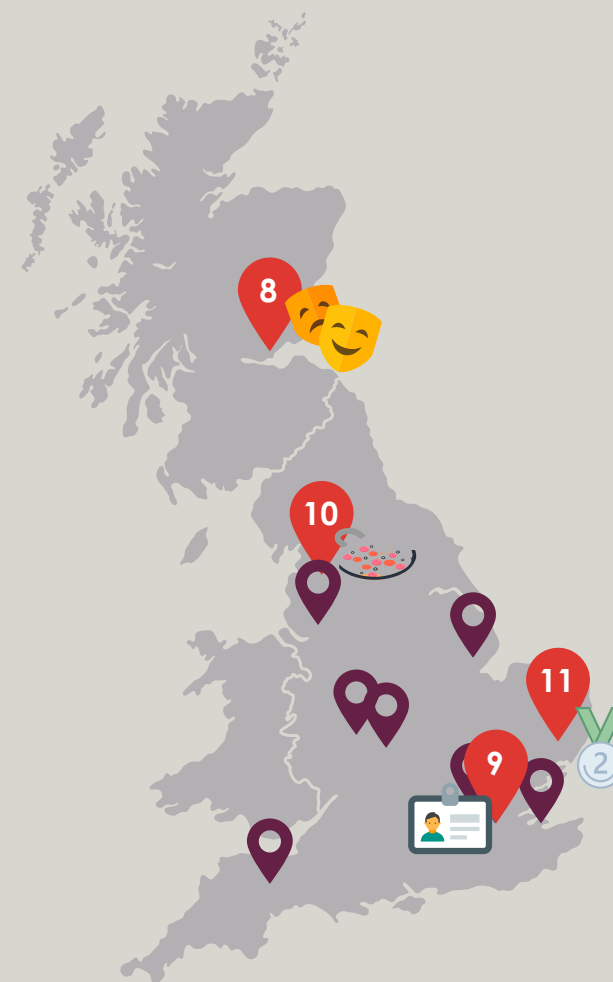** For more information on partnership types, refer to Table 2 on p. 21*

Case studies OVERVIEW

Name and location	School name and characteristics	Enrichment partner name and activity	Partnership type* and coordination mechanism
8. HMYOI Polmont *Scotland*	Fife College *Further and higher education college that also operates community learning centres National provider of the learning and skills contract for the Scottish Prison Service*	Barnardo's and Fife College The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, peer mentoring and performing arts	Coordination Cross-sector partnership to provide informal and formal education
9. School 21 *London*	School 21 *Secondary school with high levels of FSM and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils*	A wide range of employers in central London Work experience and 'real-world learning' away from school	Coordination Dedicated partnerships manager as part of education-setting staff
10. Bite Back 2030 *North West*	Parklands Academy *Secondary school with a well-developed overall enrichment offer*	Bite Back 2030 School Food Champions (SFC) – a youth social action programme centred around healthy eating within school	Cooperation Partnership initiated and led by Bite Back 2030
11. Ormiston Academies Trust - Duke of Edinburgh's Award *East of England*	Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy *Special setting for pupils with complex physical, medical and/ or sensory needs*	The Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Co-ownership Specialist practitioner at the MAT central team level (Ormiston Academies Trust)

* For more information on partnership types, refer to Table 2 on p. 21

Case studies   1. OPEN THEATRE

"Even if it's just for five minutes in that particular session, [pupils] know that they have a voice, and that they are heard. That links to all kinds of things in terms of enabling the students to know that they can make choices and that those choices will be listened to as well." **- Headteacher, partner special school of Open Theatre**

Location

Coventry, West Midlands

School name and characteristics

**Uffculme School
All-through Special School**

> Well-above-average levels of FSM pupils

> All pupils have SEND; most with non-verbal autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)

Enrichment partner & activity

Open Theatre: Performing arts

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Collaboration

Partnership initiated and led by Open Theatre

Funding approach

School's core funding, the Pupil Premium and money raised through Arts Council grants

Summary of the partnership

Open Theatre (OT) delivers non-verbal physical theatre-based enrichment to young people with SEND. OT has worked with Uffculme School for 10 years, using a whole-school approach across their primary, secondary and sixth-form classes. OT practitioners work in the setting for three days a week and have an explicit goal of working with the same young people over a long period of time, in some cases into their early adulthood. The partnership has also recently piloted an Arts Council-funded teacher training programme to spread their experience and methodology to more staff in the school. Beyond this recent Arts Council grant, the partnership is funded through the school's core budget and the Pupil Premium. For this case study, we interviewed OT's director, the headteacher of the partner school and two primary-school pupils who regularly participate in OT activities.

Case studies   1. OPEN THEATRE

What makes the partnership effective?

Leadership from both the school and partner organisation have a strong alignment in their values and strategic vision.

OT and Uffculme School have strong alignment in terms of values, with a shared commitment to giving SEND pupils the opportunity to develop speech and language skills and a sense of empowerment to speak that they cannot develop elsewhere. Similarly, they have a shared strategic vision for their partnership and its growth across the school. This alignment has been achieved through an emphasis on overall values and vision being threaded into routine partnership management conversations. The shared vision and values allow the school to commit more resources to the partnership. For example, the school ensures there is sufficient physical space, dedicated time away from formal curriculum teaching and support with physically getting young people to the right sessions, to ensure that the delivery of the OT programme is effective.

The partnership draws on extra funding to expand the reach and impact of its intervention through upskilling teaching staff in the school.

Since its inception, the partnership has tasked OT practitioners with upskilling teachers in their practice for providing non-verbal drama activities. OT staff provide training to teachers and deliver enrichment alongside them. They also actively encourage teaching staff to use OT practices with pupils for enrichment and within formal learning, even when OT practitioners are not in schools. OT's aim is to support teachers to strengthen the voice and agency of SEND students during the delivery of both formal and non-formal learning. To this end, OT and the school secured grant funding to support the piloting of a systematic teacher training approach for schools they work with. This approach to the upskilling of

teaching staff has allowed OT to spread the reach and impact of its enrichment across the school, embedding it into the school's overall approach to teaching and learning.

What impact has this partnership had?

Pupils with SEND have improved wellbeing, communication skills and voice.

Through interviews and informal evaluation reports, we saw evidence of OT's positive impact on pupils' social and emotional learning. This included their sense of belonging, emotional regulation, confidence, general wellbeing and sense of personal agency. For pupils with autism spectrum disorder, exhibiting complex needs and barriers to communication, the non-verbal theatre practice provides them with opportunities and means to communicate and express themselves differently. The practice also trains teachers to take different approaches to engaging with their neurodiverse pupils and read non-verbal cues from their pupils more sensitively.

Case studies   2. ST HELENS LOCAL CULTURAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (LCEP)

"If there's a bit of a gap in my knowledge and I need guidance to put on a particular activity for the kids or a workshop within school, or for CPD for the adults, we can go to the LCEP and they'll be the one I'd go to for supporting putting together something for our needs." - Art lead, school partner of St Helens LCEP

Location

St Helens, Merseyside

School name and characteristics

Queens Park Primary Primary School

> Very high levels of FSM pupils

> Average levels of BAME and SEND pupils

> Located in a semi-rural area with a range of cultural assets (e.g. galleries)

Enrichment partner & activity

St Helens Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP): A range of arts-based enrichment, including photography and painting

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Collaboration

Partnership supported through the local council, with the LCEP acting as a brokerage organisation

Funding approach

Mostly funded by partner school's core budget and some local council funding for the LCEP's day-to-day operation

Summary of the partnership

St Helens Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) is an organisation housed within St Helens local council that works with local schools to improve their pupils' access to high-quality arts enrichment. In this partnership mechanism, participating schools pay the LCEP an annual fee to access a certain number of days of visits to the school by an expert local arts practitioner, to deliver enrichment sessions, as well as a CPD offer for teachers to improve their ability to deliver arts enrichment activities. The LCEP uses the commercial procurement power of the local council to offer schools discounted visits to local cultural venues (galleries, theatres etc) and subsidise coach travel to get there. St Helens LCEP has been working with Queen's Park Primary School for five years. Leadership in the partnership comes from the school's arts lead and the LCEP's Development Officer. We interviewed both for this case study, as well as a young person participating in enrichment activities the LCEP has delivered in school.

What makes the partnership effective?

The LCEP Development Officer is a "trusted, flexible broker" connecting the school to existing local enrichment opportunities.

School membership payments to the LCEP fund the Development Officer, who acts as a broker connecting schools, local cultural organisations and the local council. They do this flexibly, allowing them to connect schools to enrichment providers that best meet their needs and interests. For example, the broker connected schools participating in Black History Month with local arts provision, enabling them to support enrichment activities in this area. This brokerage coordinates demand for arts enrichment with the available supply, without the need for the school or council to fund new initiatives, making more efficient use of each organisation's resources. The broker also acts as a single point of contact for cultural organisations and schools, understanding their individual needs and helping them 'speak each other's language'. For example, the Development Officer helps the cultural organisation to ask schools critical questions before delivering a session, such as around school behaviour management or safeguarding policies. The broker can also coordinate activity and access with the local council, for example using the town hall for a celebration event.

The LCEP offer and approach to partnership is co-produced with local school and enrichment provider leads.

St Helens LCEP uses steering-group meetings to test whether its current offer and services are meeting the needs of the key stakeholders in their enrichment partnerships. Similarly, meetings are used to develop the right logistical approach towards partnership working. For example, the LCEP has tested the idea of a newsletter for partner schools with the steering group to understand whether this aligns with how organisations like to receive information. It has modified its approach based on the group's feedback. The group also creates a sense of buy-in to the LCEP approach.

What impact has this partnership had?

There has been an increase in young people's access to expertly delivered arts enrichment.

Like many primary schools, Queen's Park Primary School does not have a teaching faculty with the expertise to deliver high-quality arts enrichment. Partnerships with local professional artists allow the school to deliver arts enrichment to a higher quality. This has also introduced young people at the school to the arts as a profession, changing their aspirations to be "artists or musicians" when they grow up.

