Tackling NEET Toolkit

Intervention Handbook

Originally developed through the Orienta4YEL research project and adapted by the University of Bath and Wiltshire Council

Orienta4YEL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

13 Intervention Strategies

	Intervention Strategy	Intervention Overview	Who: school staff who might lead this intervention	Page
9	**Responsive crisis resolution**	Services that respond to the causes and consequences of YP's disruptive behaviours through individual therapeutic support for children's emotional wellbeing.	Behaviour and Pastoral Leads, Leadership Team, Mental Health Support Teams	54
10	**Inclusive and participatory pedagogy**	Training in pedagogic strategies, resources, and assessment practices to promote active learning and educational success for diverse learners.	Teaching Staff, Subject and Curriculum Leads, Raising Achievement Leads	59
11	**Support with transitions**	Giving personalised support to manage the risks and difficulties of moving between placements	Transition Co-ordinators, careers staff, contracted mentors/ SENCO and TAs	66
12	**Promoting inclusive learning environments**	Promoting an inclusive learning environment	SENDco, Teaching Staff, Subject and Curriculum Leads, Raising Achievement Leads	72
13	**Support in building/navigating healthy peer relationships**	To support young people in building and maintaining positive and healthy peer relationships, including friendships, learning and co-working relationships and romantic relationships.	Mental Health Support Teams, Wellbeing Leads, PSHE staff, school counsellor	81

ACTION 1. Personalised plans

AIM

To encourage young people to steer their own educational pathway by helping them to develop a personalised support plan with concrete steps to achieve identified developmental objectives.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

Young people at risk of NEET need individualised educational responses. Individual Planning refers to tutors supporting young people by tailoring their learning and career plans in relation to young people's needs. Individual planning should provide young people with clearly mapped-out learning objectives, tools to improve their sense of well-being, and opportunities to develop positive attitudes to learning, education and training. These plans should help young people gain a better understanding of the range of education options available to them, lower absenteeism, and improve their education outcomes. By identifying the specific barriers young learners face and the strategies required to overcome them, young people should gain feel a sense of ownership and motivation over their future plans. Ultimately, individual planning aims to help young people feel more in control of their lives.

Self Determination Theory: an underpinning philosophy for the role of individual planning in learning

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) suggests young people (or anyone, for that matter!) must 'fulfil' three basic psychological needs to gain more control over their lives: **autonomy**, **competence** and **relatedness.**

- Autonomy is about being able to choose what you do, when you do it, and how you do it.
- Competence (also known as 'self-efficacy') refers to how competent/capable/skilled you feel in relation to a task.
- Relatedness is about the need to experience caring and mutually satisfying relationships.

From and SDT perspective these three needs (or 'ingredients), when combined, determine how motivated a person feels to undertake an activity:

- *Intrinsic* motivation is the highest form of motivation: the purpose of participating in an activity is enjoyment of the activity itself. For example, people who love to paint as a hobby paint for the sake of painting; they do not need any additional reward. Painting *is* the reward. Intrinsic motivation can only occur if all three needs are met: **autonomy, competence** and **relatedness.**
- *Extrinsic* motivation is what happens when we move away from intrinsic motivation. This motivation is 'extrinsic' because we need a reward that is *external* to the activity we are doing to keep us involved in the activity. An example could be a student who is not interested in education but who gets paid to go to college: the reward (money) is *external* to the activity of education. Extrinsic motivation happens when some of the three needs (**autonomy**, **competence**, **relatedness**) are not fulfilled.
- *A*motivation is the worst kind of motivation: not being motivated at all to do an activity. It occurs when there is a lack of all three basic needs: there is no **autonomy**, no **competence**, and no **relatedness**.

Therefore, successful individual planning aims to help young people experience their educational pathway in the most *intrinsically motivated* way possible. By developing plans which are based on a) young people's needs, and b) identifying the additional support needs they require, educators are helping to instil **autonomy**, **competence,** and **relatedness**:

- Autonomy comes in the form of young people choosing how and when they engage in their developmental and educational objectives (giving them control over their choices).
- Competence takes place through young people selecting tasks they feel capable of achieving (and therefore feeling such tasks are 'doable').
- Relatedness occurs between the educator and young person by developing a trusting relationship in the process of creating and implementing the individual plan.

In summary, for individual planning to be a successful strategy it requires the young person's involvement and buy-in. With the guidance and support from a tutor, young learners who are actively involved in developing their plan will acquire skills to manage and plan their careers in the future. In turn, this should help increase young people's motivation, attendance and ultimately success in education or work.

ACTION 1. Personalised plans

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY *(How can the strategy be achieved?)*:

To effectively implement individual planning, educators should focus on 'fulfilling' the three basic psychological needs previously introduced: **autonomy**, **competence**, and **relatedness**. The following activities or suggestions are *possible* routes towards achieving the three basic psychological needs, however, the list is not prescriptive. As long as educators are attentive to the concepts of autonomy, competence and relatedness in relation to each individual young person, young learners should begin to feel more *intrinsically* motivated towards their educational pathway.

With regards to the content of the personalised plans, they can be as narrow or wide in accordance to the young person's situation; some plans at certain stages need to be broader and others narrower. For instance, consideration needs to be given to the amount of focus on work, education (Action 3), training, or life plans. Equally, there may be greater or lesser foci on social (Action 13), emotional, or wellbeing aspects, as well as issues relating to community engagement (Action 7), labour market preparation (Action 8), and the soft-skills needed to achieve goals throughout the plans.

Possible activities:

1. *Develop individual learning or career plans using a road map*: which outlines a starting point, an end goal, and the stages required to reach that end goal. The division into stages helps to build young people's competence (e.g. Headspace 2020 guide on how to make a career plan template; CareerPilot to explore routes to a range of qualifications).

2. *Assess the individual's existing skills and knowledge base* (i.e., the young person's competence): to develop young people's abilities, it is useful to first identify current strengths and weaknesses in relation to education, both from the educator's and young person's perspectives (e.g. YorOK – My Support Plan; Oldham Council Person Centred Planning Toolkit; Pupil Attitudes to Self and School [PASS]). With this 'baseline' identified, an individual plan can be tailored so the student draws on their strengths to address their weaknesses. It would also help to boost a learner's self-awareness – they may be better at a skill than they think!

3. *Enhancing a young person's autonomy by providing choices.* The individual plans should be tailored to each young person, which in turn increases their chances of being committed to the plan. A note on choices: more choice is not necessarily 'better', in the same way that not all choices are equal. Too many choices can be overwhelming (buying a chocolate bar at the supermarket can be overwhelming: picking one means rejecting 40 others!). All choices are not equal because having to choose between two undesirable options is unlikely to promote autonomy. Therefore, young people should be faced with choices they feel are somehow 'valuable' to them.

4. *Contract of participation:* the inclusion of a contract of participation can be a useful approach following the completion of a personalised plan tailored to the young person. This reflects that the plan is co-designed and the young person and the requirement that s/he 'signs' the contract indicates that they are a) happy with the plan, and b) they take ownership for the objectives produced and c) they are autonomously willing to follow it.

5. *Continually fostering autonomy and competence by conducting regular reviews of progress against the plan.* Plans are useful, but they may be overly (or under) ambitious; equally, young people develop at different speeds. As such, having reviews of the plans is important to ensure young people remain engaged. This could occur through 'tracking' sessions, regular and (when needed) impromptu reviews, and individual sessions where the educator and young person can discuss and adjust the plan.

6. *Identify the young person's individual barriers and additional learning support needs.* This refers to exploring a) the challenges each young person faces (i.e., personal, social, familial, institutional) and b) the additional support structures each young person requires. Identification of the specific barriers and additional needs young people will need will require liaising with relevant support/ teaching staff, as well as other people, such as family members.

7. *Relatedness grows through developing a trusting relationship between an educator and young people.* Whilst there are many aspects to what counts as 'trust', research generally suggests it occurs when a) an educator takes genuine interest in a young person's life, b) the young person *feels* cared for, and c) the young person feels valued and listened to. Each of these factors were raised by young people and other stakeholders in

the Orienta4YEL findings. Relatedness, therefore, can occur throughout all activities as long as educators are responsive to young people's perspectives.

8. *Reflective Diaries* (whether written or verbal) can be useful ways for young people to record their feelings with regards to following a personalised. They can be used as a reflection tool to either alter the plan, or enable the educator to more deeply appreciate a young person's views on autonomy and competence, and how to enhance both aspects. An example of one such diary (albeit, focusing on health) is the Children and Young People's health diary. The content and layout can be modified whilst keeping the underlying structure.

9. *The Avoidance, or minimisation of approaches which nullify autonomy, competence and relatedness*. For example, imposing choices on young people, asking young people to achieve a task beyond their skill set, or not developing trusting relationships, are all likely to result in individual plans failing.

10. *Ensuring personalised plans take into account the emotional and mental well-being of young people* in addition to the educational pathway that has been 'mapped out'. For example, achieving a particular education goal may only be possible by previously enhancing an aspect of a learner's emotional well-being, such as their self-esteem. In this case, the 'route' may involve doing an activity outside the 'education curriculum' which supports a young person's self-esteem growth, and then build on this stepping stone by approaching the educational goal.

11. *Being transparent and systematic.* Whatever approach taken to develop and implement the plan, the boundaries and approach must be clear to the young person so they know what to expect at all stages of the process.

12. *To include a record of young peoples' academic achievements:* For example in utilising platforms for recording learning academic achievements for ease of transition (see the Personalised Learning Records in the Learning Records Service in resources)

In summary, a personalised approach to planning involves promoting **autonomy**, **competence**, and **relatedness** by mapping individual learning or career plans, ensuring personal barriers and learning support are addressed, supporting young people's emotional and mental well-being, and undertaking the above in a systematic and predictable way. This can all be achieved through *individual tutorial sessions* whereby tutors or educators facilitate a young person's active input into their personalised plan.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

☐ Tutor / counsellor / educator.

☐ Adequate and comfortable space to develop and review plans.

☐ Timetabling, in terms of when to review the plans and provide support to overcome specific barriers.

☐ Materials / Tools:
   – Tracking sheets / diaries. Educators can use tracking sheets to keep a record of how the young person is following the personalised plan. The young person can use a diary to record their progress and setbacks.
   – Contract (that the young person has agreed and signed to follow the personalised plan)
   – Tools to assess young people's competencies/skills/abilities according to their educational pathway. This could include asking young people to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, to identify barriers they face, to outline goals they wish to reach…

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

▪ Meeting the three basic needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness) can often extend beyond educational activities themselves. For instance, autonomy can be limited by a lack of access to public transport or the absence of basic material needs. It is important to consider what factors, however small they may feel, can influence the autonomy, competence and relatedness a young person experiences.

▪ To support young people with the personal challenges they face we need to help them develop a strong emotional well-being foundation. This will help learners follow their personalised education plan by becoming more resilient and having strong self-esteem and self-confidence.

▪ Working on autonomy, competence and relatedness through a personalised plan should help to raise young people's aspirations, in turn leading them to develop a more positive learner identity. Achieving these three basic

ACTION 1. Personalised plans

psychological needs will also help young people appreciate how important those three needs are in all domains of their lives.

- Autonomy, competence and relatedness are complex concepts with a lot of 'ifs and buts'. For instance, some learners' may *perceive* their competence levels to be significantly lower than they give themselves credit for. As such, they may only choose to do activities that never push them out of their comfort zone. The challenge for educators in such instances is to help young people develop a plan the young people want to follow, whilst being pushed out of their comfort zone, whilst still relying on the safety of a trusting relationship.

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☐ **Prevention**   ☐ Intervention   ☐ Compensation

RISK FACTORS ADDRESSED

☐ **Personal challenges**
- ☐ Lack of motivation, interest and expectations
- ☐ Low self-esteem and self-perception
- ☐ Low educational achievements

☐ **Social relations**
- ☐ Difficult relationship in school (with tutors, teachers, peers, etc.)

☐ **Institutional factors**
- ☐ The school management of pupil behaviour
- ☐ Absenteeism / Exclusion of teaching lessons
- ☐ Lack of trust and support of the institution

STRATEGY LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**

☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**

☐ Educational system level (educational system actions)

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ Families   ☐ Community

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)**   ☐ Families

☐ Other professionals (internal or external to the institution): ……………………………………

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the strategy is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year

☐ **Transition between key stages and educational/training settings**

☐ Other (specify): ………………………………………………………….

COST OF THE STRATEGY

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Tailored learning pathways.* Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/tailored-learning-pathways [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 1. Personalised plans

Centre for Self-Determination Theory (2020). *Education*. Available online at::
https://selfdeterminationtheory.org/application-education/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Cherry, K. (2019). *Self-Determination Theory and Motivation*. Available online at:
https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-determination-theory-2795387 [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Department for Education (2020). *Guidance: How to access your personal learning record.* Available online at:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-your-personal-learning-record [Accessed 01 July 2020]

The Learning Records Service is a national platform for hosting young people's (aged 14+) individual Personal Learning Records (PLR). It is described as follows: '*A PLR is your permanent, authoritative online record of your qualifications and achievements. The PLR records general and vocational qualifications such as but not limited to QCF, A levels, GCSEs, BTEC, Diplomas and Functional Skills. The PLR means you should no longer have to show copies of different certificates to learning providers and employers. You can provide this information as a report generated from your PLR'.*

European Commission (2017). *Tackling Early School Leaving. A collection of innovative and inspiring resources. Explore. Learn. Share*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available online at:
https://www.erasmusplus.sk/uploads/publikacie/2017_compendia_early_school_leaving_geraldine_6174.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

GL Education (2017). *Pupil Attitudes to Self and School* (PASS). Available online at: https://gl-education.com/products/pupil-attitudes-to-self-and-school-pass/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Headspace (2020). How to make a career plan. Available online at: https://headspace.org.au/young-people/how-to-make-a-career-plan-template/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Oldham Council (2015). *Person Centred Planning Toolkit*. Available online at:https://www.oldham.gov.uk/site_search/results/?q=person+centred+planning+toolkit [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Paradigm, In Control. *Every Child's Support Plan*. Available online at: http://www.in-control.org.uk/media/5011/a%20guide%20to%20planning%20with%20children%20and%20young%20people.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2020). *Children and Young People's Health Diary*. Available online at: https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/stay-home-activities-children-young-people#downloadBox [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Ryan and Deci (2020). *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, practices, and future directions*. Contemporary Educational Psychology. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860

Southern Universities Network (2020). *CareerPilot*: Available online at:
https://www.sunoutreach.org/resources/what-is-careerpilot/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Tower Hamlets Educational Psychology Service (2015). *Person centred planning with children and young people*: Available online at: https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Children-and-families-services/Early-Years/TH_PCP_Model.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

YorOK (2015). *My Support Plan* (scroll to the bottom of the webpage and click on "My Agreed Outcomes Example 1" for an example of what an individualised plan could look like) Available online at: https://www.yor-ok.org.uk/families/Local%20Offer/my-support-plan.htm [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 2. Blended media mentoring

AIM

1. To provide **one-to-one blended media mentoring support** with respect to young people's learning and development, which involves using a range of methods, tools, digital platforms and modes of communication to support and engage the young person.
2. To provide young people with a positive role model who will support them to develop the confidence and skills needed to achieve their potential and provide resources they can draw on for self-development and planning their futures.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

What is a blended media approach to mentoring?

Blended media mentoring involves using a mix of face-to-face (i.e. physical presence) and online meetings and activities, synchronously and/or asynchronously, to provide mentoring to young people in order to support their development and provide careers counselling. Within the blended media mentoring approach, a range of methods, tools, communication modes and digital platforms can be used, including social media, to break down barriers and keep young people engaged.

The advantages of blended media mentoring

The advantages of the blended media mentoring approach are: a) flexibility as regards time b) independence in terms of space; and c) engagement given many young peoples' preference for online and social media forms of communication d) to maintain contact during periods of limited face-to-face contact i.e. in response to Covid-19 restrictions. It is important for the mentor and mentee to agree the boundaries for engagement at the outset. This may include negotiating the hours of the day and means of contact that can be expected, the time-frame within which the young person and mentor may be expected to respond, and the parameters and focus for contact.

Blended media mentoring helps to lower young people's risk of by increasing the young person's sense of being supported and cared about and building their self-esteem This can help prevent drop-out, particularly at risk points, such as when making a transition from one pathway to another, and during the initial stages of a new pathway. It can help them to: a) overcome issues affecting their learning b) maintain motivation to learn c) improve their professional opportunities d) develop confidence and key skills to achieve their potential e) learn about important resources that they can draw on for self-development and future planning.

Blended media mentoring can achieve a range of aims, depending on the needs of the young person involved and the characteristics of the mentor (e.g. if they are internal/external to the learning provider, adults/peers, volunteers/paid staff). The relationship and the communications/activities involved will vary depending on the needs of the learner.

Quality blended media mentoring is characterised by a relationship built on trust, continuity and commitment of the mentor. Findings from the Orienta4YEL (UK) research identified a number of key strategies that defined quality mentoring, including; a) eliciting young people's interests and talents; b) therapeutic listening; c) advocating on the young person's behalf; d) boundary setting; e) apologising when wrong. Negotiation between the young person and mentor is essential when agreeing on mentoring goals and tailoring activities to help the young person achieve these. Mentoring is underpinned by regular contact, which could be via face-to-face meetings and social media/communication platforms such as SMS, WhatsApp, Zoom, Teams, or Skype. The mentor should also be well positioned in order to signpost relevant training, and long-term support.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION *(How can the action be achieved?):*

Successful mentoring relationships go through what can be categorised as four key phases: 1) preparation and negotiation 2) enabling growth 3) developing a relationship based on trust, and 4) closure. These phases build on each other, vary in length and can overlap. In each phase, there are specific steps and strategies that lead to an effective mentor-mentee relationship. Nevertheless, it is important to take into account that mentoring should offer long-term support. In order to achieve a relationship of trust, it is important for the mentoring to take place over the long-term rather than as a one-off session. The length of the intervention will depend on the young person's needs

and is best discussed with the young person at the outset. For those facing complex barriers to learning, the intensity and length of the mentoring may increase within available limits.

Mentoring phases:

1. **Preparation and Negotiation**. This first step involves the preparation of the mentoring process including the selection and matching of mentors and mentees. Decisions also need to be made by the line manager working with the mentor around monitoring and support (if applicable). Mentors may be professionals (e.g. guidance counsellors, teachers or tutors), volunteers (e.g. from the business community), students or peers. If the mentor is external to the educational setting, then this may make it easier for the young person to discuss their questions and difficulties with the educational institution, but it may also mean that the mentor has little/no power to address these concerns. Where mentors are external, but the mentoring relationship takes places within the school/training institution, it may be useful to identify at the outset the channels within the institution by which mentors can escalate or follow up on issues raised by the young person with appropriate senior leads within the setting. It can be a frustrating experience for both mentor/mentee if the mentor has little/no access or commitment from the educational setting to respond to issues raised, for example where the institution sees the 'risks' to Early Leaving as reducible to solely personal control and amelioration[1].

   Peer mentoring brings together young people who are independent from 'the system' and who may have experienced similar issues to one another. As such, peer mentoring may be useful for sharing experiences of learning and study techniques and for addressing social and motivational issues (see action 4).

   This phase also involves the mentor and mentee meeting up to negotiate and agree on the goals to be achieved through the mentoring partnership. SMART criteria ('Specific', 'Measurable', 'Attainable', 'Relevant', 'Time-Bound') could be used in order to guide the setting of objectives and plan the actions that have to be developed in order to achieve them.

   Suggested tasks and activities:

- *Choose the right mentors and provide training.* Prior to starting work with young people, it is important that the selected mentors receive training. This is particularly important for student or peer mentors (see action 4). Part of the training may need to include guidance on using social media and online platforms effectively and respectfully.
- *Negotiate a mentoring action plan.* The mentor and mentee should have an initial meeting to discuss the mentoring programme and plan the objectives, phases of mentoring, roles and tasks, expectations, type of support offered and so on. This could include decisions around when and how meetings will take place, as well as the rules around how the mentor and mentee will work together. This should lead to a *written agreement* on the mentoring activities that will take place during the course of the mentoring relationship, that should be signed by both the mentor and mentee. The written agreement does not have to be developed in the initial meeting but rather after some of the tasks and activities for phase 1 have taken place.
- *Establish rapport and trust from the outset.* It is important that from the outset mentors focus on establishing rapport and trust through discussion and negotiation. A key benefit of mentoring is that through the relationship which develops, the young person can benefit from advice and support from the mentor who is seen by the young person as being neutral or 'on their side'. This is particularly important for young people who are (at risk of) disengaging from their learning and at risk of EL. For some, their mentor may be the only adult they feel is supporting them with their learning and/or career.
- *Outline the confidentiality agreement at the outset*: It is essential to explain to young people at the outset the limits to confidentiality and the circumstances and contact persons to be involved in the case of disclosure of safeguarding issues.
- *Description and analysis of the mentee's starting point.* This involves setting up a 'mind map' (see Mintz, 2014) detailing the essential aspects of the personal circumstances of the mentee, according to the mentee's

---

[1] The framework for understanding the risks to Early Leaving may be a useful resource for the mentor to signpost to educators in tackling this misassumption.

perceptions and perspectives. This mind map can then be built upon in order to develop targets and identify resources.

- *Self-assessment and self-perception exercise.* This involves mentees thinking about their circumstances, expectations, learning styles, strengths and interests and so on. This could be a good opportunity to practice and develop self-awareness and build self-esteem. It is an exercise that could be practiced at different points in time to note developmental points, areas that may need further attention and to consider if plans need to be reviewed (aligning with Phase 2 'Enabling Growth').
- *Mentees identifying their own targets*. Mentors support mentees to think about and develop targets, which should then be documented and discussed. These targets should be based on their educational, social, personal and labour market trajectories.
    -

2. **Enabling Growth**. This phase involves carrying out the activities agreed upon in phase 1 and should enable the mentee to feel encouraged and empowered in order to grow and work towards achieving their potential.

   Suggested tasks and activities:

- *Regularly checking in.* It is important that mentors and mentees regularly contact each other (within the agreed boundaries and parameters) via face-to-face and social media, the latter of which can help to break down barriers and facilitate continuous collaboration and support.
- *Supportive two-way communication and feedback*. It is helpful if the mentor uses a questioning technique to elicit key issues and reflections from the mentee. It is important to actively listen (see Mind Tools 2020) as well as provide advice and to ask for and give feedback so that the learning experience is satisfactory and the pace is comfortable. Providing constructive criticism and opportunities to reflect on this is also important, as is celebrating each small success.
- *Providing timely support.* Mentees may need support to work on particular areas and targets at different times depending on their circumstances. If the mentor is planned to be unavailable for a period (within the agreed limits) or has little power to act on the support, it is especially important to communicate this to the young person.
- *Creating appropriate challenges to facilitate learning and growth.* It is essential that the mentor consider the different circumstances, strengths and areas that may need to be worked on in order to set goals and challenges that will work for the mentee and keep them motivated and engaged.
- *Evaluating goals and deadlines throughout the process.* Evaluation points could be built into the mentoring plan so that goals and deadlines can be monitored and reviewed. This could also include revisiting the self-assessment and self-perception exercise in phase 1.
- *Keeping a diary.* It would be useful for both the mentor and mentee to keep a diary to note key discussion points, dates of next meetings and tasks and activities to work on.
- *Providing support to enable the growth of the mentor/develop their professional practice.* Mentors need the opportunity to confidentially discuss and reflect on difficult or effective 'cases' they are working on. This could be achieved through regular co-mentoring support groups, peer mentor discussions and/or one-to-one support, which could be in the form of supervision sessions or meetings between the mentor and supervisor.

3. **Developing a relationship based on trust**. Trust cannot be requested or given at the start of the mentor-relationship; it must be built over time. A good mentor is friendly without being a 'friend'; they are honest and warm but keep their boundaries; they are clear in their expectations but negotiate the rules of engagement with the young person. Factors that can contribute towards the building of trust include:

- *Developing intimacy with clear boundaries* - where the mentor is open with the young person about the range and limits of their support and sets and models respectful and consistent parameters (both in terms of how and when to make contact and the focus of engagement)
- *Transparency where ideas may fail.*
- *Recognition of the limits to the mentors' power.* It can be frustrating and/or difficult for the mentor to recognise the limits to their 'gift' in offering support. For less experienced mentors this may lead to arrested communication. It is easy to underestimate the power of offering an understanding ear or a non-judgemental sounding board for the injustices that the young person experiences, even where the mentor has little power to change them.

- *Apologising for when they are in the wrong*. The way that the mentor responds to their own mistakes (transparency, taking ownership, acknowledging the impact, and genuine remorse) can be a powerful learning opportunity for young people, and convey the principle that their own mistakes need not define them and have the opportunity to strengthen and opposed to the automatic termination of relationships with others.

4. **Coming to closure (*target check, final discussion and feedback*)**. Once the mentoring relationship has been established and fostered, it is important to understand the parameters for when the mentoring relationship should change or end. Ending a mentoring relationship does not mean it has failed. Often, it simply means that the initial goals of the mentorship have been attained, and it is time to move on. It is important to finish a mentoring project with a joint target check, giving each other feedback and making suggestions for improvement. Coming to a closure should also involve ensuring sustainability in terms of the mentoring experience so that the mentee can take what they have learnt forward and draw on this in the future.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ Designated mentors
- ☐ A private and comfortable space for one-to-one meetings between mentor and mentee
- ☐ Materials / Tools:
  - – Access to the required technology, internet, online platforms and social media to be used
  - – Guidelines on how to be an effective mentor
  - – Guidance on using social media and online platforms effectively and respectfully
  - – SMART goals training tools and worksheets
  - – Templates and examples for the various tasks and activities (e.g. for the mentoring action plan; mind map; self-assessment and self-perception exercise; targets etc)
  - – Diary
  - – Communication guidelines

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ▪ This action is relevant for addressing personal, social, institutional and compensatory factors.
- ▪ It is particularly relevant in addressing the social support strategy 'feeling cared about by teachers/tutors'.
- ▪ It needs to include an education element in terms of how to use social media effectively and responsibly.
- ▪ The parameters of communication need to be specified e.g. if using mobile messaging applications (WhatsApp, texting) what times of day/week can young people expect (not) to get a response?

- ▪ Related protective factors identified from Orienta4YEL project:
  - - Individualised support is key
  - - Non-rigid learning environment; flexibility
  - - Patience with YP, consistent routines
  - - Building trust
  - - Building self confidence and self-esteem
  - - Developing a positive future vision for oneself that includes positive career choices
  - - Inclusive school culture; a caring ethos, school as a safe space
  - - Building students sense of a positive learner identity
  - - Young person autonomy and ownership; being trusted, supporting young person towards independence, student voice platform
  - - Raising aspirations
  - - Students perceptions that they are supported

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☐ Prevention   ☐ Intervention   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

ACTION 2. Blended media mentoring

☐ **Personal challenges**
- ☐ Low motivation, interest and expectations
- ☐ Low self-esteem and self-perception
- ☐ Low educational achievements
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Irregular transitions

☐ **Social relations**
- ☐ Difficult relationships in school (with tutors, teachers, peers, etc.)
- ☐ Peer pressure/negative external influence
- ☐ Peer group expectations: low peer group expectations for the future

☐ **Institutional factors**
- ☐ Absenteeism / Exclusion of teaching lessons
- ☐ Lack of trust and support of the institution

ACTION LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**

☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ Families   ☐ Community

INVOLVED AGENTS *(Who is going to implement the action?)*

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)**   ☐ Families

☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution):** ………………………………..

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the action is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**   ☐ During the academic year   ☐ At the end of the academic year

☐ **Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education (VET/Baccalaureate)**

☐ Other (specify): …………………………………………………….