School staff learn skills that allow them to increase the quality and number of arts enrichment opportunities they deliver in school.

School staff learn how to deliver arts enrichment through the continuing professional development they receive from the LCEP and then pass this on to their colleagues. This has expanded the reach and quality of arts enrichment and supported their ability to deliver arts in formal education.

Case studies   3. CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY

"That we don't really have a direct contact with schools is the strength of the Children's University's model. We set a strategic vision and provide a nationally standardised licensing framework, but we allow it to evolve flexibly to suit local needs." **- Chief Executive Officer, Children's University**

Location

📍 Coleshill, Warwickshire

School name and characteristics

The Colehill School Secondard School

> Average levels of FSM pupils

> Average levels of BAME and SEND pupils

> 'Cultural enrichment' is a priority for spending of the Pupil Premium

Enrichment partner & activity

Children's University: Multiple – including sports, arts, volunteering and debating

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Cooperation

Framework for listing high-quality enrichment providers and tracking young people's participation in enrichment activities

Funding approach

Children's University charges its local delivery partners an annual licensing fee but does not take any fees from schools

Summary of the partnership

Children's University (CU) is an award scheme that provides a structured system to encourage, track and celebrate pupils' participation in enrichment activities. CU maintains, quality assures and certifies a network of local enrichment delivery partners. CU then supports these providers to use their CU certification to connect to schools in their local area. Pupils who participate in CU are provided with a physical 'Passport to Learning' and an online portal, which they use to track their participation in enrichment activities and the skills they have gained from doing so.

CU has been working with Coleshill School for eight years. CU funds the use of its framework as part of the partnership, while the delivery of individual enrichment activities is funded through the school's core and Pupil Premium budgets. For this case study, we interviewed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CU and its Director of Communications. We also interviewed the Assistant Head and partnership lead at the partner school and a Year 10 pupil participating in CU activities.

Case studies   3. CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY

What makes the partnership effective?

CU uses its framework and supplier list to act as a 'broker' for schools to set up new enrichment partnerships with local providers.

CU lists certified enrichment providers in local areas that schools can search through to identify providers for new partnerships. This removes a barrier that schools face in forming new enrichment partnerships, namely the capacity to identify local enrichment providers and assess their quality. CU has flexible funding arrangements with its certified enrichment providers, with some offering enrichment services to schools for free and others charging a small fee. This gives schools the flexibility to select enrichment partnerships based on their budget and needs.

CU's online portal and passport supports schools to effectively capture, track and celebrate pupil participation in enrichment activities, both inside and outside the school.

Coleshill School uses the CU data on pupil participation in enrichment to adjust its approach towards enrichment. For example, it has used CU to track the participation of female young people in sports enrichment activities and adjusted its approach to targeting and increasing their participation accordingly. Similarly, it has been able to intervene with individual pupils who have particularly low levels of enrichment participation, providing extra support to understand the reasons for their disengagement and how they can be enabled to engage more. Additionally, the CU tracking has led to young people valuing their participation in enrichment similarly to their formal learning.

What impact has this partnership had?

Pupils' participation in enrichment has led to improved essential skills.

CU has commissioned several research studies that demonstrate the impact of its programme on participants' essential skills development. A 2021 study conducted by the University of Sussex found that participation in CU leads to participants' improvement within the Skills Builder Framework. An Education Endowment Foundation's randomised controlled trial in 2017 found that children participating in CU schools made small gains in teamwork and social responsibility and were more likely to report higher levels of communication, empathy, self-confidence, resilience and happiness.

The tracking and celebration of enrichment participation has elevated its status within school life.

By formally recognising children's participation in enrichment, CU has elevated the status of enrichment activities to that of formal learning at Coleshill School. Every year, many children win awards for participating in enrichment activities in ceremonies held within school or sometimes at the setting of an enrichment partner such as a university. For some parents, this has been their first visit to a local university, prompting them to consider higher education as a route for their child.

Case studies   4. MIND, BODY, SPIRIT

"It's just really open and easy-going. We both sort of 'get it' and if things change... we'll have a chat about it and make sure that whatever we're doing works." **- Youth Services Manager, YMCA Lincolnshire**

Location

Horncastle, Lincolnshire

School name and characteristics

Banovallum School Secondard School

> Average levels of FSM pupils

> Below-average levels of BAME and SEND pupils

> Local council children's centre on site

Enrichment partner & activity

YMCA Lincolnshire: Social and Emotional Learning programme

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Cooperation

Partnership initiated and led by YMCA Lincolnshire

Funding approach

School Relationships and Sex Education budget

Summary of the partnership

Mind, Body, Spirit (MBS) is a holistic YMCA programme that is delivered to young people on school premises. MBS uses youth-work techniques and youth voice to stimulate conversations around Mind (relationships with others), Body (physical education and exercise) and Spirit (broader topics associated with life, society and community).

YMCA has partnered with Banovallum School since 2020, with funding for the programme coming from Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Pupil Premium budgets. With these enrichment activities being delivered on school premises and requiring few additional materials, the principal cost is focused on youth organisation staff time. For this case study we interviewed the Careers Lead at Banovallum School, the Youth Services Manager at YMCA Lincolnshire and young people participating in the programme.

Case studies   4. MIND, BODY, SPIRIT

What makes the partnership effective?

There are close working relationships between the Careers Lead and Youth Services Manager.

The principal coordination mechanism is the relationship built between the Careers Lead at the school and the Youth Services Manager with the youth organisation. This is written up in a partnership agreement for the academic year. The coordination has progressed in a logical, phased approach. Much of the collaboration among the partners took place in the set-up and design phase of the activity development. This involved an initial consultation with the key stakeholders on the needs of the young people, the intended goals of the activities and the budget the school would be working within. YMCA then led on the delivery, with any issues being resolved on an ad-hoc basis, rather than through a consistent meeting schedule. The close working relationship between lead contacts supported this light-touch approach to partnership coordination.

The partnership uses a distributed leadership approach to partnership management.

This close working relationship is enabled by strong buy-in to the partnership from senior leaders at the school and youth organisation. The partnership uses a distributed leadership approach, where the leads are empowered and trusted to be proactive in partnership and programme management. For example, while this partnership was initiated by YMCA Lincolnshire advertising directly to the school, the school lead was following guidance from school leadership that staff should be doing all they could to provide pupils with as many extracurricular opportunities as possible. In line with this advice, the Careers Lead took the initiative to respond to YMCA's advertisement to ensure that engaging RSE activities were delivered.

The partner's approach is centred on youth voice

Youth voice is placed at the centre of determining the content of the offer and the approach to its delivery. This supports higher engagement from young people in MBS activities and interventions. Initially, YMCA would draw on young people's feedback on previously run sessions when adapting the programme of MBS activities for the school's needs. Now, throughout the delivery stage of all activities, the facilitators from YMCA Lincolnshire draw on youth-work approaches – principally through youth participation and leadership – to ensure the sessions are being led by the needs, concerns and interests of the students in the room. This might mean following a line of pupil questioning on a specific topic, tackling areas that are least understood by the group or going towards topics that are provoking the biggest responses from pupils. Different versions of the programme are run for a range of students from Year 7 through to Year 11, with the content and delivery methods adapted so that they are age appropriate.

What impact has this partnership had?

Young people lead the conversation.

The use of youth voice as part of the intervention allows young people to lead conversations held in MBS sessions. Students benefit by changing the power dynamics within the session, redirecting it towards what they feel will be most valuable to themselves and their peers. This has allowed young people to discuss topics that may not come up as part of formal learning in RSE lessons. Similarly, it has also created a space where young people feel comfortable and empowered to talk through these difficult topics with a trusted adult.

Case studies   5. OASIS COMMUNITY HUB – ISLE OF SHEPPEY

"What is really important is actually making time to spend time together… talk about the project and spend time evaluating as you go, seeing what works and seeing what doesn't work." - **Oasis Community Hub Leader**

Location

Isle of Sheppey, Kent

School name and characteristics

Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey Secondard School

- › Well-above-average levels of FSM pupils
- › School rated 'Special Measures' by Ofsted
- › High levels of pupil persistent absence

Enrichment partner & activity

Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT); Oasis Community Hub: Sports

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Collaboration

Local Oasis Community Hub led by youth workers

Funding approach

School core budget, the Pupil Premium and a funding grant from CACT

Summary of the partnership

The Isle of Sheppey Oasis–Charlton Partnership brings together Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey, the local Oasis Community Hub and Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) to provide sports-based enrichment for young people who attend Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey. The Community Hub provides a range of services to pupils and the wider community, including youth work, family support and food support. CACT provides sports-based programmes for communities in south-east London and Kent.

Since 2022, the partnership has delivered sports-based enrichment for Year 8 pupils struggling with engagement and behaviour in core subjects, pupils experiencing emotionally based school avoidance and Year 6 pupils from local primary schools about to enter Year 7 at the Oasis Academy. Delivery takes place in the unique rural context of Sheppey, where there are high levels of income and employment deprivation. The activities are delivered on school grounds and led by CACT staff, with support from the Hub team who provide extra support to young people and act as a link to the academy. The partnership is jointly funded by the academy and a grant from CACT, positively impacting participating young people's attainment and school attendance. For this case study we interviewed the Oasis Community Hub Leader, a school representative from Oasis Academy and a Year 7 pupil participant in the Year 6 Transition programme.

Case studies   5. OASIS COMMUNITY HUB – ISLE OF SHEPPEY

What makes the partnership effective?

The cross-sector partnership works actively to create strong relationships through regular progress meetings, backed up by supportive leadership.

The partners have met regularly and built a mutual understanding of each organisation's philosophy and approach to enrichment. This includes routine meetings between the partners after the delivery of an enrichment session, to have a debriefing on how the session went and how it may be improved. These relationships are supported by strong leadership buy-in to the partnership, with the academy Principal and a senior leader at CACT ensuring that key delivery staff have the time to engage in these meetings.

The partnership is guided by a clear division of labour, with the ability to draw on additional expert resources from the Community Hub as required.