FORM of delivery *(how do we group?)*

☐ **Individually**   ☐ In pairs   ☐ Small groups   ☐ Class group

☐ **According to needs of young person**

COST OF THE ACTION

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Android Authority (2020). *How to use WhatsApp: A step-by-step beginners' guide*. Available online at: https://www.androidauthority.com/how-to-use-whatsapp-1097088/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Sevilla,G., (2020). *Zoom vs. Microsoft Teams vs. Google Meet: A Videoconferencing Face Off*. Available online at: https://uk.pcmag.com/how-to-work-from-home/125661/zoom-vs-microsoft-teams-vs-google-meet-a-videoconferencing-face-off [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Riley, S., (2020). *Zoom vs Teams: Which video conferencing app is right for you?* Available online at: https://www.mvsav.co.uk/microsoft-teams-vs-zoom-rooms-review/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 2. Blended media mentoring

SIGUCCS mentoring program (2020). *Mentor guide.* Available online at: **https://www.educause.edu/-/media/files/wiki-import/2014infosecurityguide/mentoring-toolkit/siguccsmentorguidepdf** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *One-to-one support through coaching or mentoring*. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/one-one-support-through-coaching-or-mentoring [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Involving citizens as volunteer mentors for VET students*. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/resources/involving-citizens-volunteer-mentors-vet [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Prince's Trust (2020). *Resources for mentoring a young person.* Available online at: https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/support-our-work/volunteer/volunteer-tools-tips/mentoring-young-person [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Tandem now project. Available online at: **http://www.tandemnow.eu/** Accessed 01 July 2020]
This organisation matches young people with mentors from their own ethnic communities.

Mintz, S., (2014). *How "mind mapping" can help mentors and mentees find activities.* Available online at: https://www.evidencebasedmentoring.org/how-mind-mapping-can-help-mentors-and-mentees-find-activities [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Online questionnaire 'Risiko Check' and coaching tool 'Counselling profile' in the context of the project Stop Dropout*. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/resources/online-questionnaire-risiko-check-and-coaching [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Guide and lesson plan examples with suggested activities and resources – promoting social skills among students.* Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/resources/guide-and-lesson-plan-examples-suggested [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Yumpu (2020). *The Self-Esteem Workbook for Teens: Activities to help build confidence and achieve goals.* Available online at: Available online at: **https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/63116239/pdf-download-the-self-esteem-workbook-for-teens-activities-to-help-you-build-confidence-and-achieve-your-goals-e-book** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Act for Youth (2020). *Social and Emotional Learning Toolkit: Self-Awareness.* Available online at: **http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/sel/self-awareness.cfm** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Riopel, L., (2020). *17 Self-awareness activities and exercises (+test).* Available online at: https://positivepsychology.com/self-awareness-exercises-activities-test/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

MindTools (2020). Active Listening: Hear What People Are Really Saying. Available online at **https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkll/ActiveListening.htm** [Accessed 01 July 2020)

Develop Good Habits (2020). *SMART goal setting worksheets and templates.* Available online at: **https://www.developgoodhabits.com/goal-setting-worksheet/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Smartsheet (2020). *Essential guide to writing SMART goals.* Available online at: https://www.smartsheet.com/blog/essential-guide-writing-smart-goals [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 2. Blended media mentoring

MindTools (2020). *SMART goals. How to make your goals achievable*. Available online at: **https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 3. Personal development activities to engage young people in learning

AIM

To engage young people in activities to improve their self-concept, helping them to see themselves as a valued learner and feel a sense of belonging in the educational or training setting.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

This strategy is about helping young people develop a positive view of education in general and of themselves as learners. As such, the emphasis is on countering previous negative schooling experiences by motivating, inspiring, and breaking down barriers young people may feel towards education or educators. This entails identifying their interests and sparking their curiosity as well as helping them grow their capabilities in regards to pursuing educational and training pathways. However, a prerequisite to such goals is to strengthen young learners' self-confidence and self-concept. According to Paulo Freire, one of the key educators and philosophers of the last 50 years, improving self-confidence and self-concept occurs through a process of empowerment.

Paulo Freire, Empowerment, and Critical Pedagogy
Paulo Freire's ideas about empowerment and challenging oppression stem from his work in the 1960s in poverty-stricken north-eastern Brazil. His core thesis – referred to as Critical Pedagogy – is that many social structures (such as education systems which prioritise marks and achievement above holistic person development) end up oppressing people. Education, for Freire, should serve as a tool to challenge this oppression and help people become empowered. Once people are empowered, they become 'liberated' or 'emancipated', meaning they can try to 'break free' from oppresive social structures. Becoming empowered, by definition, leads to improved self-confidence and self-concept; young people feel they have reclaimed autonomy – the power to make choices regarding how they lead their life.

Freire's 'route to empowerment' can be summarised into four 'steps':

1) The first step to challenge oppressive social structures is to develop an awareness of social structures that can be oppressive. For instance, as previously mentioned, the current mainstream education system in the UK can be oppressive to any young person who struggles with Maths and English, high stakes testing, and learning in big classes. Identifying oppressive structures can be done by carefully looking at injustices – what injustices do young people feel and see? These may be economic, social, or political, and can be tied to education in many ways. For example, the lack of a well established and subsidised transport network can be both an economic and political problem that oppresses young people by complicating their access to educational settings.

2) The second step, closely linked to the first, is encouraging political thinking in young people. Politics refers to how groups are people are governed; in other words, helping young learners appreciate that education systems do not randomly appear – they are designed with particular goals in mind.

3) To explore young people's awareness and feelings of injustice, it is essential to *dialogue* with young learners. Freire stresses this point: dialogue is a two-way street, where we *listen* to young people's views, as well as appreciate their backgrounds and histories. In turn, educators should also reflect on their backgrounds, histories, and views.

4) From this dialogue comes *praxis* (or practice) – applying the issues dialogued about to effect social change. This process of effecting social change is where empowerment occurs: young people have gone from passive recipients of an education system that oppressed them to active agents who are addressing/improving an injustice caused by the education system.

There are many nuances to Freire's thinking, too many to explore here in depth. However, the following two help illustrate the four steps above:

- Critical Pedagogy is about educators and learners *transforming* knowledge rather than passively consuming it. Freire argued that education systems are generally geared towards a 'banking' model rather than a 'transformative' one. 'Banking' refers to feeding young people 'knowledge' without them questioning, thinking, or challenging it.

ACTION 3. Personal development activities to engage young people in learning

- Dialogue needs to occur at a level 'the oppressed' can understand. This requires being attentive to young learners' histories and contexts. For example, when starting to talk about oppressive structures in education, it may be suitable to first ask the young person to think about what is unfair in their lives. In short, Freire argued that empowerment can only occur if young people can genuinely reflect on their lives.

The Critical Pedagogy approach can help re-engage young learners who have disengaged from education and training, or support those who show signs of low motivation to participate in education. Whilst there is a risk that by highlighting weaknesses or injustices in the educational system young learners may be put off further, if this is channelled through a dialogue about how young learners can effect changes to their lives, it can yield positive results. At the very least, young people will feel they are gaining a 'voice', which can be linked to gaining some autonomy. The importance of autonomy as a basic psychological need has been discussed in Strategy 1 (Individualised Plans). Of course, like all aspects of working with young people who have disengaged from education, or at risk from doing so, the process of empowerment is both long and slow. There is no fast track or one-size-fits all.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY *(How can the strategy be achieved?):*

Engaging young people in learning requires paying attention to young learners' voices. Critical Pedagogy does not outline a prescriptive set of practices – the four 'steps' previously stated provide a rough guideline that needs to be adapted to each context and set of learners. The following activities offer a series of suggestions about how young people's voices can be heard/listened to, and how the process of *dialogue* may be incorporated into practice. See Currell 2020 and Lynch 2019 for a brief summary of Critical Pedagogy, and some tips of how to incorporate a Critical Pedagogy approach practically.

Possible activities and approaches:

- *Listening to the students' voices*. Young people need to be given regular opportunities to share their viewpoints (see Speak Out, Listen Up! Toolkit). This could occur at regular intervals (like 'feedback meetings'), or they could take place when there is clearly affecting a young person. Topics discussed could range from the provision of education and the barriers young learners are facing, to where they would like to see changes or improvement. This is an effective way of minimising disaffection and maintain engagement. Equally, it is important to *act* on the views young people share – if their opinions are asked, but not acted upon/reacted to, that will lead to greater disengagement.
- *Learner voice panel*. One way of listening to learners' voices is to create a regular 'panel' which represent the views and concerns from the rest of a cohort. It can be challenging to end up with a panel that is diverse and representative of the group, and in some cases the panel approach may be either inappropriate or unsuitable. In this case, scheduling an equivalent one to one, or small group meetings with all young people could be an effective approach. (See Learner Engagement)
- *Community involvement.* Activities to engage and motivate young people in learning often require the involvement and cooperation of the community (e.g. local services and organisations, local employers and community groups). Each provider enjoys its own unique strengths and is particularly suited to a set of activities or approaches – both of these need to match a young person's personality/developmental stage. When re-engaging a young learner into education, either because they have fully disengaged or are likely to, it is helpful to design activities which are not directly linked to a formal training programme or qualification. The stress or pressure associated to such formal outcomes may be a barrier young people have learned to avoid. Consequently, community activities should promote interactions with peers, educators or other positive relationships outside a formal learning environment. Whilst the ultimate goal is to re-engage a young learner into education, at this stage community involvement should be used for its own intrinsic value (i.e., a young person feeling part of a group and being valued for their contribution) rather than as an immediate stepping stone back into formal education. (See Action 7: Establishing links with the wider community)
- *Activities which promote personal and social development*. An aspect of becoming an empowered learner (according to Freire) involves a young person growing personally and socially. Opportunities for personal and social development should be included in any formal education setting – these 'non-formal' and 'informal' education experiences (see Action 6 – Support for young people's learning outside the formal

curriculum) can help young learners develop 'soft' skills. These 'non-formal' or 'informal' education opportunities can be geared towards discussing problems (or injustices), and to *dialogue* with young people about who they are and who they wish to become. Activities which promote personal and social development tend to work effectively indirectly. One a young person is 'hooked' onto an activity they enjoy (such as music, sport, or art), that activity in turn can be used as a vehicle to help a young learner get to know themselves better.

- *Building trusting relationships between young people and educators*. At the heart of helping young learners re-engage in education is a trusting bond between young people and educators. Whilst the kind of activity used to re-engage young people into education matters (for instance, using dance as a 'hook' for someone who dislikes dancing will never work), the relationship with a caring adult is even more important. These trusting relationships need to be underpinned by what prominent care theorist Nel Noddings argues are the three components of 'care': 1) young people feeling someone is interested in their lives, 2) young people seeing someone taking action to be involved in their lives/support them, and 3) young people feeling they can freely react to the care they are given (i.e., sometimes they'll be happy about the care received, sometimes they'll be unhappy. They should be able to express happiness and unhappiness without the quality of care received altering) [See Teaching Themes of Care].

- *Keeping an educational logbook*. A logbook is a way to record and keep track of events. Though there are many types of logbooks, in the context of Early Leaving, there are two kinds of educational logbook which could be useful (see The Teacher Toolkit for more details on logbooks):
    - *An educational logbook which aims to organise learners' learning*. This logbook enables learners to write down the goals they want to achieve during a particular educational programme or curriculum. Additionally, the young person should (with the help of an educator) map what steps they plan to take to reach this goal (see Action 1 – Individualised Plans)
    - *An educational logbook focusing on learners' future education and career*. This logbook focuses on a leaner's longer-term future. It should be developed using the support of a range of educators, such as tutors, counsellors and careers advisors. To ensure the young person feels their proposed 'route' is feasible, the logbook needs to be developed taking a lead from a young person and should include information about how to deal with transitions in education (a key moment when young people are likelier to drop out of education or training). Successful logbook approaches are rooted in having positive relationships between young learners and educators as well as developing an 'achievable' set of goals.

- *Weekly 'review' meetings or assemblies*. When a young person is at risk of disengaging from education, or has disengaged and is re-engaging, weekly 'review' meetings can be an effective pedagogical tool which encourages learners to remain in education. Whilst the 'voice panel' activity focuses more on issues which may affect the cohort, the 'review meetings' or assemblies focus on the individual's education pathway. How does the young person feel about re-engaging in education? Is the current plan working for them? What issues, if any, outside of the education itself may be affecting them? Again, ensuring a young person feels listened to and cared for is a fundamental aspect of successful 'review' meetings. These meetings can be of a more individual focus, or more collective, such as an assembly. (See Weekly assemblies in Portuguese second chance school; What are the benefits of school assemblies?).

- *Learner co*-ops. Learner co-ops are educational experiences where learners and educators cooperatively co-create something of educational value. For instance, they may co-create a small-scale curriculum (what do learners want to learn, and how?) or a more concrete outcome, like a business or volunteering initiative. The shared participation on a task between learners and educators, underpinned by a democratic approach, can support learners feeling valued. If the focus is on a business or volunteering opportunity, this works effectively when taking into account the context and needs of the local community.

- *Suggestion box*. An effective way of encouraging young learners to voice their concerns is to ask them, anonymously and periodically (for example, each month), to write down one or two concerns they have about the educational programme and put them into a 'suggestion box'. Educators can then read these anonymous notes and, either in further consultation with students or by directly responding to the issue, improve the educational experience for learners. (See Class Meetings: A Democratic Approach to Classroom Management).

ACTION 3. Personal development activities to engage young people in learning

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)***:**

- ☐ Range of community organisations/non-formal/informal education providers
- ☐ Adequate and comfortable space
- ☐ Timetabling
- ☐ Materials / Tools
- ☐ Others (specify): ……………………………………………….