All partners have designated roles, building flexibility depending on need and making the most of each team's expertise in pupil recruitment and engagement, and the delivery of sports activities. Both teams come together for planning and reflecting on delivery, with the Community Hub working with individual young people and acting as a link to the academy. This approach makes the most of each team's expertise.

The organisation and capacity of CACT and Hub staff have also been a factor in the effectiveness of the partnership. Both organisations have been able to involve the necessary numbers of staff to plan and deliver the programme effectively. For example, when delivering a programme with three cohorts, the Hub attached one youth worker to each cohort to simplify communication and provide consistency for the young people.

What impact has this partnership had?

Enrichment has supported more effective transitions for Year 7 pupils.

The Year 6 Transition programme has introduced young people to the school environment before the official transition and provided them with the opportunity to meet young people from other schools. The link between local primary schools and the academy has also meant that support can be provided for a young person before they even begin in Year 7. For example, when one young person stopped attending sessions, both schools were able to work together to identify their needs and put support in place before their first day at secondary school. Young people have also enjoyed the sports element, which introduced them to several sports they had not tried before.

Enrichment has supported improved pupil attainment and attendance.

The Year 8 Achievement programme and Emotionally-Based School Avoidance programme have both achieved positive impact for young people. Year 8 pupils have attained an improvement in their core subject grades, while young people struggling to attend school have achieved an improvement in their attendance. One young person was struggling to attend school for two years due to anxiety but became better engaged through the CACT programme. CACT staff paid for the young person to complete a coaching qualification, ultimately inviting them to become a volunteer coach.

Case studies   6. YOUNG SOMERSET

"We've kind of inspired them to diversify their own curriculum, in a way." **– Services Manager, Young Somerset**

Location

📍 Wellington, Somerset

School name and characteristics

**Court Fields School
Secondard School**

🍴 › Average levels of FSM pupils

🧩 › Below-average levels of BAME and SEND pupils

🤲 › Provides some alternative provision to those struggling with mainstream education

Enrichment partner & activity

🌳 Young Somerset: Outdoor learning

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

👥 Coordination

Partnership initiated by school, shared coordination

Funding approach

🐷 School core budget

Summary of the partnership

Young Somerset and Court Fields School have worked in partnership to provide outdoor learning opportunities for young people since 2018. The partnership provides outdoor learning excursions and activities once a week during the school day for young people aged 11–16 who are struggling with mainstream education. A specialist outdoor learning youth worker from Young Somerset leads the activities, which take place in nearby Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty such as the Quantock Hills. The youth worker can tailor trips to the needs of the small group. Court Fields School contributes to selecting the young people in need of this support and provides teaching assistant support. The programme is funded through the school paying Young Somerset for the youth worker's time.

Case studies   6. YOUNG SOMERSET

What makes the partnership effective?

The high level of trust between the school and Young Somerset allows them to have a light-touch approach to partnership management and delivery.

Trusting working relationships between Young Somerset and Court Fields School allow youth-work staff to provide the activities without interference. The partnership operates with minimal senior-level involvement as delivery staff are trusted to continue providing high-quality enrichment. This trusting, light-touch relationship has also meant that reporting has been kept to a minimum, reducing the amount of administrative burden on either organisation. The trusting relationship developed between delivery staff has also had a positive impact on the enrichment. By keeping the staff members consistent (the same youth worker and teaching assistant have been involved throughout the year), delivery staff can develop effective ways of working and easily share information.

Robust resourcing and the duration of the partnership support efficient day-to-day partnership working.

The straightforward procurement of Young Somerset's services by simply paying for a youth worker's time reduces the administrative load associated with funding the partnership. Similarly, the length of the partnership allows both organisations to have clarity on what is expected, how they will work together and what the outcomes will be. The length of the partnership also allows the organisations to keep a broadly similar agreement in place year on year, making contracting and set-up straightforward. The positive impact of the enrichment activities on the school's young people speaks for itself, demonstrating the benefits of working with Young Somerset to school leaders.

What impact has this partnership had?

Young people's wellbeing and social and emotional skills have improved.

Young people participating in the programme have consistently reported, and been observed developing, increased confidence and resilience from participating in the intervention (this is recorded in update emails as there is no formal reporting system). Young people participating in the outdoor learning describe a sense of freedom they experience from the activities and how important the space and time are for them to feel more relaxed and comfortable to be themselves. The relationships that are built between the young people outside the classroom are also important, with some participants having made friends on trips with whom they now spend regular social time within school at breaks and lunchtimes.

Young people have also been introduced to novel but vital experiences through the trips. For example, a young person who took part in the enrichment had never seen the sea before, despite living only 20 miles from the coast. These benefits have knock-on positive effects for the young people's behaviour within school.

Success has motivated the school to develop its own outdoor learning offer.

The teaching assistant supporting the enrichment has learned new techniques for working with young people from observing youth workers delivering the intervention. This has allowed the benefits of the intervention to be spread to more young people around the school, even without participating directly in the intervention itself.

The spread of the success of the approach across the school means that Court Fields School is now planning to develop its own Forest School, which will be replacing the partnership work with Young Somerset. This suggests that Court Fields both has seen the benefit of outdoor learning provision for its young people and feels that it would like to develop its own in-house understanding.

Case studies   7. FOOTBALL BEYOND BORDERS

"I think from the outset one of the key things with Highgate Wood was, they understood what we wanted to do. And they got us in for the exact reasons that we exist." – Director of Programmes, Football Beyond Borders

Location
Haringey, London

School name and characteristics

Highgate Wood School Secondard School

> Higher-than-average number of FSM pupils

> Higher-than-average number of SEND pupils and pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Enrichment partner & activity
Football Beyond Borders: Outdoor learning

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Coordination

Partnership initiated and managed by Football Beyond Borders

Funding approach
School core budget

Summary of the partnership

Football Beyond Borders (FBB) is a charity that works with young people who are disengaged at school, to develop their socioemotional skills and improve their attainment through long-term, intensive support. It builds strong relationships between young people and a trusted adult by delivering enrichment activities in the classroom and on the football pitch. FBB and Highgate Wood School have been working together to support young people since 2020. The school is currently working towards more relational practice in school, which involves a trauma-informed approach, with an emphasis on building strong relationships and a mutual ethos of compassion, rather than punitive attitudes, from staff. The partnership has developed a strong collaboration approach, with the organisations working together to co-design initiatives both within and beyond the school. Both organisations are clear on the other's vision and are committed to supporting each other to achieve these. For this case study we interviewed the Director of Programmes at FBB and the Deputy Head and Safeguarding Lead from Highgate Wood School.

What makes the partnership effective?

There has been an intentional development of close working relationships and alignment.

Relationship building between FBB and Highgate Wood School is a priority for both organisations, with staff making time for communication and regular face-to-face interactions. Both organisations expressed a sense of mutual understanding – FBB understands the pressures the school is under and the school understands FBB's ethos. This has helped to build trust between the two organisations, allowing FBB the freedom to suggest approaching the enrichment activities in particular ways.

Equally, both organisations have similar philosophies for working with young people, such as relational practice, strengths-based practice and unconditional positive regard. Interviewees acknowledged that this is newer for Highgate Wood. This means both organisations feel they are working towards the same higher goals, making it easier to reach mutual understanding and support one another in their day-to-day activities.

Partners invest resources above and beyond the intervention.

Both organisations have demonstrated clear buy-in and commitment to making the most of the programme. The school has continued to make a significant investment from its stretched budget, as well as reducing other interventions, in order to prioritise FBB's enrichment offer, because it believes in its impact. The school is on its third cohort of young people taking part, further demonstrating the school's commitment to and belief in the programme. School staff make time to share information with FBB practitioners on developments in young people's lives or the school environment.

FBB makes a significant investment in its staff, prioritising retention and training to equip its staff to be excellent practitioners who are able to commit to working with a school, providing weekly reflective practice sessions for Highgate Wood pastoral staff as well as offering training webinars to teachers to support them to deliver elements of the programme themselves.

What impact has this partnership had?

There has been a positive impact on young people's social and emotional skills.

FBB and Highgate Wood School have observed considerable progress in young people's confidence, social and emotional skills, behaviour and mindset as a result of taking part in this enrichment activity. Young people can also become more positive about school and can see improvements in their academic attainment. With Highgate Wood adopting a more relational approach, there is consistency between FBB sessions and wider school life, facilitating the holistic support of young people beyond the activity hours. .

The school has been motivated to change its overall pedagogical approach.

Both organisations have also been open to some compromise and respecting the other's expertise or advice. For example, initially FBB agreed to start working with a different year group to its official model as working with a particular year group was key for Highgate Wood School to be able to take part. FBB has formed part of Highgate Wood's journey to more relational practice by offering reflection sessions for pastoral staff. The organisations are supporting and learning from each other.

Case studies   8. HMYOI POINT

"There's a lot of times where we've been brought in to Polmont because we are the experts with the skills and knowledge in this area of managing behaviour and solving issues young people are experiencing." **- Partnership lead, Barnardo's**

Location

📍 Falkirk, Scotland

School name and characteristics

Fife College
Further and higher education college

- › It also operates community learning centres
- › National provider of the learning and skills contract for the Scottish Prison Service

Enrichment partner & activity

🎭 **Barnardo's and Fife College:** The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, peer mentoring and performing arts

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Coordination

Cross sector partnership to provide informal and formal education

Funding approach

🐷 Polmont (via the Scottish Prison Service) directly funds Barnardo's and Fife College through a tender / contract process

Summary of the partnership

Barnardo's and Fife College work closely with HMYOI Polmont – and each other – to provide access to education and a range of enrichment activities to the young people in custody there. HMYOI Polmont is Scotland's national holding facility for young people aged between 16 and 21. Polmont Prison is the lead partner and has overall responsibility to ensure the young people have access to a high-quality enrichment offer. Barnardo's is a leading children's charity and has been providing youth-work services to young people in custody in Polmont since 2010. It offers a wide range of services. These include, but are not limited to: the DofE, peer mentoring, performing arts and event planning. Fife College is a national further education provider that has 14 colleges across Scotland. It has been working in Polmont since 2017, providing access to core-skills support (vocational courses, life skills, peer mentoring and employability initiatives). Information to build this case study was provided by the Children Services Manager for Barnardo's Scotland and the Learning Centre Team Leader for Fife College.