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ▪ Developing soft skills can help re-engagement in education: resilience, ownership in learning, self-confidence and esteem, emotional wellbeing.
- ▪ Home-family engagement can be an effective route to help learners re-engage with education. However, this is likely only to succeed if the family values education.
- ▪ Developing formal educational tools and strategies can help learners cope with specific aspects of the curriculum, such as how to deal with test-related anxiety, tips on how to revise, techniques for managing stress…

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☐ **Prevention**   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**
- ☐ Lack of motivation, interest and expectations
- ☐ Low self-esteem and self-perception
- ☐ Low educational achievements
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Irregular transitions

☐ **Family circumstances**
- ☐ Parental values: low family aspirations, parental expectations for young people
- ☐ Low family support: lack of attention, educational support and affection

☐ **Institutional factors**
- ☐ The school or education environment
- ☐ Absenteeism / Exclusion of teaching lessons
- ☐ The syllabus and their development specially related to teaching strategies and/or methodologies

STRATEGY LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**
☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**
☐ Educational system level (educational system actions)

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ Families   ☐ Community
☐ ………………

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ **Teacher/Trainer**   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)**   ☐ **Families**
☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution):** …………….............................

ACTION 3. Personal development activities to engage young people in learning

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the strategy is going to be implemented)*

☐ At the beginning/welcoming   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year

☐ **Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education (VET/Baccalaureate)**

☐ Other (specify): …………………………………………………….

COST OF THE STRATEGY

☐ **Low**   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Bafile, C., (2016). *Class Meetings: A democratic approach to classroom management* Available online at: https://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/profdev/profdev012.shtml [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET tookit for tackling early leaving. *Development of an educational logbook in Danish Youth Guidance Centres .* Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/content/development-educational-logbook-danish-youth-guidance-centres [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving, Building motivation to learn. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/building-motivation-learn [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. Weekly assemblies in a Portuguese second chance school. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/da/content/weekly-assemblies-portuguese-second-chance-school [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Currell, J., (2020*). Paulo Freire: The pioneer of critical pedagogy.* Available online at: https://mathsnoproblem.com/blog/teaching-practice/paulo-freire-pioneer-of-critical-pedagogy/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Lynch, M., (2019*). How to implement Critical Pedagogy into your classroom.* Available online at: https://www.theedadvocate.org/how-to-implement-critical-pedagogy-into-your-classroom/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Harris, J et al., (2014). *Speak Out, Listen Up! Tools for using student perspectives and local data for school improvement.* Available online at: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/pdf/REL_2014035.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

MDS3, *Student Panel Workbook - Student Voice.* Available online at:. https://sites.google.com/a/mds3online.org/mds3-resource-binder/student-voice [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Noddings, N., (1995). *Teaching Themes of Care*. The Phi Delta Kappan,76:9, pp.675-679

The teacher toolkit. *Logbooks*. Available online at: http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/log-book [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Walker, L. and Logan, A., (FutureLab) (2008). *Learner Engagement: A review of learner voice initiatives across the UK's education sectors*. Available online at: https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/futl80/futl80.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

What are the benefits of school assemblies? Available online at: https://www.academicentertainment.com/what-are-benefits-school-assemblies [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 4. Peer to peer learning and support

AIM

Peer-to-peer learning and support is an educational strategy that aims to prevent NEET through social interaction and support to the young person offered by a peer from the same or similar cohort (i.e. a student at the educational/training setting, or a young person who has experience of barriers to educational engagement). *Peer-to-peer learning and support* aims to address drop-out at risk factors through peer support to young people's learning, by providing them with a positive role model and the confidence, the resources, and the skills needed to reach their potentials and in response to their support needs.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

Learning from,- and interacting with,- peers is an effective strategy for both learning and support. Underpinning the strategy is an objective to facilitate a collaborative and inclusive peer-to-peer culture where learners see themselves as key stakeholders in the learning community. Peer learning and support is a strategy that should motivate both peer and mentor through assuming the responsibility and benefits that accompany both supporting,- and being supported by,- peers. Peer learning occurs when students learn collaboratively from each other. Peer-learning and 'collaborative learning' are sometimes used interchangeably, while other definitions see collaborative learning as where learners are equal discussants in a learning activity, in contrast to peer-learning which is where one learner leads another. Both approaches can be seen to be a useful strategy to tackle the issue of bullying and social exclusion, which was one of the key risk factors to Early Leaving raised by young people in the Orienta4YEL research that took place in the South West of England. The value of peer mentoring and support is based on a number of assumptions:

a) Young people are best equipped to relate to other young people, and because the power dynamic is more egalitarian than with an adult.

b) Learning is consolidated through the opportunity to process, apply, query and reflect on the learning task among co-learners. Peers with a higher mastery of the learning task can better understand the process of achieving mastery (and associated pitfalls) hence may be able to assist those yet to achieve mastery. There is also a benefit to those with a higher mastery, in that their own learning is consolidated through assisting those with a lower mastery.

c) Collaborative discussion of both formal and informal educational issues introduces multiple perspectives, which enables new ways of understanding the issue, as well as the potential for greater appreciation for diversity in perspectives and opinions.

Defining 'peer'
Peer-to-peer learning and support can be understood as a kind of mentoring, but it is important to take into account that peers should ideally both be learners or participants in the same educational setting, each get something educationally beneficial out of the collaboration and be equals either in terms of achievement level or status as 'learners'. David Boud (2001) defines the 'peers' in peer-learning as;

"Generally, peers are other people in a similar situation to each other who do not have a role in that situation as teacher or expert practitioner. They may have considerable experience and expertise or they may have relatively little. They share the status as fellow learners and they are accepted as such. Most importantly, they do not have power over each other by virtue of their position or responsibilities" (p9).

Defining 'learning'
Learning in this context is understood in its broadest sense. This could mean in relation to (non/)formal education (i.e. programme of study) or work/employment related learning, i.e. in building work or soft skills (i.e. teamwork or collaborative skills), or it could involve informal learning; i.e. the skills and aptitudes that underpin education, work and more general participation in society (such as motivation and self-confidence).

Embedded in a culture that promotes collaborative learning and support,- not a competitive one.
A recurring concern of the educational system raised by young people, teachers, school leaders and non-formal learning providers across the Orienta4YEL research (UK) was that the performative pressures and national assessment indicators based on individual achievement and increasingly exam-based methods, contribute to a culture whereby young people feel in competition with each other and ranked by their individual performance according to their relative position within a cohort. Peer learning and support has the potential to challenge the individualism of the national educational system by shifting the focus from predefined and individual learning

ACTION 4. Peer to peer learning and support

outcomes to the *process* of learning, and of *unanticipated* and *collective* learning outcomes. This has the potential to motivate and alleviate the anxiety some learners may perceive towards a competitive educational environment. This shift away from pre-determined learning outcomes can make learning a more fun and spontaneous experience, which can also raise motivation. It is however, important to acknowledge that the effectiveness of peer learning strategies are dependent upon the culture created in the learning setting (see participatory culture in action 10), where collaborative achievements are celebrated and reciprocal, and peer-to-peer support and learning is recognised and promoted. Peer learning activities employed as a bolt-on or within a culture that emphasises learner competition according to pre-defined and standardised performance measures are unlikely to be effective.

Overall objective

As with adult mentoring, peer-to-peer learning and support works to tackle young people's risk of NEET by helping them to overcome issues affecting their learning and participation in work and society. The objective is to support young people to develop their confidence, build their understanding or knowledge, access resources, and to develop the skills needed to realise their potential in education, training, work and life.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY *(How can the strategy be achieved?):*

Any strategy involving collaboration of peers in a learning situation can be called 'peer learning'. According to this premise, indicative actions to be developed within the framework of peer to peer learning and support include:

1. **Peer tutoring or Peer mentoring programmes**. These are based on young people supporting each other; matching peer mentors with mentees in one-on-one relationships so they can provide guidance and support, serving as positive role models. With appropriate training, guidance and supervision (e.g. see Kidscape 2020) peer mentors are able to listen and support fellow pupils (mentees); helping them deal with the challenges they face that they may be struggling with. Given that the focus of peer mentoring is often upon social, emotional or wellbeing issues (as opposed to formal education objectives), the objective of the programme, identification of participants, and training of mentors requires considered and sensitive management. The success of the initiative is wholly dependent upon the effectiveness of mentors in this role and on the supervision/support structures provided for mentors.

2. **Proctor model.** The proctor model involves senior/experienced students tutoring junior/less experienced students (see Drew 2020). The senior student can be: a) an older student from a higher grade level; b) a more skilled student helping a less skilled student in the same cohort (in this instance, the students may be the same age level and in the same class).

3. **Discussion seminars.** The purpose of the discussion seminar is for peers to talk together in a group about the topic on which they have received teacher-led instruction. Discussion seminars tend to be unstructured and designed with the flexibility to enable students to jump in with thoughts or contributions when they feel they have something important to add. A teacher or discussion group facilitator may present the group of students with a stimulus question. The students use that stimulus as an entry point into a discussion on the topic at hand. For discussion seminars to be successful, teachers need to create a safe, comfortable space where students feel free to speak up and ask questions in front of their peers. Discussion seminars have the potential to be most effective where a young person (peer) is trained or supported to chair, lead or facilitate the discussion.

4. **Peer support groups.** Peer support groups are also known as private study groups (see Drew 2020). A peer study group can be beneficial for motivating students. When studying with peers, a student has people to bounce ideas off and provide support and explanations. These tend to take place outside of the teacher's presence and are often organized by peers themselves. Common peer study groups can take place during free time, after school or on weekends. Nevertheless, it is possible to promote peer support groups with the support of a tutor in spaces/places of the learning setting. For example, a designated space and time for young people to work together on formal or extra-curricular activities and projects offers a place for young people to work in a supportive environment out of institutional hours (*see Strategy 6. Support for young people's learning outside of formal curriculum*).

5. **Cooperative learning methods.** Cooperative learning methods organize small peer groups with the objective of establishing the ties and requirements necessary for cooperation (see UAB 2020). There are a number of methods for doing this. It is a matter of using the method, which better adapts to our needs, taking into account the characteristics of the group of students and the focus of the learning activity, in such a way that the factors favouring cooperation and learning are enhanced. Example of cooperative learning methods include:

  a. Student Team Learning, such as the Jigsaw method (see resources), where learners are split into groups (e.g. 6 numbered groups) where each is assigned a different piece of information needed to achieve the learning tasks. Groups are then reassembled with a learner from each of the six groups (e.g. groups 1,2,3,4,5,6) in order to work together to complete the task.

  b. Group-Investigation, or problem-posing investigation, where learners are supported to work together to formulate a question regarding real-world (and timely) social or educational issue, that often do not have an easy solution or a single answer.

  c. Cascading groups method, using either successively smaller, or successively larger, groups to discuss the learning activity. Successively smaller groups can help learners to specialise in a key area of the learning task, while in successively larger groups students' own ideas are supplemented with increasingly diverse number of perspectives.

  d. Reciprocal teaching method where learners take it in turns to support each others' learning. This involves employing 4 key skills; questioning (to gauge partner's knowledge); predicting (applying knowledge); summarising (identifying the learning outcomes); clarifying (identifying when/how to seek help).

6. **Buddy scheme:** Often used in school following transition, i.e. between school phases or where a child joins an educational setting outside of the normal admission point (see Better Buddies Framework 2020). A designated peer is assigned responsibility to induct, familiarise and be a contact point for a learner who is new to the educational setting. The concept has become common practice in schools for learners who join outside of normal admission points. The peer may be from the same cohort or an older learner depending on whether the key objective is to have a guidance role or whether it is to socially integrate the learner. The effectiveness of the role is highly dependent upon the aptitude and motivation of the 'buddy' and when effective can initiate a long-standing friendship or role model. When assigned on an ad-hoc role i.e. in the absence of careful selection/induction/ training, the effectiveness can back-fire as if the buddy is not approachable, inclusive and welcoming the role can further alienate the learner who is new to a setting. It is essential for the buddy to see themselves as an ambassador for the educational setting and appreciate the reciprocal value of the buddy-peer role. The buddy scheme can also be employed in response to an identified need e.g. for learners who are socially isolated.

7. **Innovative learning cells:** Based on the idea of small group learning (i.e 2-4 learners) innovative learning cells involve (normally self-selected) partnerships between peers of the same cohort. Normally self-organising and informally run, these partnerships aim to offer support and collaboration between peers that are evenly matched. The objective is two-fold, firstly support with formal learning activities, i.e. through working together on homework tasks, coursework, consolidating in-class learning; secondly to offer support in personal concerns through being an advocate, sounding board or through offering social and emotional support. For this reason partnerships are best organised through self-selected methods whereby learners have some level of prior relationship/friendship.

8. **Work-place mentoring.** This involves workplace collaborations normally in dyads. The objective could follow an apprenticeship model or a reciprocal arrangement to pair up to support one another. According to Drew (2020) this could involve:

  a) *Mentor-Mentee Relationship:* A more established member of the workplace team mentors a new member of the team. This method is akin to the situated learning approach, whereby an apprentice is slowly absorbed into the workplace by observing their peers go about their work.

  b) *Peer Support:* On a regular basis, peers will watch one another go about their work to provide *and* receive tips and help on how to do the tasks more effectively or efficiently.

9. **Vertical Tutoring.** In contrast to the more common 'horizontal tutoring' approach to pastoral support in schools, the vertical tutoring approach organises learners into 'communities' that span the full age range within the setting. This is described by key proponent Peter Barnard (2020) as 'a systems design based on improving learning relationships between staff, students and parents. Mixed age-groups work together for a very short time most days, usually tutor time or homeroom time. It requires…that we see the school as a complete system or learning community.' See TeacherToolkit 2016 for a first-hand account from a senior school leader of the benefits accrued from switching to a vertical tutoring model in secondary school pastoral provision.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

ACTION 4. Peer to peer learning and support

There are challenges associated with peer learning and support. For exemple, if learners are unequally invested in the peer learning activity, group working can be distracting and unfocused. Furthermore, this strategy is especially of value for audio or constructive learners who use dialogue to build understanding. Some learners may find it challeging, such as; visual or kinaesthetic learners; those who prefer to think or work individually, or who need quiet to focus. It is also important to consider that learners with sensory or specific learning needs, mental health diffiuclties, or who are more reserved and quieter learners, may find the discussion element to be challenging. It is therefore important for peers to opt in to any peer learning or support activity, and for clear rules of conduct and principles of collaboration to be clarified from the outside. This should also include training in key skills that are associated (e.g. active listening, respect, turn-taking, social boundaries).