Case studies   8. HMYOI POINT

What makes the partnership effective?

The efficiency and effectiveness of having long-term partnership contracts in place are key.

Polmont Prison has long-term contracts in place with Barnardo's and Fife College. Barnardo's was awarded a seven-year contract, with a one-year extension granted because of disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Fife College was awarded a five-year contract and currently has a two-year extension. The contract length has enabled partners to build strong relationships and consistent ways of working. This has helped to foster a trusting, stable and collaborative working environment. Interviewees reported how trusting relationships between partners helped contribute to improved retention of staff, institutional knowledge and expertise that enabled high-quality enrichment and NFL activities to be delivered.

Having a dedicated and lead role managing the partnership has been important.

This partnership has a dedicated role based in Polmont Prison who is responsible for coordinating all partnership working related to inmate needs and outcomes – the Head of Offender Outcomes. They coordinate the specialised services that Fife College and Barnardo's provide. This was seen to be effective partnership management because there is a clearly identified staff member, with dedicated resources, responsible for coordinating activities. This single contact ensures that any issues are resolved efficiently and duplication is minimised.

What impact has this partnership had?

High levels of engagement in enrichment and NFL activities are achieved by taking a young-person-centred approach.

In September 2023, Barnardo's worked with 97% of the population of Polmont Prison, and Fife College worked with 74%. These high levels of engagement were seen by both partners to be driven by the flexibility and adaptability of their provision and the non-prescriptive nature of their service offer. This appeared differently across the two partners. While Fife was keen to not mimic a formal education setting too closely, Barnardo's was trying to recreate the conditions of youth-work settings that are found in the community.

Developing these relationships with Fife/Barnardo's staff supported young people to develop socioemotional skills.

Participation in the enrichment provision was reported to have a range of benefits for young people – in particular, improvements in self-confidence, self-esteem and communication skills. Both services use a trauma-informed approach to support improving outcomes for young people in these areas. Outside of direct service provision, the role Fife College and Barnardo's play in Polmont Prison (both advocating for young people's needs and the consultative way in which they work with young people) has also contributed to the development of trusting relationships between the young people and the providers. This was reported to improve young people's sense of self-worth, which was seen to be the foundation for more positive engagement in services more generally.

Case studies   9. SCHOOL 21

"A big part of our programme is equipping our partners with the knowledge and skills they need to talk properly with young people, treat them like employees, and offer useful, constructive, feedback." **- Partnerships and Careers Lead, School 21**

Location

Stratford, London Borough of Newham

School name and characteristics

School 21
Secondary school

> High levels of FSM and BAME pupils
> Average levels of SEND pupils
> Located close to major business districts in London, e.g. Canary Wharf

Enrichment partner & activity

A wide range of employers in central London: Work experience and 'real world learning' away from school

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Coordination

Dedicated partnerships manager as part of education-setting staff

Funding approach

Funded out of the school's core teaching budget

Summary of the partnership

School 21 is a secondary school in East London, which forms part of the Big Education Multi Academy Trust. Its 'Real World Learning' (RWL) programme is delivered with 15 external organisations that range from major banks such as HSBC to local charities such as London Citizens. Partnerships with these organisations are created and managed by a dedicated partnerships manager. RWL involves a set of 10-week work placements for Year 10 and Year 12 pupils, with pupils spending one afternoon a week at their placement. The programme is treated as part of the school curriculum and 'viewed as an extra GCSE or A-Level for pupils'. Funding for the programme is taken from the school's core budget. For this case study, we interviewed the Partnerships and Careers Lead at School 21, the outreach coordinator at a partner employer, and a Year 13 pupil who had participated in the programme in Years 10 and 12.

Case studies   9. SCHOOL 21

What makes the partnership effective?

A full-time, dedicated Partnerships and Careers Lead role in school creates the staffing capacity and specialisation for effective partnership work.

The Partnerships and Careers lead at School 21 acts as a full-time, dedicated enrichment partnerships manager for RWL. Having this dedicated role allows the lead to develop expertise in, and commit substantial amounts of time to, the creation of new partnerships, the co-production of enrichment opportunities for young people and effective partnership management and delivery. For example, the lead conducts surveys of all young people participating in RWL to place them with an external partner appropriate to their interests and career ambitions. Before delivery of the RWL programme each year, the lead organises a training day on the school site for all enrichment partners to attend, which includes an induction on working with School 21 and delivering RWL. Similarly, the lead meets weekly with all partner organisations for feedback and to plan accommodations and adjustments to the RWL programme for young participants. The lead also works with the partnerships lead employed by their MAT, Big Education. This use of central team resources gives the lead extra reach for creating new partnerships and gathering information for new partnership opportunities from other schools within the trust.

Youth voice is used to actively shape the partnership's enrichment activity.

Young people are actively involved in shaping the RWL activities they participate in. This begins with them being matched to an employer based on their stated interests and goals. They then meet the employer they are placed with at the RWL training day and work with them to shape what specific activities they will do as part of their placement. For example, a young participant told us that they

were placed with London Citizens to work on their 'Living Wage' campaign due to their interest in pursuing a degree in economics and interest in fair pay. Young people are also prompted by the partnerships lead to give feedback on their placements to support any adjustments that need to be made to the delivery of their RWL.

What impact has this partnership had?

Young people develop key skills they would not otherwise have had the opportunity to develop.

Young people can develop unique skills through RWL placements. For example, one young person told us that they were able to develop skills in understanding and applying economic modelling in 'real world' contexts, an opportunity that exceeded what they learnt as part of their formal education in economics at school. Furthermore, the young person was able to develop essential skills in social interaction and conducting themselves in a formal work setting, which they told us they would not have been able to develop in school.

Partner organisations are encouraged to improve their enrichment offers for young people through training days and structured support.

The upskilling work in partnership with formal education settings and young people has allowed at least one RWL partner to develop its own internship and apprenticeship offer based on RWL. This has expanded that organisation's reach and ability to create new enrichment partnerships with other education settings.

Case studies   10. BITE BACK 2030

"One of the things [Bite Back] do really well is training the coordinators. They're really, really good at ensuring that everybody knows exactly what they're doing, why they're doing it and what the overall purpose is."

- Enrichment Lead, Parklands Academy

Location

Chorley, Lancashire

School name and characteristics

Parklands Academy
Secondary school

> Average levels of FSM pupils

> Average levels of BAME and SEND pupils

> Provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for students to take on leadership roles

Enrichment partner & activity

Bite Back 2030: School Food Champions (SFC) – a youth social action programme centred around healthy eating within school

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Cooperation

Partnership initiated and led by Bite Back 2030

Funding approach

SFC is funded by the #iwill fund and Tesco Community Grants, with matched funds currently coming from Bite Back 2030 itself

Summary of the partnership

Bite Back's School Food Champions (SFC) programme seeks to engage, and work alongside, schools in areas of high health inequalities to recruit teams of young people to lead social action projects that improve the food served at school. SFC is mainly delivered by school staff, who are trained by Bite Back to do so. Bite Back provides £1,100 of funding to each participating school and covers the costs they incur delivering activities and campaigns.

Parklands Academy initiated the SFC programme, initially to deliver sessions to a small number of Year 9 pupils as part of its Aspire programme. During this first phase, an Enrichment Lead was trained to deliver SFC sessions, with support from Bite Back. Following the success of these initial sessions, SFC is now being delivered to all of Year 9, totalling around 225 pupils. Nine teachers have been trained, with the school Enrichment Lead coordinating their efforts. For this case study we interviewed Bite Back's Head of Programmes and a Programme Executive. We also interviewed the education partner lead for the programme and a young participant at the same school.

Case studies   10. BITE BACK 2030

What makes the partnership effective?

Bite Back has created a comprehensive programme of teacher training and support that allows teachers to deliver the enrichment programme themselves.

The partnership is fuelled by Bite Back's commitment to building school staff's capability to deliver the SFC programme. Bite Back designs its training for teachers to be as accessible as possible, considering their already high teaching workloads. The training is couched in clear and precise actions for teachers to take as part of session delivery and explanations for why these specific actions are taken, increasing teacher buy-in to the delivery approach. Training is supplemented by fortnightly email updates and one-to-one meetings between the school's activity lead and Bite Back's Programme Executive. Bite Back also provides an online teacher hub for teachers to access session plans and previously recorded training videos. This support, alongside strong initial training, gives teachers the confidence to pick up and deliver this additional material easily.

Strong buy-in from school leadership, grounded in Bite Back's funding and resourcing approach, has been key.

The partnership has secured strong buy-in from a key senior leader within the education setting. This leader ensured that all senior leaders in school were present to hear feedback from the SFC based on their findings of surveys of peers. Bite Back has supported this buy-in through a well-structured approach to engaging school senior leadership at partnership inception to ensure there is a full understanding of programme methods and outcomes before contracts are signed. Bite Back also provides financial incentives to schools, paying up to £1,100 to each to cover staff time and incurred costs alongside training and access to teaching resources.

What impact has this partnership had?

Participating young people have created tangible social change.

Through participation in the programme, young people have been able to effect tangible change to the school's approach to catering. The new approach includes a commitment to sustaining strong youth voice to determine food choices within the school canteen. Young people have also changed the school curriculum to include regular sessions delivered by teachers as part of the regular timetable on food and health, as well as on social action and campaigning.

The programme has stimulated young people's interest in and commitment to the school's wider enrichment offer.

Over the course of two years, the strength of the partnership between Bite Back and Parklands Academy has enabled SFC to be delivered to the whole of Year 9. This has both resulted in a high level of engagement in the programme and encouraged uptake in other enrichment activities offered by the school that had previously had low uptake (such as the DofE). The success of this partnership has encouraged the school to continue to deliver a breadth of enrichment activities for its Year 9 pupils, and to seek additional partnerships with other enrichment providers.