- Related protective factors:
    - Health and well-being
    - Positive future vision for oneself and positive career choices
    - Positive self-perception linked to learning ability
- Relevant for personal challenges, social factors and compensatory factors in that working with, or learning from peers, could have an impact on self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Important for peers to have personal experience and/or understanding of the NEET barriers that young people face, as peer group testimonials (young people facing similar barriers who have succeeded in education/training) are particularly effective.
- A particularly important resource for young people whose mental, and emotional wellbeing is affected by schools/college work.

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☐ Prevention   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**
- ☐ Lack of motivation, interest and expectations
- ☐ Low self-esteem and self-perception
- ☐ Low educational achievements
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Irregular transitions

☐ **Social relations**
- ☐ Difficult relationship in school (with tutors, teachers, peers, etc.)
- ☐ Peer pressure/negative external influence
- ☐ Internet risks: social media pressure, gaming online, grooming vulnerability
- ☐ Peer group expectations: low peer group expectations for the future

☐ **Institutional factors**
- ☐ The school management of pupil behaviour
- ☐ The school or education environment
- ☐ Absenteeism / Exclusion of teaching lessons

STRATEGY LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**
☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**
☐ Educational system level (educational system actions)

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ Figure of adult tutor
- ☐ Figure of student-tutor or student-mentor
- ☐ Figure of student-mentee

ACTION 4. Peer to peer learning and support

- ☐ Initial training and continuous support
- ☐ Adequate and comfortable space
- ☐ Timetabling
- ☐ Materials / Tools
- ☐ Others (specify): …………………………………………….

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**   ☐ **Teachers/Trainers**   ☐ Families   ☐ Community
☐ ………………

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)**   ☐ Families
☐ Other professionals (internal or external to the institution): …………………………………

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the strategy is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year
☐ Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education (VET/Baccalaureate)
☐ Other (specify): ………………………………………………….

COST OF THE STRATEGY

☐ **Low**   ☐ Medium   ☐ High

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Barnard, P., *Vertical Tutoring*. Available online at: **https://www.verticaltutoring.org/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Boud, D., (2001). *Making the move to peer learning*. In Boud, D., Cohen, R. & Sampson, J. (Eds.) (2001). Peer Learning in Higher Education: Learning from and with each other. London: Routledge 1-20. Available online at: **https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309967818_Making_the_Move_to_Peer_Learning** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Behizadeh, N., (2014). *'Enacting problem-posing education through project-based learning'* The English Journal, 104(2):99-104. Available online at: **https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269708472_Enacting_problem-posing_education_through_project-based_learning** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

'Better Buddies Framework' (2019). Available online at: **https://www.betterbuddies.org.au/bb-parents/benefits-to-your-child.phps** [Accessed 01 July 2020]
Developed by the Australian Alannah and Madeline Foundation. This framework identifies 12 principals to inform an effective buddying scheme. Although developed for primary schools can be adapted for older children

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving.

Drew, C., (2020). *'Benefits and Challenges (Pros and Cons) of Peer-to-Peer Learning':* The Helpful Professor blog. Available online at: **https://helpfulprofessor.com/peer-learning/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Kidscape (2016). *Thrive Peer Mentoring programme*. Available online at: **https://www.wiltshirehealthyschools.org/partnership-projects/kidscape** [Accessed 01 July 2020]
Kidscape is an example of a training programme that has been well recieved and successfully implemented in schools in the South West of England. The impact of the intiative and information about it is available here.

ACTION 4. Peer to peer learning and support

Share to Know (2016). *Furthering peer-to-peer and collaborative learning methods*. Available online at:
https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Share-to-Know-summary-guide.pdf[Accessed 01 July 2020]

UAB (2016). *Cooperative learning methods*. Available online at:
http://grupsderecerca.uab.cat/grai/en/content/cooperative-learning-methods [Accessed 01 July 2020]

The Jigsaw Classroom. Available online at: **https://www.jigsaw.org/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]
> The Jigsaw Classroom is a cooperative learning technique that is particulary orientated to reducing racial conflict among school children, promotes better learning, improves student motivation, and increases enjoyment of the learning experience. There are 10 key steps that could be applied for múltiple learning objectives.

@TeacherToolkit (2016). *Vertical Tutoring Vertical Tutoring: The Life Of A Deputy Headteacher:* Available online at: **https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/2016/09/17/vertical-tutoring/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]
> In this popular and influential teacher blog, headteacher Ross Morrison McGill describes model of vertical tutoring introduced in his school and outlines the benefits.

ACTION 5. Family support and engagement

AIM

Family support and engagement plays a key role in preventing early leaving and supporting young people's engagement in education. The aims are to increase parents' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and to promote their active engagement in their child's education and personal development.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

The extent to which education is valued in the family is reflected in young people's educational aspirations. Lack of parental support in educational activities negatively affects educational achievement and is associated with absenteeism. If parents have negative experiences or perceptions of education and training, or lack trust in education and training, they are likely to communicate this to their children. As a result, young people do not engage positively and are more likely to drop out. It is important to inform parents about the education choices available for their children, and to give them tools to be able to support their children in making choices in their education.

When implementing this strategy, it is very important not to judge parents and to recognise that families act as a supportive pillar for young people. It is also important to show care for the parents. Services that demonstrate that the education provider cares about and understands the pressures on families (as opposed to blaming them) are key to getting families to engage in their child's learning. (Goodall, 2019)

To be effective, strategies developed within this framework should:
- show care to parent(s)
- aim for boundary-setting to be the same both at school and home
- ensure young people's achievements are shared between school and home
- promote home-visits or communication over young people welfare.

It is very important to provide clear guidance on how parents can support young people's learning because most parents want to support learning but do not know how.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY *(How can the strategy be achieved?):*

Actively engaging parents in their child's education and personal development can be a powerful determinant in reducing the risk of early leaving. Developing a family support service focuses on offering parenting practical and emotional support in order to give them the necessary knowledge, tools, guidance and support.

Recent research has clarified our understanding of more effective approaches to parental engagement. Different conceptions of what is meant by parental engagement mean work in this area can fall in different places on a continuum which runs from 'involvement' to 'engagement' (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014). Research suggests that the highest value of comes from a focus on parental-engagement in young people's *learning*. Rather than focusing on engaging parents to support the school, the focus should be on supporting the parents to support learning. (Goodall, 2018; University of Bath, 2019). For instance, it is not about working to increase attendance numbers at parents' evenings and getting parents in to school. Rather it should be about working to better understand the learning environment at home and supporting parents to support their young people.

Goodall's work with schools in the South West (Bath University, Parental Engagement Toolkit, 2019) pinpoints six key principles for schools looking to develop work in this area to maximise effectiveness:
1. It should be a **whole-school approach** with parental engagement at the heart of the school's approach
2. **Staff training** is necessary to ensure staff have skills and confidence to engage with parents.
3. Engage with other stakeholders – parents, community organisations – to pool resources and insights on meeting young people's learning needs
4. Formally consider **barriers to engagement** (time, transport, financial, space) and take practical steps to address them
5. Be clear how you will **evaluate** effectiveness over time to make sure the most productive approaches are maintained
6. Carefully consider language used and naming of sessions to communicate collaborative, supportive, partnership working and avoid the work being perceived as interventions for 'poor parenting'

Some specific activities which could support this action include:

ACTION 5. Family support and engagement

Parent-School Connection Sessions

Parents can be an important resource for each other and also for the school. The overall objective of parent-school connection sessions is to provide psychosocial and educational information and support to families. This gives the family, who are the nucleus in charge of guaranteeing young people's well-being, valuable tools. The focus is on providing opportunities for parents to learn new skills, build confidence, develop positive relationships with the school/ other parents and build self-confidence.

The classes can also help parents learn more about the life of the school and the curriculum. It should be a space where exchange of experiences and collective reflection are used to develop together strategies which contribute to the integral development of the young people. Recent research has highlighted the importance of making space for educators and parents to understand better each-other's perspectives in order to work together for the best interests of the child (Van Laere, Van Houtte and Vandenbroeck, 2018)

In addition, building familiarity and positive relationships with staff can nurture parents' confidence in approaching staff with issues, in initiating conversations with their youngsters about their day and learning, and in seeking resources to support their child's learning.

Activities could include:
- Organising workshops, talks, discussions and training events for families based on their interests, concerns, age of children, etc.
- Creating designated spaces for parents and families to promote their participation in formal and/or informal activities. For instance:
  - inviting parents to share their expertise in schools by giving talks about their job, hobby or experiences as part of a guidance activity
  - holding coffee mornings/afternoons in schools for parents.
  - designating a 'parent's room' with space for them to comfortably meet staff and each other, with useful resources and displays available

Family support worker. Promoting school-family partnerships that are built on trust and mutual respect can help identify families with high levels of need. Specific outreach measures can then be deployed to support them. There may be a need for an outreach strategy to individual families facing complex challenges; or it can be useful to designate a specific **key school worker** with a concrete role to engage with parents. The challenging and varied role of a family support worker is ideal for anyone hoping to make a positive impact on the lives of young people and families.

The family support worker should be very familiar with the local community and the barriers that young people and families face to learning. They should also have familiarity of the key groups affected. For instance, within the framework of this project, and according to one of the risk factors that has been identified (Roma Traveller families), one example of family support worker could be a person from the Roma Traveller community who can work together educational staff.

A key role for the family support worker is an understanding of 'alternative learning provision' available locally to identify which providers or types of provision are most appropriate for the young person. A key effective strategy for this role is to facilitate transitional and alternative learning arrangements through providing 'a warm handover' and 'travel training' (see action xx).

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)***:**

- ☐ Families
- ☐ Designated Staff - family support worker
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Adequate and comfortable space
- ☐ Timetabling
- ☐ Parental Engagement Toolkit (see additional resources)

ACTION 5. Family support and engagement

☐ Others (specify): ………………………………………….

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ▪ Related protective factors:
  - Supportive family environment
  - Health and well-being
  - Positive future vision for oneself and positive career choices
  - Positive self-perception linked to learning ability
- ▪ See *Action 7. Establishing links with the wider community*

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☐ **Prevention**   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**

- ☐ Lack of motivation, interest and expectations
- ☐ Low self-esteem and self-perception
- ☐ Low educational achievements
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Irregular transitions

☐ **Family circumstances**

- ☐ Parental values: low family aspirations, parental expectations for young people
- ☐ Low family support: lack of attention, educational support and affection
- ☐ Low parental educational achievement and negative parental experiences of education which may result in parental distrust of school or authorities
- ☐ Low socio-economic level/economic problems: living in an underprivileged context, dependence on government subsidies. In some cases, is related with having to support their family

☐ **Institutional factors**

- ☐ Lack of professional/personal/academic guidance
- ☐ Lack of trust and support of the institution

STRATEGY LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**

☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**

☐ Educational system level (educational system actions)

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ **Families**   ☐ Community

☐ ………………

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)**   ☐ **Families**

☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution):** …………………………………

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the strategy is going to be implemented)*

☐ At the beginning/welcoming   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year

☐ **Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education (VET/Baccalaureate)**

ACTION 5. Family support and engagement

COST OF THE STRATEGY

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. *VET toolkit for tackling early leaving*, **Supportive family environment.** Available online at: **https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/protective-factors/supportive-family-environment** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Goodall, J., (2020). *Engaging Parents.* . Available online at: **https://learningfoundation.org.uk/5680-2/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Goodall, J., (2019). *Parental engagement and deficit discourses: absolving the system and solving parents*, **Educational Review,** DOI: 10.1080/00131911.2018.1559801

Goodall, J., (2018). *A toolkit for parental engagement: from project to process,* **S**chool Leadership and Management, 38:L 2, 222-238

Goodall, J and Montgomery, C (2014) *Parental Involvement to parental engagement: a continuum*, Educational Review, 66:4, 399-410

Healthy Schools Wiltshire (2020). *Supporting schools to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people, Triple-P Positive Parenting Programme*. Available online at: https://www.wiltshirehealthyschools.org/core-themes/whole-school-approach/working-with-parents/parenting-programmes/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Somerset Children and Young People Health and Well-Being. *Supporting Parents – Parent and Family Support Advisors*, Available online at: **https://www.cypsomersethealth.org/?page=supporting_parents_-_primary_pfsa** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

University of Bath (2019). *Engaging Parents Toolkit*

Van Laere, K., Van Houtte, M. and Vandenbroeck, M., (2018). *Would it really matter? The democratic and caring deficit in 'parental involvement.'* European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 26:2, 187-200

ACTION 6. Support for young people's learning outside of the formal curriculum

AIM

To provide support for young people's 'non-formal' or 'informal' learning outside of the formal school curriculum.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

This action focuses on the non-academic aspects of children's learning and development, such as working on 'soft' skills (ie., interpersonal skills or educational values). To support this type of learning outside of the formal curriculum, young people require 'non-formal' and 'informal' educational experiences. The difference between 'formal', 'non-formal', and 'informal' learning is as follows:

- Formal education is characterised by having learning objectives that are assessed, and spread out hierarchically (for instance, in school you progress from Year 3 to Year 4).
- Non-formal education overlaps with formal education in having learning objectives, however, it is not necessarily assessed and the learning is rarely scaffolded in a rigorous hierarchical structure (unlike school). After school clubs or charity-programmes are examples of non-formal education.
- Informal education has no pre-defined learning objectives, assessment, or hierarchical organisation to it. It refers to learning which occurs spontaneously. For instance, a young person may learn how to cook because their parents happen to enjoy cooking.