Case studies   11. ORMISTON ACADEMIES TRUST - DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

"It helped that there was support offered by Ormiston Academies Trust as they are keen on Thomas Wolsey [as a special school] being able to participate in larger-scale activities." **- Enrichment Lead, Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy**

Location

Ipswich, Suffolk

School name and characteristics

Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy
Special school

> Above-average levels of FSM pupils

> Provides education for pupils with complex needs

> All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Enrichment partner & activity

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE)

Partnership type and coordination mechanism

Co-ownership

Specialist practitioner at the MAT central team level (Ormiston Academies Trust)

Funding approach

Funding is from the school's core budget, with additional funding from the MAT central budget and DofE

Summary of the partnership

Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy is a special school with a cohort entirely made up of young people with complex physical and sensory needs. Their MAT, Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT), appointed a national lead practitioner for enrichment in 2021, who supports schools across the trust to access and deliver the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). To make the DofE accessible to Thomas Wolsey's young people, the national lead practitioner supported the school to gain funding and a licence that allows them to shape the programme to the needs of their young people. For example, the expedition section of the programme was changed from hiking and camping activities to sleepovers within the school to take part in activities comparable to those in the standard programme. The school adapted other elements, such as volunteering, to take place on site.

For this case study we interviewed the National Lead Practitioner at Ormiston Academies Trust and the Enrichment Lead at Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy. It was not possible to interview a young person online due to the complexity of participants' physical and sensory needs.

Case studies
11. ORMISTON ACADEMIES TRUST - DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

What makes the partnership effective?

The school draws on the capacity and capability of the MAT central team's lead practitioner to adapt the enrichment activity and improve its impact.

To adapt the DofE programme and make it accessible to Thomas Wolsey's pupils, the school's Enrichment Lead draws on the expertise of the MAT lead practitioner. The specialist practitioner was able to use their relationships with the DofE and experience navigating its systems to seek and secure additional funding. This funding supported enrolment, accessibility and participation for the school's pupils. The school was able to buy resources, which allow pupils to experience the comfort and safety they require when staying away from home for the first time.

The specialised Enrichment Lead role in school enables the effective delivery of new and complex enrichment provision.

As a special school catering for pupils with highly complex needs, a strong emphasis has been placed on enrichment, to provide the same opportunities as those for their non-disabled peers. For the school, enrichment provision is central to pupils' understanding of the wider world, and to gain external experiences. To enable this, the academy has appointed an overall Enrichment Lead with experience of adapting provision to work with young people with complex needs, and with the capacity to make links with providers, seek funding and upskill other staff in the school. The successful delivery of the Bronze DofE in school depends on this role's expertise and experience.

What impact has this partnership had?

High-quality enrichment opportunities have been provided for young people with complex needs, with tangible positive outcomes.

There was a clear sense from respondents that making the required changes to the DofE programme was worthwhile to ensure the participants gained a new set of skills and experiences that they can use in their future lives, despite a relatively low number of pupils taking the award compared with mainstream schools. The school is aware of the impact of the award on the participating pupils, and the resulting impact that participation has had on parents and families. The process of building skills and confidence, such as having a sleepover away from home and raising money through creating a tuck-shop, has had a huge impact on participants' aspirations for the future.

Teachers have higher aspirations for future enrichment provision.

The successful resourcing and delivery of the DofE within Thomas Wolsey has inspired the school to think bigger when it comes to the future delivery of enrichment activities. The school is seeking to formalise its enrichment activities for the whole school, making it part of its ongoing outreach work and committing to providing specific enrichment activities for individual year groups. This aspiration is helped by the funding of a variety of resources that can be used to deliver other enrichment activities. The school has engaged with an array of charitable stakeholders and community funders that enable the provision of additional resources for the school in the future.

Key findings OVERVIEW

Our literature review identified six themes relating to effective education and youth sector partnership practice. Our analysis of the data we collected for our detailed case studies yielded findings that are best discussed under five of these discrete themes. Our analysis found that our findings related to the sixth theme – 'time' – would be best reported as part of other themes. The five themes along with the key findings for each are set out below:

Local context	Human resources	Ways of working	Financial & material resource	Power and equity
› Formal education and youth sector organisations often face a coordination challenge in creating new partnerships.	› In many of our case studies, education settings placed partnership management roles with individuals in a way that allowed the relevant duties to be accommodated by those individuals' wider role within the setting.	› Trust between partners was a key element of effective partnerships. Trust is developed in a range of ways – including through length of partnership, routine meetings and robust and clear contracting processes.	› Most of our case study partnerships are primarily funded by the core budget and Pupil Premium of the formal education setting, with some partnerships drawing on other sources of external funding such as grants or MAT support.	› Some partnerships co-produce their enrichment programme with stakeholders, but many partnerships experienced barriers and challenges to engaging in this co-production.
› Effective partnerships often overcome this challenge by drawing on 'brokerage organisations' such as community hubs, LCEPs and MAT central teams for brokerage and support in their partnership working.	› Some education settings in our case studies found ways to resource and support dedicated partnership management roles, and the benefits of this are clear.	› Effective partnerships included strong organisational alignment, for example through agreed and monitored outcomes for the impact of the partnership on participating young people.	› Some partnerships drew on economies of scale or other efficiencies from scale, such as using local council procurement frameworks or drawing on MAT central team resourcing.	› Youth voice is a prominent part of some partnerships, but overall the formal education sector would benefit from support from the youth sector in learning how to best engage in effective youth-voice practice.
	› Staff capability and expertise in relation to partnership management were sometimes lacking on the formal education side. Some partnerships featured an active agenda to increase education-setting capability to manage partnerships and deliver high-quality enrichment.	› Strong value and philosophical alignment also supported effective partnerships. However, there were sometimes challenges to creating this alignment due to the often diverging approaches to supporting young people between the education and youth sectors.	› Some partnerships also engaged in resource sharing of space and expertise, which supports partnership growth and leads to a greater impact of enrichment partnerships.	

We describe our findings in relation to these themes in detail below.

Key findings

📍 LOCAL CONTEXT

Intermediary brokerage organisations are a key local asset that connects education and youth sector organisations and supports effective ongoing partnerships.

The literature review highlighted that strong local networks and partnership infrastructure, often supported by local government, are supportive factors in creating successful enrichment partnerships. A key theme in our case studies was that high-quality youth sector enrichment providers often exist in the same geographical area. However, both education and youth sector organisations frequently encounter challenges in connecting and coordinating partnership work. Local infrastructure can play a key role in helping overcome these challenges.

School partnership leads often described how they find themselves overwhelmed by inbound communication from organisations 'selling' them a service. Consequently, contact from high-quality local enrichment providers can become 'lost in the noise'. Education partnership leads also noted that they lacked the capacity to assess the quality of provision from youth sector enrichment providers, leading them to often rely on word of mouth. This limits the scope for creating new partnerships with a diverse range of providers. Youth organisations expressed similar challenges, commenting on the lack of success of 'cold calling' schools to develop partnerships.

A key piece of local infrastructure in some of our partnerships was a brokerage organisation that acts as a 'trusted, flexible intermediary' between the education and youth sector organisations. This broker role took different forms. St Helens LCEP is housed within the local council and forms part of the council's wider education and health strategy. Its Development Officer draws on their extensive knowledge of the local cultural sector and experience working within schools to develop a menu of enrichment options available through local cultural organisations. The Development Officer then works with local schools that subscribe to the LCEP's services to understand each school's needs, ways of working and desired enrichment activities, using this knowledge to introduce the school to relevant local cultural organisations. This brokerage supports the education sector and cultural sector partners in efficiently creating new partnerships and ensuring these are based on transparent information sharing and expectation setting. The broker is trusted because they are external to both organisations within the partnership, they have a strong understanding of the needs of both education and youth sector partners and they are available for ongoing troubleshooting and support.

Oasis Community Hub on the Isle of Sheppey also acts as a brokerage organisation between the Oasis Academy and Charlton Athletic. It supports the partnership with communication, coordination and extra capacity to deliver the sports enrichment activity when needed. Children's University similarly acts as a trusted, flexible broker to Coleshill School. It has shared a list of quality-assured and certified enrichment providers local to the school. The transparency of the quality assurance process, and

Children's University's separation from the enrichment providers themselves, create trust in their brokerage that allows the school to engage with the providers from their list efficiently.

A MAT can also provide these brokerage and partnership support services. For example, Ormiston Academies Trust provides enrichment activities directly to its academy sites and centralises management tasks such as training and evaluation. In particular, a specialised leader in the MAT central team supports access to the DofE across their schools by supporting leaders in school to plan a high-quality programme, while providing extra capacity and coaching where needed to deliver this programme. This MAT support was employed by Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy to support the adaptation and delivery of its DofE programme.

🔲 HUMAN RESOURCES

Education settings typically lack dedicated partnership management roles, but find configurations that create more staff capacity for this work.

Our rapid literature review highlighted that staff roles dedicated to partnership management are a foundational feature of effective partnership working. These dedicated staff roles can take a range of forms, from 'enrichment coordinator' to 'consortium liaison' and 'flexible broker'. Very few of our case studies featured such a dedicated

Key findings

partnership lead role on the formal education side. The work was typically taken on as additional responsibilities by teachers, school leaders, careers leads or someone working in pastoral care. Education sector leads had limited capacity to engage in partnership coordination activities, due to managing a high teaching workload and having limited protected time for meetings with their youth sector partner. Partnerships typically tended to overcome the challenge of a lack of dedicated staff roles in one of the following ways:

› **Appointing an education sector partnership lead with a teaching, leadership or pastoral role that naturally overlaps with the enrichment activity to be delivered.** For example, the education lead for St Helens LCEP's delivery of arts enrichment is the school's arts curriculum lead, while Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey uses its Head of Physical Education as the partnership lead on its sports programme.

› **Adding formal responsibilities to education leadership roles,** which explicitly include responsibility for the successful delivery of enrichment. This involved creating performance management targets related to enrichment for these roles. For example, both Coleshill School and Ormiston Academies Trust had an education sector partnership lead whose role at the trust level involved enrichment.