Research over the past decade has generally coincided in highlighting how Western 'formal' education (ie, schooling) has been driven by governments to focus on the curriculum, rather than on the person as a whole. The impact of this on young people and learners is significant given it reduces the breadth and complexity of what it *means* to be a person to a one-dimensional metric: academic achievement. In other words, a 'good' person is someone who does well academically in a series of school-based subjects. Educationalists have argued how limiting and harmful this 'simplification' of personhood is, and have highlighted how 'non-formal' and 'informal' educational opportunities are crucial to develop well-rounded individuals.

Non-formal and informal learning are overlapping concepts which frequently bleed into one another, which is why some researchers use both terms interchangeably. It is important to remember that these three forms of education are not necessarily 'tied' to a physical space; it is possible to have all three types of learning occuring in the same physical space. Whilst schools are generrly associated with 'formal' learning, there are aspects which are 'non-formal' (for instance, teachers providing support classes during break times) and others which are 'informal' (such as young people learning from peers or teachers during lunch times). Exposing young learners to a range of 'non-formal' and 'informal' learning opportunities is likely to increase the range of soft skills they develop. This is why involving young people within their local community can be so valuable. It expands their horizons from a soft-skills perspective by allowing them to interact with a broader range of people, across more settings, learning as they go. Of course, this is not necessarily a suitable approach for all learners, and in some cases more limited community engagement may be preferrable.

To support and complement young people's engagement with formal education (be it school, college, or vocational training), it is fundamental to have opportunities to develop their personalities – an aspect many formal curriculums do not necessarily prioritise. These 'soft' skills, such as interpersonal skills, values, creativity, or empathy are generally more present in 'non-formal' and 'informal' learning. Research suggests there are multiple reasons for this. Firstly, formal education has become heavily associated to adhering to a strict curriculum of content which then has to be assessed – there is limited wiggle room for anything which deviates from this remit. Secondly, interpersonal relationships in formal education settings are generally perceived as more hierarchical, whereby the distance between the 'teacher' and the 'student' is significant. Contrarily, 'non-formal' and 'informal' learning is usually more flexible (meaning it can be tailored more to young people, and can focus on both content and 'soft' skills). Equally, these two forms of education generally feature relationships which are less hierarchical, allowing 'teachers' and 'students' to be closer. In turn, this increases the chances of trusting relationships to flourish, which research suggests are important when developing soft skills.

ACTION 6. Support for young people's learning outside of the formal curriculum

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY *(How can the strategy be achieved?):*

- At the heart of this action is the goal of supporting young learners' educational development in a holistic way. Moving beyond the curriculums provided in formal education settings means cooperating with a range of people and organisations that can all support a young person's educational pathway. Specifically, this requires:

- Identifying strengths and weaknesses of each formal, non-formal or informal education 'settings' or 'opportunities' (i.e., what combination of settings' strengths can a young person access, and how can the weaknesses of particular settings be offset by other ones?). Having said this, more is not necessarily better – accessing too many different settings and providers can be harmful and confusing for young people.

- Being aware of the opportunities and threats/barriers in each young person's context. This issue can partly be addressed by some of the ideas covered in Strategy 1 (Individualised Plans) – what are a young person's key needs, and what are the key barriers to fulfilling such needs?

- Establishing collective processes and actions. again, this echoes some of the points covered in Action 1 (Individualised Plans): young learners require input into how and what they learn outside the formal curriculum.

- Developing relationships and alliances between institutional and professionals: this is a natural outcome of guiding young people towards different 'non-formal' and 'informal' educational opportunities. Establishing trusting relationships between institutions is significant for young people to feel a robust holistic approach to helping them develop their educational pathway.

- All of the above is easily said, but hard to implement in practice. Nevertheless, the underpinning philosophy is to break away from individuality and educational fragmentation, and instead progress towards an idea of education that is more interconnected and rooted in 'community action'. This, in turn, aims to help young people understand what it *means* to be a person more holistically. Instead of viewing 'good' or 'bad' personhood in terms of whether they have achieved academic success on a narrow spectrum of subjects, 'non-formal' and 'informal' education can broaden their horizons. What follows are a series of small-scale suggestions (rooted in non-formal and informal education) that may help develop young learners' soft skills/educational selves. Findings from the first phase of our project indicate that these activities are generally more successful if they are made fun and enjoyable!

- Possible activities:
- *Develop relationships between schools and educational organisations that support young people's learning*. This requires coordination between educators in different settings who can work together to support young people's social and emotional development. The aim is to establish stable relationships which can be used as a resource by young people, leading to more of a 'community' approach towards education. (See The Power of Community-School Partnerships in Expanding Learning)
- *Homework club in school*. Homework clubs are spaces for young people to work on their academics in a supportive environment outside of school hours. These spaces can facilitate peer learning (see Strategy 4) by having young people teach and support each other. Additionally, homework clubs may feature resources that some young learners may lack, and tend to be particularly effective when supervised/facilitated by an adult who is willing to help young people problem solve, find information, identify resources… (See How to set up a Homework Club)
- *Extra-curricular activities (i.e., sport, music, arts, languages…)*. These activities take place outside of formal schooling hours and are characterised by being voluntary – young people can choose what to get involved with. According to the research, these non-formal education activities are opportunities to develop social skills, organisation and time management (i.e., how to use one's free time and learn routines), improving physical and mental health, learn values (such as cooperation and empathy), provide opportunities to learn a new skill or ability, and, most importantly, provide an opportunity for young people to have fun. Despite these benefits, research repeatedly stresses that participation in these activities does not automatically 'unlock' the benefits listed – the activities need to be delivered and tailored carefully to achieve positive

results. For example, there is no reason why playing football (which is fundamentally about kicking a ball) automatically results in being more empathic. Football sessions need to be structured and designed to *specifically* promote empathy. (See It's not what sport children play, but how they play it that matters).

- *Sessions developing learning techniques*. Formal curriculums usually focus on learning content, and less frequently explore how learners learn. Some young people will naturally be visual learners; others may have preference for auditory learning. Since everyone learns in different ways, these workshops can focus on helping young people develop an awareness of how *they* learn, and what they can do to 'translate' lessons or sessions into a medium that is suitable for them. Additionally, these workshops can be useful to develop skills that can enhance the learning process: time management, organisation, concentration and focus, and developing tools to help with learning.

- *Building resilience.* 'Non-formal' and 'informal' learning opportunities can dedicate time to helping young learners develop resilience. Given how prevalent the concept is nowadays, there are an almost infinite set of resources and routes to do this. We have identified two potential sources of practical exercises, developed by Samaritans (DEAL: Building resilience) and the Glasgow South Sector Youth Health Improvement Team (Resilience Toolkit). The activities in these toolkits can be adapted or modified according to your needs.

- *Gamification*. Gamification is a growing trend which consists in making learning more enjoyable by turning it into a 'game'. Whilst some people use videogames as part of the process (Minecraft is a popular example of this), videogames are not an essential part gamification. As long as the educational experience features 'game' elements (such as interesting narratives, challenges, achievements that can be unlocked, creative problem solving…), then gamification occurs. Given 'non-formal' and 'informal' education is less wedded to a formal curriculum, there is greater room to 'gamify' content. (See 12 Examples of Gamification in the Classroom and Gamify Your Classroom!)

- *Trips or journeys*. Trips or journeys to different locations can provide young people with novel educational experiences (i.e., museums, factories, gardens, stadiums, countryside, farms…). What matters here is not how glamorous or exotic the trip is; it is about introducing young people to environments they are unfamiliar with. In some cases, the trip *itself* may be more valuable than the destination, such as showing/supporting young people how to navigate beyond their postcode. One way of doing this is creating a treasure hunt-style game, where young people need to use public transport to reach certain spots on a map.

- *Peer mentoring or learning*. Peer learning (See Action 4 – Peer Learning and Support) is a powerful aspect of non-formal and informal education. Effective peer mentoring seems to operate in spaces where educators establish the 'structure' or 'foundations' of an educational space, with some boundaries and parameters, and then allow young people freedom to learn from each other. Public skate parks are good examples of peer learning (albeit, without an educator establishing a structure). Young people watch one another and interact to help each other (though there can be issues with bullying and discrimination too, which is why having an educator there to address these issues is important).

- *Supplementary schools*. Supplementary schools (see Black Families Education Support Group), are non-formal education opportunities where young people can come together for a few hours on a regular basis to participate in educational activities. For instance, the supplementary school mentioned meets from 11am-1pm on a Saturday and provides a diverse range of learning opportunities, such as "film, history and creatives arts projects, all rooted in a curriculum exploring Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic culture, heritage and identity".

- *Reducing hierarchical relationships between 'teachers' and 'students'*. The beauty of non-formal and informal education is that the relationships between whoever is doing the 'teaching' and the 'learning' can be a lot closer. This occurs for multiple reasons: young people generally *choose* to participate in non-formal or informal education activities; they rarely want to be in school. Additionally, mainstream school teachers frequently have large class sizes to handle, which makes it impossible to spend enough time with each young person. Comparatively, non-formal and informal education opportunities usually feature smaller cohorts, in turn, making more meaningful relationships possible. Whilst boundaries are still important in such relationships, closer relations generally lead to young people feeling 'cared for' and valued. This is essential to help them develop as learners because, at the end of the day, young people do not learn from people they do not like! Prominent care theorist Nel Noddings argues 3 aspects are required for 'care' to take place: 1) young people feeling someone is interested in their lives, 2) young people seeing someone taking action

to be involved in their lives/support them, and 3) young people feeling they can freely react to the care they are given (i.e., sometimes they'll be happy about the care received, sometimes they'll be unhappy. They should be able to express happiness and unhappiness without the quality of care received altering). [See Teaching Themes of Care].

- *Warm handovers*. Warm handovers entail an educator a young person trusts accompanying them to a new educational setting or provider. For instance, instead of sending a young person to go by themselves to a new activity (like art sessions), an educator who has a good relationship with the young person accompanies the young learner, introduces them to an educator in the new setting, and then leaves. This process of 'handing over' can help young people access a range of learning environments they may otherwise be too anxious to visit by themselves.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ **Figure of the tutor / counsellor**
- ☐ Adequate and comfortable space
- ☐ Timetabling
- ☐ Materials / Tools:
- ☐ Others (specify): **Collaboration with other organizations and professionals**

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ▪ For an educational 'community' approach to be successful, it is essential that the different institutions or organisations (schools, charities, alternative providers, VETs…) share a similar philosophy and vision. This will help establish consistency for the young learner, as well as facilitate relationships and coordination between settings.
- ▪ More is not necessarily better. As indicated previously in this action, whilst different providers can offer young people a range of experiences and strengths, too many can be overwhelming and confusing. Finding a balance for each young person is fundamental. Having said that, it is probably worth trying different experiences or activities until the young person 'finds' their passion. There are many activities young learners may never consider doing (perhaps because no-one in their immediate life circle participates in such activities), therefore, new experiences may lead to unlocking a passion they never would have known about. This, of course, comes with a pre-requisite of young people feeling sufficient self-confidence and self-esteem to try something new.

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☐ **Prevention**   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**
- ☐ Low self-esteem and self-perception
- ☐ Low educational achievements

☐ **Family circumstances**
- ☐ Low family support: lack of attention, educational support and affection

☐ **Social relations**
- ☐ Difficult relationship in school (with tutors, teachers, peers, etc.)
- ☐ Peer pressure/negative external influence

☐ **Institutional factors**
- ☐ Lack of professional/personal/academic guidance
- ☐ The school or education environment
- ☐ Lack of trust and support of the institution

☐ **Structural factors**
- ☐ Educational Administration (lack of support, school funding crisis, early identification mechanisms, etc.)

STRATEGY LEVEL

ACTION 6. Support for young people's learning outside of the formal curriculum

- ☑ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**
- ☐ Institutional level (institutional actions)
- ☐ Educational system level (educational system actions)

BENEFICIARIES

- ☑ **Young people**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ Families   ☑ **Community**
- ☐ ....

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

- ☑ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)   ☐ Families
- ☑ **Other professionals** (internal or external to the institution): **Organisations which provide social and educational support**

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the strategy is going to be implemented)*

- ☐ At the beginning/welcoming   ☑ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year
- ☐ Transition between ……………. and ………………………
- ☐ Other (specify): ……………………………………………………….

COST OF THE STRATEGY

- ☐ Low   ☑ **Medium**   ☐ **High**

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Batlle, I.C., (2017). *It's not what sport children play, but how they play it that matters.* The Conversation Available online at: **https://theconversation.com/its-not-what-sport-children-play-but-how-they-play-it-that-matters-72827** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Black Families Education Support Group (2020). *Supplementary School*. Available online at: **https://www.educationequals.org.uk/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Camilleri, V., Dingli, A., Montebello, M., (2015). *Gamify Your Classroom! Game based learning to alleviate Early School Leaving.* Available online at: **https://toolkit-gbl.com/downloads/guidebook** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Connelly, G. and Young, P.G., (2013). Expanding Minds and Opportunities: *The Power of Community-School Partnerships in Expanding Learning.* Available online at: **https://www.expandinglearning.org/sites/default/files/expandingminds_section_4_0.pdf#page=3** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Education Endowment Foundation (2020). *Developing Effective Learners*. Available online at: **https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/school-themes/developing-effective-learners/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Glasgow South Sector Youth Health Improvement Team. *Resilience Toolkit*. Available online at: **https://ed4health.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Resilience-Toolkit-Teens.pdf** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Noddings, N., (1995). *Teaching Themes of Care*. The Phi Delta Kappan,76:9, pp.675-679

ACTION 6. Support for young people's learning outside of the formal curriculum

Samaritans (2020). *DEAL: Building resilience*. Available online at: **https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/schools/deal/deal-resources/coping-strategies/deal-building-resilience/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Smith, A., (2019). *How to set up a Homework Club*. Available online at: **https://www.teachstarter.com/gb/blog/how-to-set-up-a-homework-club-2/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

TeachThought (2019). *12 Examples of gamification in the classroom*.Available online at: **https://www.teachthought.com/the-future-of-learning/12-examples-of-gamification-in-the-classroom/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 7. Establishing links within the local community

AIM

To establish links and improve relations between education/training settings and agents within the local community with the shared objective of young people's social and educational development and participation in society.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Educational settings include specialist and mainstream schools/colleges as well as other non-formal educational and social institutions, centres, charities and communities that promote social and educational inclusion, social justice and democratic values. Within the local community there are a variety of educational settings and agents that provide services, programmes and initiatives with these shared objectives. This action involves establishing links with,- and improving relations between,- educational settings and agents in the local community to work towards achieving the shared goal of young people's social and educational development and increasing their participation in society. This requires the commitment and active participation of a variety of agents (e.g. educators, case workers, mentors, youth workers, community citizens, employers, young people and their families etc), operating at different levels (e.g. leadership/administrative, on the ground/in the field), jointly taking responsibility and sharing collectively negotiated values is essential.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION *(How can the action be achieved?):*

A number of suggestions are proposed below in order to take this action forward.

- **Promoting shared responsibility and sharing collectively negotiated values**

  It is important that the educational settings and agents involved agree to share responsibility for this action. In addition, they need to develop, share and commit to collectively negotiated values (e.g. collaboration, commitment, solidarity, dialogue, etc.), linked to individual rights (privacy, freedom, etc.) and collective rights (respect for own and other cultural backgrounds, self-determination, etc.), regardless of origin (social, cultural, geographic, etc.), ideology (political, religious, etc.) or personal circumstances. Examples for achieving this include:

  - *An initial stakeholder dialogue meeting with for example; local employers, community leaders, service providers, local authority representatives, parents, young people and educators*: At the commencement of the school-community initiative a meeting or workshop to be hosted in a community space with a key focus to agree key objectives and values that underpin young people's engagement in the community.
  - *Contract of participation for young people and key community stakeholders involved in the initiatives*: As an outcome of the initial stakeholder meeting, a young person representative works with the action lead to formulate a concrete account of the above objectives and values that underpin engagement in the community. This would best be reviewed and signed by all stakeholders (see action 1).

- **Establishing and maintaining networks for collaboration in young peoples' community engagement**
  Findings from the Orienta4Yel project indicate that a significant barrier to addressing Early Leaving is a disjointed approach to tracking and supporting those at risk of early leaving or who are already NEET. Despite the range of services and initiatives provided, for example at schools, through the local authority and through charities, many of these operate in isolation and are time limited. This can lead to inefficient use of resources (including repetition/duplication) and a lack of coherence and continuity that may result in the key support needs of those at risk being only partially met or, at worst, to young people falling through the net. Working as part of a network can serve to enable, foster and increase reciprocal knowledge; report problematic situations and make suggestions for improvement; share and develop resources and represents the basis of a collaborative education- community endeavour.

  Planning for networking
  Thinking about how networks will be established, who they will be established between, how networks will be maintained and built upon, and what their purposes and functions will be is key. This will require a planning element, which may need to be reviewed at different time-points. Networks could be established between a range of educational settings including, for example service providers (e.g. in and outside the local authority), charities, schools and colleges, VET providers, and youth schemes. They should involve a

variety of agents including peers, families, educators, employers, case workers, mentors, and community citizens. Considerations for the planning of effective youth engagement in the community include:

- *Regular opportunities for face-to-face contact and collaboration* (i.e. being physically present, or in the case of COVID-19 restrictions, online). To be timetabled at a venue and time that is agreed in advance by stakeholders.
- *A dedicated online project site.* The importance of having a dedicated online presence is of paramount importance in a post Covid-19 context, where young people's engagement with the community has been drastically altered. Setting up a facebook group is a good way to do this (see the references section below for some resources on how to do this).
- *The identification of designated meeting spaces* (either in the educational setting, or in a community space) to encourage relationship-building (for example, between work experience providers, local employers and young people). In the case of spaces within the community this helps to generate young peoples' sense of belonging to and being valued citizens within the local community.
- *Activity specific networks* for developing activities related to sport, culture, music, art and other areas that aim to promote the social and educational integration of young people. Research has indicated young peoples' unequal access to extra-curricular activities, particularly sport and music according to family income, which denies young people the opportunity to build important skill for participation in society (Donnelly et al. 2019).

The participation of families

Networks are most effective when they involve collaboration with families as they play an important role in young peoples' engagement with education (*see Action 5. Family support and engagement*). Different educational settings can act as a source of support for families in terms of enabling them to encourage their children to engage with their education and personal development and to participate in community initiatives. They should therefore be involved with and participate in developing educational interventions. Ideas for the involvement of families include:

- *involvement of families in developing school support activities.* This initiative is about schools involving families in the development of complementary activities to support students' educational, social, emotional and cultural learning needs. This could include after school clubs and activities where families (and other community volunteers) can come together with young people and school staff and participate in sports, arts, crafts etc; involving families in homework clubs; parent-school connection sessions to provide psychosocial and educational information and support to families so that they can support young people's well-being (see Action 5 for further details).
  - o *learning activities with young people in the home*. This initiative recognises the importance of supporting parents/primary carers and families to engage with their children's education in the home. In the current Covid-19 context, many resources are being provided online for free by schools, the government, charities and other organisations to support families educating their children at home (see weblinks in the references section below). As well as providing resources, schools could help families to explore and navigate existing resources and build a community of support where resources and ideas can be tried and shared. An online platform and social media (e.g. through a facebook group) could be used, which would also enable families, educators and young people to communicate and discuss ideas, best practice, concerns and challenges. Learning activities and projects could be set up and engaged with, some of which could be aimed at the young person specifically and some of which could involve the families working together on a joint initiative involving young people for personal development. Post Covid-19, school staff and other educational stakeholders could organise visits to the family home in order to support them to engage in different learning activities.
  - o *organising joint seminars, workshops, talks, discussions, training events etc* between families, teachers, young people, and employers, based on common interests and concerns. This builds a sense of education as a life-long journey and positions community citizens and parents alongside young people as co-learners and learning communities.
  - o *publishing and disseminating newsletters* addressing regional and local issues and information addressed to the educational community. This helps to build young peoples' and their famílies

sense of líving within a community, and addresses the issue of exclusion of information on local issues. For groups with low levels of literacy (i.e. parents of children with English as an additional language (EAL) or from Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities) short pod-cast or audio newsletters could be an effective means of communicating local news.

- o *organising meetings with families* in a variety of mutually agreed spaces (e.g. the home, school, and community or elsewhere) to address educational issues of interest to families. This helps to build young people and their families' sense of having a stake within the community, while avoiding the power imbalance where certain spaces (i.e. the school) assume a status of authority.

Supporting engagement with employers

Establishing and promoting links with the local labour market can help young people to feel connected to employers and develop awareness of career opportunities and pathways to particular jobs. It is important that young people feel that opportunities are within their reach and that they are being encouraged and supported to explore and develop their skills and talents in relation to different opportunities. Young people need to feel a sense of worth and value and that they have something to offer so building relationships with employers is key. It is essential that young peoples' experiences with employers are positive and encouraging and not off-putting. Different educational stakeholders can support engagement with employers in a number of ways, including:

- *Bringing in employers to give talks, training events, workshops, informal discussions* with groups of young people and their families or on an individual basis. These could focus on how to develop young peoples' key skills, competencies and talents, including soft skills and other employability skills (e.g. through organising mock interviews and running CV workshops); boosting confidence and self-esteem; providing information about work opportunities in the region; raising awareness around the types of skills, aptitudes and experiences that employers are looking for and how young people can reflect on their strengths in relation to these as well as areas for development. It is important that educational stakeholders debrief the employers first to ensure they are aware of the different backgrounds the young people are coming from and approach discussions sensitively and positively in order to boost morale and aspirations.
- *Organising quality work placements and/or positive work experience opportunities*. It is important that these are mutually beneficial and appropriate for the young person and employer and that these are carefully planned and monitored, particularly if the young person is struggling with a variety of challenges that could make it difficult for them to fully engage. Support should be provided to both the employer and the young person and it may be necessary to provide mediation and support in various ways, including helping the employer to tailor the experience according to different young peoples' needs and abilities; helping the young person to prepare for the experience – for example, ensuring they are aware what they need to do and that they feel comfortable with any expectations and are able to face any challenges that come up; bringing the employer and young person and maybe their families together to reflect on progress and so on.
- *Bringing employers and young people together to showcase and celebrate successful work experiences.* Positive work experience opportunities can play a major role in motivating and inspiring young peoples' work goals. However, the experience can be variable and depends on how employers view the value. One strategy to promote the sharing of good practice between employers' work experience provision and to celebrate the achievement of young people in the role could be the co-ordination of an event whereby young people and their work line managers present to a community audience their experiences, highlighting in particular their gains, while also reflecting on how they dealt with any challenges encountered and how these contributed to their personal and careers development. This could be held in a community space either face-to-face or online.
- *Ensuring employers and educational stakeholders (including those driving any of these initiatives) are up-to-date with government policies and guidance regarding employability and transitioning into the work place*. This should include how the ideas in various key policies and reports (e.g. the DfE's (2017) careers strategy, the Careers and Enterprise Company's (CEC, 2017) report on transition skills (mock interviews and CV workshops) and the CEC's Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit for Schools (CEC) - see resources section for weblinks) meet the the eight Gatsby Benchmarks of good practice in schools' careers' guidance (see Action 8), which schools are expected to meet by the end of 2020. In line with this, the CEC (p.31) note that key activities schools are to provide include:

- An annual 'meaningful encounter' with an employer
- At least one experience of a workplace by age 16 and one further experience by age 18
- A meaningful encounter with providers of the full range of learning opportunities by age 16. 'A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has an opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace'
- At least two visits to universities for those interested in going on to study at Higher Education
- Guidance interviews with a careers' advisor

Developing a Context-Specific Educational Plan. The aim of this plan is to support young people in different areas of their lives (personal, social, academic and professional). This needs to involve an integrated and community response to young people's educational needs, especially for the most vulnerable groups, through coordinated educational action in a local context (i.e. in a particular neighbourhood, town or region). Examples of areas or themes that the plan could focus on include: formal education (e.g. continuity between educational stages) and non-formal education (e.g. through youth schemes); informal education and families (shared educational responsibility). Suggestions of what a context-specific educational plan might incorporate include:

- *Awareness-raising educational initiatives* (e.g. campaigns, conferences, exhibitions, training for families and professionals etc. – see resources below for relevant weblinks)
- *An educational ethos based on a participatory culture.* How to optimise and complement what is on offer through the school (e.g. adopting a 'balanced schooling' pedagogical approach based on participatory cultures (see action 10), collaborations between schools, families and employers
- Support with educational transitions (see action 11), counselling (see action 9) and mentoring (see action 4.)
- *Welcoming families* (e.g. providing information, guidance, monitoring etc. – see references for an example resource on welcoming families published by the Welsh government)
- *Complementary, enrichment and extra-curricular activities*. As mentioned above, this could involve allocating designated spaces (both in schools and online) where families, young people, employers and other community members can come together for a range of different activities. This could include after school clubs and activities where families (and other community volunteers) can come together with young people and school staff and participate in sports, arts, crafts etc; involving families in homework clubs; parent-school connection sessions to provide psychosocial and educational information and support to families so that they can support young people's well-being (see Action 5 for further details).
- *School initiatives:*
  - *educational innovations* (i.e. initiatives such as projects, activities, pedagogies, strategies, etc. that are put in place in order to address particular challenges and change and/or improve the quality of education. Such initiatives impact on students' motivation, interests and performance and are therefore important to tackling the risk of early leaving. Depending on the school and context, examples might include: flipped classrooms (these involve reversing traditional classroom-based learning (i.e. the delivery of instructional content) to a more learner-centred approach whereby the learning material is introduced before class, often through online content and other resources, for students to study at home. Classroom time is then used to deepen understanding of what has already been studied through discussion and activities facilitated by educators), collaborative learning, learning by projects, building family-school relationships, digital schools/e-learning, parent-school connection classes (see Action 5), reading buddies, flexible learning (see action 8), etc.
  - *supported study.* This could involve bringing in family members and community citizens to provide additional learning support to young people through extended learning activities and/or homework clubs either on an as and when needed basis or as part of a regular supported study programme.
  - *positive reinforcement in the classroom* (this behaviour management technique involves rewarding desired behaviours and achievements so that young people will feel

encouraged to continue to behave well and achieve. See references below for a resource on positive reinforcement)
- o *open school libraries* (i.e. keeping school libraries open out of school hours, including on weekends, so that young people and their families can access them)
- *Responding to social challenges and influencing social change* (e.g. learning about social justice, social inclusion, intercultural education and related topics such as solidarity, citizenship, health, violence prevention, racism and xenophobia etc.)
- *Professional development* (e.g. careers guidance, work experience, developing professional skills, developing one's professional identity, collaborations and initiatives with employers and companies etc.)
- *Educational and social projects, activities and initiatives that complement what young people already receive in school/college.* These projects could focus on different themes according to young peoples' needs, for example, on education for social inclusion, for health, for leisure, for social justice, for climate sustainability, for school-work transition and so on.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ Designated agents within and external to the school
- ☐ Adequate and comfortable spaces for collaboration
- ☐ Workload and timetabling allocation
- ☐ Databases that include contact details of potential collaborators
- ☐ Materials / Tools:
  - – Access to the required technology, internet, online platforms and social media to be used
- ☐ Others (specify):

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ▪ Those involved in implementing this action need to be sensitive to the social needs and demands of the community. Consideration must be given to the potential impact on socio-community development.
- ▪ Promoting equity and equal opportunities requires the commitment and involvement of local, political, civil and social authorities in the context of action.
- ▪ Despite many school's already having relationships within the local community, there remains a need to collaborate further to develop and share approaches, policies and actions.
- ▪ The proposed activities within this action require taking into consideration the extent to which different educational settings and agents are in a position to collaborate. In order to decide which initiatives to implement, it is important that each educational setting is aware of its individual circumstances including its strengths and areas that require. Each education setting should also consider which institutions it will be able to collaborate with in order to develop common and shared goals and to make the best use of the social and educational resources available to young people.