› **Ensuring strong buy-in from school leadership within education settings to minimise the risk of de-prioritisation.** This sometimes involved inviting school leaders to observe the delivery of enrichment activities, or to showcases such as presentations of young people's work in arts enrichment activities in galleries or theatres.

Despite the lack of a dedicated role, such partnership configurations allowed the education lead to carve out more time for partnership management. They draw on greater resourcing to create dedicated time for effective partnership working – for example, organising teaching timetables in a school to include more protected time for work on the enrichment partnership and meetings with the youth sector partner during the school day.

Where there is dedicated partnership management capacity, the benefits for creating effective partnerships are clear.

By contrast, dedicated partnership management roles were the norm for youth and community sector organisations in our case studies. Youth sector partnership leads typically worked with a relatively small number of schools (ranging between five and 22), allowing them time to develop a detailed understanding of the needs and context of individual schools. This enabled them to provide bespoke support and act as an immediately recognisable first point of contact for the development of relationships with their education establishments. As a result of this specialisation, youth sector partnership leads frequently absorbed partnership management responsibilities away from education partners. Partnership management responsibilities involved setting out the terms and ways of working within the partnership, monitoring the delivery and impact of the enrichment activity, managing any conflicts and planning changes to the design of the activity.

The main exceptions to this trend are School 21, which has a dedicated Partnerships Manager who coordinates the Real World Learning (RWL) enrichment programme, and HMYOI Polmont, which has a Head of Offender Outcomes who is a dedicated partnership manager. In the case of School 21, this dedicated staffing has been

possible due to the school's commitment to treating RWL as part of the school curriculum, enabling core teaching and learning budgets to be directed to the funding of programme delivery. The advantages of a dedicated role in this case study are clear, as the Partnerships Manager has the capacity to screen and recruit new enrichment partners, align each young person's RWL experience with their own goals and interests, monitor delivery of RWL with each individual employer, and recommend ongoing adaptations. The role also supports the upskilling of employers – who typically lack experience working directly with young people – in effective ways of communicating with young people during their placement. This results in many young people having positive RWL experiences and acquired skills that have supported their education and employment ambitions. Some young people have even returned to work for the enrichment partner employer they were placed with after finishing school.

Staff capability can present a challenge for education and youth sector organisations working in partnership, but mutual upskilling supported by brokerage organisations can help overcome this.

In addition to capacity, both education and youth sector partners reported encountering and overcoming challenges relating to knowledge and capability. From the literature review and case studies, it is clear that effective partnerships often overcome this challenge through mutual knowledge sharing and upskilling.

In some cases, education partnership leads reported lacking expertise in contract management and in overseeing external partnerships. Organisations such as Bite Back 2030 overcame this challenge by having a clear, highly systematic approach to partnership working, which it

Key findings

introduced to school leads during inception meetings. This 'partnership protocol' included clear ways of working together, milestones for contract review and other key information. The structured approach positively impacts school partnership leads' understanding of effective partnership management, benefiting the work with Bite Back and upskilling the school staff to successfully deliver future enrichment partnerships.

Some partnerships encountered a challenge with youth sector organisations' understanding of working within a school setting. Examples included a lack of knowledge of certain behaviour management and safeguarding procedures, or of the resources a school may already have on site (such as materials for arts workshops or for showing a video as a stimulus as part of a discussion). This was overcome by effective and structured information sharing between partners. For example, the Development Officer at St Helens LCEP worked with education and cultural enrichment providers in a shared email thread to make sure both asked each other the relevant questions on topics such as behaviour management, safeguarding, resources and session content prior to the delivery of a session.

In almost all our case studies, enrichment delivery expertise sat primarily with the youth sector organisation. However, there were active attempts within some case studies to improve the capacity of education staff to deliver enrichment activities themselves. For example, St Helens LCEP and Open Theatre provide teaching staff professional development opportunities relating to delivering arts-based enrichment as part of their

partnership. This allowed teachers at Queens Park Primary, partnered with St Helens LCEP, to introduce new arts enrichment activities for pupils delivered directly by teaching staff. Additionally, Bite Back's comprehensive training programme for teaching staff was used by Parklands Academy to deliver additional teaching on youth social action and food systems beyond the SFC programme itself, as part of both the school's enrichment and formal curriculum offer.

Sharing of expertise and upskilling sometimes took on a more strategic focus in partnerships. For example, Football Beyond Borders provided their partner, Highgate Wood, with guidance on how to expand school-wide plans for the integration of a more child-centred approach to learning.

Trust between partners is vital for effective enrichment delivery, with trust being developed through clear contracting processes, long partnership duration and regular face-to-face partnership management meetings.

Trust was highlighted by our literature review as a foundational condition of effective partnership working. This was echoed by our case study partnerships, which exemplify different ways in which trust can be developed, and the benefits it creates for successful partnerships.

Some partnerships developed trust through their

longevity. For example, Open Theatre's 10-year-long partnership with Uffculme School provided both partners with the opportunity to develop a mutual understanding of each other's ways of working, alongside their challenges and constraints. The duration of the partnership also allowed them to align their processes and ways of working, further supporting mutual trust. In the case of HMYOI Polmont, the long duration of the contracted partnership reduced staff and organisational turnover, which helped to preserve institutional knowledge for a longer period of time.

Other partnerships developed trust through more formalised processes. For example, both Bite Back and HMYOI Polmont partnerships reported benefiting from well-managed formal contracts and clear partnership protocols set out at the beginning of the partnerships. Less formal partnership management processes also helped to create trust in partnerships. For example, Football Beyond Borders has regular face-to-face meetings with its education setting, Highgate Wood, where they discuss their understanding of the pressure the school faces, and the challenges its community experiences. Similarly, Oasis Academy's partner organisations meet for weekly debriefs after enrichment sessions to discuss opportunities for improving the delivery of their sports programme.

An education partner's lack of knowledge and questions about the quality of an enrichment activity delivered by a youth sector organisation were often a barrier to building trust in advance. Education settings reported constantly feeling 'sold to' with inbound marketing campaigns

Key findings

from education suppliers, professional development programmes and those providing enrichment services. They felt overwhelmed and lacked capacity or knowledge to engage with and assess the myriad of different offers. As discussed above, this issue of quality assurance and trust was sometimes navigated by partnerships through the use of a brokerage organisation to broker and support the partnership.

As trust was built within partnerships, it typically supported the growth of the reach and impact of enrichment activities. For example, the trust built between YMCA Lincolnshire and Banovallum School resulted in the gradual expansion of the delivery of the Mind, Body, Spirit programme to new year groups. Similarly, the trust developed between Football Beyond Borders and Highgate Wood motivated the school to involve Football Beyond Borders in supporting the school with training and reflection sessions, as part of the school's strategic pedagogical move to more relational and child-centred practice with young people.

Organisational and philosophical alignment between partner organisations is a key feature of supporting effective enrichment activity delivery, partnership management and growth.

Our rapid literature review highlighted that organisational alignment, in the form of shared goals and objectives, is a functional part of effective enrichment partnerships. Our case studies further evidenced the importance of this type of alignment between partners.

Some partnerships grounded this shared set of goals and objectives in clear, pre-agreed outcomes targets for their partnership. For example, Oasis Academy and Charlton Athletic run programmes with mutually agreed objectives to improve participants' attainment and attendance. Changes to outcomes in young people's school attendance and academic attainment can be readily measured and tracked, leading to the shared goal of the partnership feeling more concrete to partners. The positive improvements in attendance and attainment have also felt to partners like a validation of their approach.

In a similar vein, Coleshill School's use of the Children's University's online tracking tool has allowed it to monitor young people's participation and achievement in a wide range of enrichment activities against established impact frameworks, such as the Skills Builder Framework for essential life skills, and the Gatsby Benchmarks for key experiences in young people's careers education. This has given the school the ability to measure the impact of young people's participation and have a shared vocabulary for discussing the impact of enrichment among practitioners.

Our case studies also highlighted that philosophical and value alignment could often be just as important as organisational alignment. For example, Open Theatre and Uffculme School reported that their shared vision for SEND pupils to access the arts as an opportunity to experience joy and develop their confidence was vital to how they agreed and delivered an enrichment offer to young people. Similarly, Football Beyond Borders and their partner school shared similar philosophies for

working with young people, including the importance of relational practice and unconditional positive regard for young people. This resulted in both organisations feeling they are 'pulling in the same direction' towards shared higher goals.

However, youth sector partnership leads reported facing challenges with achieving both organisational and philosophical alignment. Youth sector organisations often reported challenges around schools' lack of understanding that practitioners delivering enrichment may not be knowledgeable about (or comfortable with) behaviour management techniques used routinely in schools. Similarly, formal education settings may have different priorities for the outcomes of an activity (for example, improved attendance, pupil behaviour for learning in lessons or academic attainment) compared with youth sector organisations within programmes focused on participants' socioemotional learning and overall personal growth as an outcome.

There were also challenges in some partnerships with formal education settings' unfamiliarity with youth-work approaches, particularly in how these centre youth voice and use youth-led methodologies. These approaches sometimes sit at odds with the more formalised, instructor-led approaches that education settings are used to. In the Young Somerset partnership, this was overcome by teaching assistants from Court Fields School taking the time to work directly with youth workers, understanding their methods and observing how they could benefit young people. Nonetheless, there remains scope for developing the knowledge and capacity of education staff to support effective partnership working, including

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greater literacy of youth-work approaches to enrichment and contract management.

FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

Education-setting budgets are the main funding source for enrichment partnerships, which can support stable and long-term funding for delivery.

Our rapid literature review highlighted the importance of adequate long-term funding to support effective enrichment partnerships. It also noted that core school budgets are often the main funding source for the management of enrichment partnerships and the delivery of activities. This financial model was the basis of the majority of the partnerships we studied, where funding was drawn from a school's core budget or their Pupil Premium funding for day-to-day spending. This budget was used to procure enrichment services from youth sector providers.

Both education and youth sector partners described the advantages of this school-led approach to funding. It was noted that utilising a school's established funding distribution mechanisms reduced the workload of education or youth sector partners having to apply for funding, avoiding a process that can be costly in terms of staff capacity. Additionally, education partnership leads reported lacking experience or expertise in writing bids and grant applications for funding.

Youth sector partnership leads also reported valuing

being formally procured as a service by education sector partners. For example, HMYOI Polmont's partners reported using a formal contracting process subject to monthly contract review, helping to provide clarity of roles, responsibilities and expectations. Bite Back offers its programme for free to many schools, but charging schools a small amount for its services often results in greater buy-in from the education partner and improved engagement with partnership management.

Nevertheless, the use of formal education settings' core budgets as the primary source of funding entails risks. Several partnerships reported that, in the current climate of stretched school funding, they were having to fight harder to justify the value of their partnership and the enrichment activity to school budget-holders. Even in case studies such as Young Somerset, which has strong leadership buy-in from Court Fields School, financial pressures were leading the school to looking to move delivery of the 'offsite trips' enrichment programme in-house. This suggests that there is a need for further funding to support the delivery of enrichment activities through formal education settings, as well as funding for ongoing effective enrichment partnerships.

Some partnerships also drew on MAT-level funding to support their partnerships. For example, Children's University's partnership with Coleshill School used funding from the trust's overall enrichment budget to pay for enrichment activities with individual delivery providers. This central budget was also used to support initiatives such as awards ceremonies for young people participating in the programme. Similarly, Oasis Academy Isle of

Sheppey and Ormiston Academies Trust were able to draw on resourcing available at the trust level. For Oasis Academy, this involved resourcing provided through its trust's creation of the Oasis Services Hub on the Isle of Sheppey. Ormiston used the central team's enrichment funding to support effective partnership delivery at the local school level.

Each trust was able to provide this support to schools due to a strategic commitment towards using its central resources to support enrichment partnerships at the level of its local settings. For example, the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (a network that Coleshill School belongs to) has a trust-wide strategy to use the Pupil Premium to support enrichment provision.

Some partnerships share key resources, such as brokerage organisation procurement capacity, physical space for enrichment delivery and staff capability.

The literature review identified resource sharing between education and youth sector partners as a potential way to deliver efficiencies. Our case study research identified numerous ways in which organisations share resources to benefit their partnerships.

Some resource-sharing arrangements drew on the procurement power of brokerage organisations. For example, St Helens LCEP used its position within the local council to put out a tender for a coach company to offer fixed-cost coach transport packages for schools to use when travelling to and from LCEP arts enrichment

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opportunities. A local coach company currently holds the contract, charging £50 per hour for a 49-seat coach (a rate that is significantly below the market rate that schools would pay otherwise). The LCEP acts as an intermediary in booking coaches on behalf of schools and has seen an increase in the use of the coach service for arts enrichment visits. The tendered coach company has had to increase the number of coaches it has to accommodate demand, including purchasing a new double-decker coach. St Helens LCEP has leveraged the procurement power of the local council to reduce financial barriers to local schools in accessing enrichment.

Sharing of physical space was also a key mechanism of effective partnership working among our case study partnerships. For School 21's RWL programme, it is essential that young people experience enrichment in the setting of a partner employer to gain skills and experience in navigating the workplace in the real world. Partnerships also shared staff capacity to plug key skills gaps. For example, Open Theatre partnered with Uffculme School to put in a joint bid to fund a professional development programme for the school's teachers to deliver its enrichment programme. This was supported through Open Theatre's greater knowledge of bidding for arts grant funding. This sharing of resources, therefore, created new resources for the partnership to expand the impact of its enrichment intervention.

👥 POWER AND EQUITY

Stakeholder co-production of the enrichment offer

Some partnerships employ sophisticated approaches to involving stakeholders in the co-production of their offer, while others struggle to do so because of capacity and capability challenges.

Several case study participants discussed the importance of having a shared sense of ownership over the enrichment intervention being delivered in partnership. This sense of ownership often came from regular meetings between the partners, where the design and delivery of enrichment activities were discussed, especially if concerns were taken seriously and changes were made by each partner.

This sense of shared ownership was described as more challenging with more standardised programmes delivered by national partners, such as Bite Back. However, settings such as Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy were able to create a sense of co-ownership of the standardised DofE programme by leveraging their MAT central team's knowledge and connections to support in adapting the programme to the needs of their SEND young people. This suggests that there remains scope for tailoring these standardised programmes with the right support and early discussion of partner organisations' mutual requirements.

Beyond staff discussions to tailor interventions, only a few of our case study partnerships engage in more

sophisticated co-production of their overall offer. St Helens LCEP uses a stakeholder steering group of local headteachers and leaders from cultural organisations. The group meets quarterly to plan the LCEP's overall enrichment offer and ways of working with schools, serving to build mutual understanding between the local education and cultural sectors and support the planning of more ambitious enrichment programmes (e.g. a showcase of pupils' photography at a larger local gallery or a performance that requires the use of local council space). The group has also produced tangible improvements to partnership management, such as how cultural organisations contact schools by email.

Other partnerships with smaller, local youth organisations reported difficulty engaging in similar stakeholder co-production. Partnerships often lacked the capacity to organise consultation sessions and the capacity to act on requested changes meaningfully. Nevertheless, smaller youth organisations were able to tailor their offer to the needs of participating young people through their close relationships with them, rather than through a formalised co-production process. For example, Young Somerset used the close working relationship between youth workers and participating young people to select outdoor experiences that matched the young people's interests and areas for desired personal development.

While enabling youth voice is regarded as important by most partnerships, most require more guidance from youth sector organisations to be able to do this more effectively.

Key findings

While youth voice did not feature prominently in the literature we reviewed, our advisory group emphasised that it is vital to involve young people in the development and delivery of enrichment through partnerships, as it leads to the alignment of enrichment activities with young people's needs and increases the likelihood of their engagement with the activities. Improved engagement is more likely to lead to improved outcomes such as increased skills, wellbeing and attainment and to a better return on investment.

We explored the challenges and barriers to youth-voice practice in order to understand what may be required at policy, programme and practice levels to support its wider adoption.

Despite the potential benefits of enabling youth voice, almost none of our case studies utilised youth voice for this purpose. Key exceptions included 'Mind, Body Spirit' and School 21. The 'Mind, Body, Spirit' programme involved young people in the design of its original enrichment activity and encouraged young people to shape the content of individual sessions. The sessions were delivered by youth workers who centred youth voice and supported discussion in any session to be led by the interests of young people. This led to a focus on topics that were important to young participants but were not prominent in the formal curriculum for health and relationships education.

School 21 draws on youth voice to match young people participating in the Real World Learning programme to the most relevant employer. It also supports a conversation between the young person and the employer on what they would like to do as part of their placement, leading to an enrichment programme that is both matched to the needs of the young person and their skills development ambitions, and is useful to the employer. The mutually beneficial arrangement has resulted in employers being more accommodating and engaged with young people during their placements.

Several of our case study partnerships described youth voice as important but there were limitations on how this was applied at a local level. For example, St Helens LCEP reported engaging youth voice in the co-production of its offer by conducting annual surveys of young people who participate in its programme. Bite Back reported using youth voice in developing its programme and hosting a youth advisory board for its overall work at a national level. However, youth voice was not utilised in its school partnership as part of the intervention or partnership development and modification.

The mostly commonly reported barrier to engaging youth voice was a lack of capacity to meaningfully involve young people. School partnership leads were more likely than youth organisations to report a lack of knowledge and experience in how to meaningfully engage youth voice. There was also a reported tension between youth-work approaches that centre youth voice and the approach of formal education settings to working with young people, which are typically more instructor and curriculum led. There is a case for both the education and youth sectors to be supported in adopting light-touch methods for designing and delivering youth-voice practices, as part of their ongoing enrichment partnership work.

Recommendations

Based on the evidence set out in this report, we now outline some suggested pathways for policy makers, practitioners and researchers to consider. These pathways could support the development of the necessary conditions for an increase in the number and growth of education and youth sector partnerships that would make improvements to young people's access to, and participation in, high-quality enrichment activities.

Recommendations for policymakers that could support a higher quality enrichment offer to all young people	Recommendations that could support education and youth sector practitioners in effective partnership working *Practitioners are operating as enrichment leads*	Recommendations that could support education and youth sector practitioners in effective partnership working *Education and youth sector leads*	Recommendations that could support education and youth sector practitioners in effective partnership working *Both education and youth sector organisations*	Recommendations for researchers to create insights that can grow the accessibility and impact of enrichment partnerships
Some pathways that policy makers might use to create a climate for higher-quality – and more widely accessed – enrichment for all young people are: ❯ A framework for effective enrichment provision. This could serve as a standardised and authoritative overview of best practice and guidance for enrichment provision across the education and youth sectors. ❯ An updated approach to education sector inspections that includes guidance around the quality of enrichment and partnerships with the youth sector. ❯ Teaching and youth sector workforce training focused on effective partnership working. ❯ An 'enrichment premium', which could create the long-term funding stream required for improving disadvantaged young people's access to enrichment.	Where practitioners are operating as enrichment leads, organisations that are funding or hosting the role should consider the following: ❯ Enrichment leads can be most effective if recruited by and situated in intermediary organisations ❯ Previous experience in the local enrichment landscape and working with schools is useful for enrichment leads. ❯ Standardised responsibilities and workflows for an enrichment lead should focus on quality assurance and brokerage. ❯ Enrichment leads can engage with local stakeholders and community voice to shape the local enrichment offer.	More broadly, all education sector practitioners involved in enrichment should consider the following: ❯ Enrichment lead roles at the trust level can be effective in supporting trust-wide improvements for enrichment partnerships and delivery. ❯ Leads on specific partnerships may sometimes be best drawn from a role that has responsibilities that overlap with the type of enrichment. ❯ Leadership support for a partnership can be used to allocate protected time and create other resourcing. ❯ A trust-wide commitment to funding enrichment partnership work can support stable long-term partnerships. **Youth sector practitioners should consider the following:** ❯ Youth sector organisations can use their expertise to introduce the education sector to effective youth-voice practice.	Both education and youth sector organisations should consider the following to improve partnership working: ❯ Creating checklists of key questions to discuss at inception meetings with a new partner. ❯ Agreeing a clear and shared set of outcomes for a partnership. ❯ Creating time for regular face-to-face meetings. ❯ Creating processes for effective information sharing that improve long-term planning around funding.	Themes that warrant further investigation by researchers include the following: ❯ How do different kinds of education and youth sector partnerships most effectively support disadvantaged young people? ❯ What are the most efficient and effective methods used by education settings for recording and tracking young people's participation in enrichment activities and using the data collected?, ❯ How are education and youth sector partnerships proactively working to tackle key challenges for young people using enrichment?

Recommendations

Analysis of our findings suggests some pathways that policy makers might use to create a climate for higher-quality – and more widely accessed – enrichment for all young people.

A framework for effective enrichment provision. There is a need for greater cross-sector knowledge and understanding of enrichment best practice. A new framework could serve as a standardised and authoritative overview of best practice and guidance for enrichment provision across the education and youth sectors. The framework could be designed as a resource for education and youth sector settings to support their enrichment delivery and their partnership working for enrichment. This framework could draw on existing guidance such as the Skills Builder Framework, Gatsby Benchmarks or statutory guidance for embedding local authority youth provision. Features of the framework might include the following:

› A typology of different types of enrichment and a summary of the evidence on the impact they can have.

› A glossary that helps to establish a common vocabulary for how the sectors talk about and monitor enrichment provision.

› Strategies and guidance for involving youth voice in the development and delivery of enrichment provision.

› Guidance on effective monitoring and evaluation approaches for enrichment provision.

› Guidance on effective education and youth sector partnership working for enrichment, including approaches to brokering new partnerships, day-to-day partnership management, funding options and approaches to stakeholder engagement.

An updated approach to education sector inspections that includes guidance around the quality of enrichment and partnerships with the youth sector. Updates to the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) could be a useful tool in supporting greater system-wide understanding of best practice. The current EIF's specifications on inspecting the range and uptake of enrichment could be extended to incorporate standards on the quality of enrichment, including the importance of educational settings collaborating efficiently with local youth sector organisations. These criteria could derive from the enrichment framework described above. The EIF could also include specifications under the Leadership and Management section on what should be included within 'enrichment lead' and partnership management best practice.

Teaching and youth sector workforce training focused on effective partnership working. Findings for the new enrichment framework discussed above might inform changes to the core content framework for Initial Teacher Training to improve early-career teachers' understanding of effective enrichment provision, youth-work principles and approaches, and effective partnership working. A National Professional Qualification (NPQ) based on the same framework might support access to this learning for teachers who are deeper into their careers. Similarly, approaches to effective partnership working could be added to the various training and qualification pathways for youth workers.

An 'enrichment premium', which could create the long-term funding stream required for improving disadvantaged young people's access to enrichment. If policy makers want to increase funding for young people's access to enrichment, an efficient and effective way of doing this could be through an uplift to the Pupil Premium (i.e. an 'enrichment premium') that is earmarked for expenditure on enrichment. This approach would utilise funding mechanisms that are currently used to distribute Pupil Premium funding to schools through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The Pupil Premium mechanism can also be used to improve enrichment access for all young people, not just those that are disadvantaged (as per the government's general guidance for Pupil Premium expenditure). This premium could be linked to the new enrichment framework suggested above, with schools supported to draw on the two together. Several organisations have previously called for an enrichment premium to provide this much-needed, long-term funding, including The Centre for Education and Youth (The Cultural Learning Alliance, 2019; The Centre for Education and Youth, 2021; UK Onward, 2022).

When looking to fund new Enrichment lead roles, the position can be most effective if recruited by and situated in brokerage organisations – for example, within local councils, LCEPs, bridge organisations, community or children's services hubs and regional youth work networks.

Recommendations

Our review of the evidence provides advice that may interest education and youth sector practitioners seeking to improve their management and delivery of enrichment partnerships.

Where practitioners are operating as enrichment leads, organisations that are funding or hosting the role should consider the following:

> **Previous experience in the local enrichment landscape and working with schools is useful for enrichment leads.** Organisations might consider these as critical role criteria when developing frameworks and specifications for recruiting enrichment leads.

> **Standardised responsibilities and workflows for an enrichment lead should focus on quality assurance and brokerage, including:**
>> Developing a clear, consistent and transparent approach to the quality assurance of enrichment providers to share with education settings. This approach to quality assurance could be supported by a centralised overview of quality enrichment (e.g. as described in the enrichment framework above) but retaining leads' ability to make modifications based on the unique challenges and constraints of their local setting.
>> Acting as a brokering intermediary that supports ongoing partnership management conversations between education and youth sector partners – including facilitating discussions around resource sharing, funding applications, youth voice and implementing changes to the delivery approach.
>> Mapping and making use of the wider local landscape of available assets (e.g. sports centres, theatres and civic spaces available for rent) and opportunities for partnerships to give opportunities to young people as part of these assets (e.g. showcasing a drama performance at a local theatre, or conducting a young people's debate in a local town hall).

> **Enrichment leads can engage with local stakeholders and community voice to shape the local enrichment offer.** Key stakeholders include leadership from local education settings, enrichment providers, youth sector organisations, local government, local employers and businesses, parents and young people.

More broadly, all education sector practitioners involved in enrichment should consider the following:

> **Enrichment lead roles at the trust level can be effective in supporting trust-wide improvements for enrichment partnerships and delivery.** Directing a proportion of the MAT central team budget towards creating an enrichment lead role can support a MAT with delivering on its wider ambitions to improve enrichment access and participation across the trust.

> **Leads on specific partnerships may sometimes be best drawn from a role that has responsibilities that overlap with the type of enrichment.** For example, arts-based enrichment should be led by an art teacher or middle leader, while a physical education teacher should lead sports enrichment.

> **Leadership support for a partnership can be used to allocate protected time and create other resourcing.** For example, school leaders can plan timetabling to give partnership leads more non-teaching time that can be devoted to partnership management. This could be further supported by creating the resourcing for lesson cover as required for partnership leads with teaching responsibilities.

> **A trust-wide commitment to funding enrichment partnership work can support stable long-term partnerships.** Trusts interested in improving young people's enrichment opportunities across their trust should consider setting long-term enrichment funding as a strategic objective. They should also consider circulating guidance among their schools for planning and delivering enrichment activities as an important part of annual Pupil Premium expenditure strategies.

Recommendations

Our review of the evidence provides advice that may interest education and youth sector practitioners seeking to improve their management and delivery of enrichment partnerships.

Youth sector practitioners should consider the following:

›   **Youth sector organisations can use their expertise to introduce the education sector to effective youth-voice practice.** This might include already available guidance on youth voice, proposed new guidance (e.g. from the 'enrichment framework' discussed above) or new guidance created by consortia of larger national youth sector organisations. This guidance should offer education settings light-touch and rapid ways for collecting youth voice and involving it in enrichment shaping and delivery.

Both education and youth sector organisations should consider the following to improve partnership working:

›   **Creating checklists of key questions to discuss at inception meetings with a new partner.** Key themes to be discussed at inception could include:

  ▸ The shared philosophies and values of both organisations, and their shared overall vision for the partnership and the enrichment intervention proposed.

  ▸ Milestones for contract review.

  ▸ Lead points of contact on each side of the partnership and their availability for calls during each working day and over a whole working week.

  ▸ Routines for face-to-face meetings or phone calls for information sharing and review of enrichment programme delivery.

  ▸ Sharing of behaviour management and safeguarding approaches in each organisation.

  ▸ Noting key dates in the education setting's calendar (such as school holiday dates) and plotting overall delivery timelines.

  ▸ Potential risks and bottlenecks in the partnership (e.g. access to funding, pupil participation and similar), alongside planned mitigations.

  ▸ Planned approaches for monitoring and evaluation of the enrichment activity.

  ▸ Division of labour for partnership management activities.

  ▸ Opportunities for capturing youth voice to shape the enrichment activity.

›   **Agreeing a clear and shared set of outcomes for a partnership.** . If this outcome is directly measurable (e.g. improving young people's attendance or wellbeing) then an approach towards measurement should be agreed, with a clear division of labour on data collection and analysis. Where outcomes are less tangible (e.g. young people feeling trusted members of the local community), there should be agreed success criteria for the partnership that can be regularly reviewed as part of partnership meetings.

›   **Creating time for regular face-to-face meetings,** used to review the delivery and impact of enrichment activities, share information and build mutual trust. These meetings could also be supported by using the inception checklist described above and used at subsequent meetings where relevant. These conversations should be attended by any brokerage organisations being used by the partnership.

›   **Creating processes for effective information sharing that improve long-term planning around funding.** It is advisable for youth sector organisations to inform education partners about changes to their delivery costs, including dates when schools will learn about funding for the following academic year. Similarly, partnership meetings can be used as opportunities to plan for potential changes to funding and how this can be offset and worked around as appropriate (e.g. through joint funding applications for supplementary grants funding).

Recommendations

Our rapid literature review and case studies have offered key insights into effective enrichment delivery through education and youth sector partnerships. However, our review has also highlighted gaps in the research base and areas for development of the insights that policy makers and the education and youth sectors can draw on in delivering enrichment.

Themes that warrant further investigation by researchers include the following:

How do different kinds of education and youth sector partnerships most effectively support disadvantaged young people?

What different types of partnerships (coexistence, cooperation, coordination, collaboration, co-production) can support disadvantaged young people's participation and success in enrichment in different ways? Are particular approaches best suited to improving outcomes for these young people?

What are the most efficient and effective methods used by education settings for recording and tracking young people's participation in enrichment activities and using the data collected?

The utilisation element here should focus on how schools use the data to target and support young people with lower participation in enrichment, alongside how schools support young people to communicate their enrichment participation as part of their skills development for future education and employment opportunities.

How are education and youth sector partnerships proactively working to tackle key challenges for young people using enrichment?

Key challenges here include persistent absence, young people's mental health and the skills pipeline.

What are young people's experiences of current enrichment provision and their preferences for future delivery?

This should include preferences about activities and approaches to their delivery.

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