TYPE OF ACTION

☐ **Prevention**   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**
- Low educational achievements
- Disengagement

☐ **Family circumstances**
- Low family support: lack of attention, educational support and affection
- Low educational achievement of young person or parent that, in some cases, links with parental distrust of school or authorities

☐ **Social relations**
- Peer pressure/negative external influence

☐ **Institutional factors**

ACTION 7. Establishing links within the local community

- The school or education environment

☐ **Structural factors**
- Educational Administration (lack of support, school funding crisis, early identification mechanisms, etc.)

ACTION LEVEL

☐ Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)

☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**

☐ Educational system level (educational system actions)

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**　　☐ **Teachers**/Trainers　　☐ **Families**　　☐ **Community**

☐ ....

INVOLVED AGENTS *(Who is going to implement the action?)*

☐ **Tutor**　　☐ **Teaching staff**　　☐ **Other internal staff (e.g. SENCO)**　　☐ Families

☐ **Young people**　　☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution**): **Leadership team**

FORM of delivery *(how do we group?)*

☐ **Individually**　☐ **In pairs**　☐ **Small groups**　☐ **Class group**

☐ **According to needs of young person**

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the action is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**　☐ **During the academic year**　☐ **At the end of the academic year**

☐ Transition between ……………. and ………………………

☐ Other (specify): …………………………………………………………….

COST OF THE ACTION

☐ Low　　☐ **Medium**　　☐ High

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE ACTION

☐ Tutor　　☐ Teacher/Trainer　　☐ Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)　　☐ **Families**

☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution): Educational centre and organizational and social and educational agents of the context**

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

CEC *The Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit for Schools***.** Available online at:
https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/1041_gatsby_toolkit_for_schools_final.pdf
[Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEC (2017). *Transition Skills: Mock Interviews and CV workshops. What works*. Available online at:
https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/our-research/transition-skills-mock-interviews-and-cv-workshops-what-works [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. Protective Factor. *Supportive Family Environment*.
Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/protective-factors/supportive-family-environment [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Concept and Materials – involve parents, improve school*. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/resources/concept-and-materials-involve-parents-improve

ACTION 7. Establishing links within the local community

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Parents toolkit*. **Available online at:**
https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/resources/parents-toolkit [Accessed 01 July 2020]. This resource provides examples of how to increase parental participation in school life. The toolkit contains tools for educational teams to organise and facilitate discussions with parents.

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Capacity building for students, companies and vocational schools involved in apprenticeship-training*. Available online at:
https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/resources/qualifizierte-ausbildungsbegleitung-betrieb [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Childnet International (2018) *Online safety activities you can do at home*. Available online at:
https://www.childnet.com/resources/online-safety-activities-you-can-do-from-home [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Craig, H., (2020). 5 Activities for using Positive Reinforcement in the Classroom. Available online on the PostivePsychology.com website: https://positivepsychology.com/positive-reinforcement-classroom/

Department for Education (2017). *Careers strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents*. Available online at: https://www.thecdi.net/write/Careers_strategy_Dec_2017.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Department for Education (2020). *Online education resources for home learning during Covid-19.* Available online at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Donnelly, M., Lazetic, P., Sandoval-Hernández, A., Kameshwara, K. K., & Whewall, S. (2019). *An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-Curricular Activities, Soft Skills and Social Mobility*. Social Mobility Commission.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/extra-curricular-activities-soft-skills-and-social-mobility

Freya Yuki (2019). How the Flipped Classroom is Being Used in UK Schools. Available at:
https://freyayuki.tumblr.com/post/187534429122/flipped-classroom-learning-method-schools-education-uk

Goodall, J., (2018). *Engaging Parents*. Available online at: *Engaging Parents*. Learning Foundation. [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Lua, A. *The Complete Guide to Facebook Groups: How to Create a Group, Build a Community and Increase Your Organic Reach*. Buffer Marketing Library. Available online at: https://buffer.com/library/facebook-group/ [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Education and Training Foundation (2020). *Advanced Practitioner Toolkit – Professional Development Cards.* Available online at: **https://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/content/etf2826** [Accessed 01 July 2020]
A toolkit to develop the skills of teaching and learning coaches who, using a peer-to-peer coaching model, work with staff to improve specific aspects of their delivery. They can also provide models and approaches that will help structure whole organisation interventions.

Dialogue Matters (2020). *Online Meetings and Workshops.* Available online at:
https://dialoguematters.co.uk/online-meetings-workshops-and-guidance/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Wiltshire Council (2020). *Wiltshire Family and Community Learning.* Available online at:
http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/family-learning [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Friends, Families and Travellers (2020). *Services Directory (specialist services for Gypsies and Travellers around the country)* Available online at: https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/services-directory/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 7. Establishing links within the local community

STEM learning (2020) *Families: Activities to do at home*. Available online at: https://www.stem.org.uk/home-learning/family-activities [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Somerset Children and Young People Health and Well-Being. Parent and Carer Toolkit. *Parent and Family Support Advisors*. Somerset County Counci). Available online at:
https://www.cypsomersethealth.org/?page=supporting_parents_-_primary_pfsa [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Telford and Wrekin Council SEND local offer. *Moving Beyond Lockdown - Resources for Parents, Carers, Young People Schools, Settings & Professionals*. Available online at:
https://www.telfordsend.org.uk/info/1/home/99/resources_for_learning_and_wellbeing_for_all_children_including_those_with_send [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Welsh Government (2016). Family and community engagement toolkit for schools in Wales. FaCE the Challenege together: Theme 3 – Welcoming Families to engage with the school. Resources 1-9.
https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-12/theme-3-welcoming-families-to-engage-with-the-school-resources-1-9.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

West Suffolk College. *Free online resources and activities to support home-schooling*. Available online at:
https://www.wsc.ac.uk/parents/free-online-resources-home-schooling [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Wiltshire Council (2020) *Wiltshire Healthy Schools. Parenting Programmes. Triple-P. Positive Parenting Programme*.
Available online at: **https://www.wiltshirehealthyschools.org/core-themes/whole-school-approach/working-with-parents/parenting-programmes/** [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Wiltshire Museum Strategic Plan 2019-2024. *Inspiring people to explore the archeology, history and environment of Wiltshire:*
https://www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Strategic-Plan-2019-09-06-Circulation-to-Trustees.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Wiltshire Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum (2019). Available online at: **http://www.cfvsf.org/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]
CFVSF works across Wiltshire to bring together voluntary organisations offering services for children and families. The forum is funded by Wiltshire Council and works closely with the local authority to ensure there is a strong relationship and good partnership working between the public sector and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector)
ps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFGAH5X7Rfw [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 8. Learning pathway and careers guidance

AIM

1. To support young people to make informed choices around their education, training and career trajectories, according to their interests and abilities.
2. To provide flexible education and learning so that young people can adapt their learning pathway to suit their needs and interests in preparation for the labour market.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Careers guidance consists of structured developmental experiences and opportunities presented systematically through classroom and small group activities for students in order to prepare young people for entry into the labour market. These activities may directly support young people's career plans, for example through 'taster' days in training, further education, or work settings, as well as indirect forms of guidance that focus on the 'soft' skills such as communication skills, organisation and planning skills that help young people to become 'work ready'. 'Learning pathway' refers to the institutional and structural mechanisms that enable young people to steer their learning endeavours towards career goals, as well as the possibility for these pathways to accommodate change towards new or alternative work objectives. It is closely related to careers guidance and involves a range of activities to support individuals to make educational, training and occupational choices that match their abilities and strengths as well as their interests and learning preferences. This action is concerned with providing flexible education and learning to enable young people to have a range of education and training options so as not to close doors.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION *(How can the action be achieved?):*

Findings from the Orienta4Yel project identified a broad range of structural, institutional, social, familial and personal factors that lead to young people being at risk of early leaving. Examples relevant to this action include the rurality of where many young people live with poor transport links and a lack of local education, training and employment opportunities (structural); rigid and formal education routes with particular requirements and traditional pedagogies that are not appropriate or appealing to at risk young people (institutional); low educational and work aspirations and role models amongst family members and peers (familial/social); and a wide range of personal challenges such as Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), low confidence and low self-esteem. This action on learning pathways and careers guidance addresses many of the risk factors identified and is very important for those at risk of early leaving or who have already dropped out of the formal school system. The design and development of this action involves integrating some of the other actions (or aspects of those actions) that have been developed. Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 are particularly relevant and should be consulted for further details and in order to make decisions about which of these should be implemented as part of this action on learning pathway and careers guidance. In addition to these actions, further suggestions are provided in this section regarding how to develop this action.

Embedding the Eight Gatsby Benchmarks of Best Practice for Careers Development:
In order to effectively implement education, training and careers guidance activities, it is essential to ensure these are based on the eight Gatsby Benchmarks of best practice for careers development. These benchmarks are at the heart of the Department for Education's careers strategy (DfE, 2017) and are included in the 2018 Statuary Guidance for careers, which state that all schools should achieve the 8 benchmarks by 2020 (Complete Careers, 2018). The benchmarks were developed following national and international research, which led to a report on Good Career Guidance published in 2014 by the Gatsby Foundation (see references for the full report). The report makes 10 recommendations regarding how to implement the benchmarks and includes sub criteria for how the benchmarks can be achieved (Complete Careers, 2018).

Research suggests that many schools are still behind where they should be in terms meeting the benchmarks. For example, the Careers and Enterprise Company's (CEC) 'State of the Nation 2017' report (CEC, 2017) found that on average schools only meet 1.87 of the 8 benchmarks. The CEC has been actively involved in helping schools to work towards achieving the benchmarks and has introduced a free evaluation tool called 'Compass' for schools and sixth forms in England to see how they are performing against the benchmarks (see references for a link to the tool). The CEC has also developed a Careers Planning Tool called 'Tracker' to be used by schools after they have used Compass so that they can record their careers education provision and plan how to improve it (see references for a link to the tool). In order to aid understanding of the benchmarks and how they can be implemented, the CEC has designed a practical toolkit (called the Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit for Schools (GBTS) – see references for the weblink to the toolkit) to help schools and those involved in careers education understand what good practice looks like. The GBTS

ACTION 8. Learning pathway and careers guidance

outlines why each benchmark is important, offers practical guidance and tips on what schools can do to implement them and what employers can do to support them, and provides example resources that are updated annually. The eight Gatsby Benchmarks are listed and explained below with some ideas on how they can be implemented, according to the GBTS (CEC). Some additional ideas have also been incorporated into the summary below:

1. *A stable careers programme.* Every school should develop a stable, structured careers education and guidance programme that is explicitly supported by senior management. An appropriately trained person (e.g. a Careers Leader) should be responsible for the delivery of the programme. There should be a clear plan for how the careers programme will be implemented, which should be reviewed annually. Tools such as 'Compass' and 'Tracker' should be used to evaluate careers provision and make future plans for improvement. The programme should be clearly understood by key stakeholders (i.e. students, teachers, key family members, governors, employers) who should have opportunities to discuss expectations, contributions and benefits and regularly provide evaluative feedback (e.g. through questionnaires, surveys and focus groups). This feedback should inform future planning of the programme. The programme must be easily accessible (i.e. published on the school's website and promoted through the school's social media, newsletters etc). This benchmark underpins the other seven. For further tips on planning and delivering this benchmark, see the GBTS.

2. *Learning from career and labour market information*. Accurate and up-to-date information about education and training options and labour market opportunities (such as the Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan (SWLEP) 2016 and 2019 – see references for these) should be made available to all students and their primary carers. This is important for raising aspirations, promoting social mobility and enabling young people to make effective choices and transitions. Information could be provided on: progression routes into the local labour market and the skills required for them; courses and qualifications; training and apprenticeships; job applications and interviews; working life; salaries and financial planning; alumni's successful transitions etc. An informed adviser should support them to make best use of the information, which may need to be adapted to meet the needs of different learners. It is suggested that young people are taught how to find and process information from year 7 onwards and that by the age of 14, all students should have accessed and used career and labour market information to inform their learning pathway and careers decisions. Other initiatives to work towards this benchmark include enabling young people to gain first-hand information through encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces with classroom-based follow-up activities; the production and distribution to schools and other educational stakeholders of local labour market information by Local Enterprise Partnerships (which schools can actively promote via their websites, through parents evenings etc); and schools tracking the destination of their alumni and using this information to inform the school's careers programme (i.e. benchmark 1). For further tips on planning and delivery of this benchmark, see the GBTS.

3. *Addressing the needs of each pupil*. Students need to be given opportunities for learning pathway and careers guidance that are tailored to their needs, which may vary at different stages such as at key transition points. The advice and support offered should enable students to challenge any stereotypical thinking and raise their aspirations. It is important that schools gather enough information about each student's knowledge, skills and career needs so that they can support them to overcome any barriers to progression and work towards achieving their learning goals and developing needed skills. Vulnerable students, particularly those at risk of NEET or with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), should be identified and monitored as they may need additional or more tailored support through for example mentoring (see Action 2). Schools should systematically keep records of the individual advice and support provided to each student as well as of ensuing agreed decisions. These records should be accessible by all students to help them advance their study and career plans with support from relevant school staff and primary carers. Schools should also collect accurate and up-to-date data on each student's education, training or employment destinations for at least three years after they leave school. Where possible, and in line with ethical procedures such as the Data Protection Act, this information should be shared with current students to support the development of their plans and enable them to give feedback on the careers programme they are involved in. It might also be possible for students to hear from alumni who have made good progress with their learning pathway and careers plans. For further tips on planning and delivery of this benchmark, see the GBTS.

ACTION 8. Learning pathway and careers guidance

4. *Linking curriculum learning to careers*. All teachers should link curriculum learning to careers in order to enable students to develop their career learning alongside their subject learning, and enhance their personal and social development. An effective way to do this would be for subject teachers to highlight the relevance of their subjects for a wide range of future career paths. In addition, all subject teachers should emphasise the usefulness of English and maths skills for a range of learning pathways and careers. Key ways of working towards this benchmark includes: providing career learning as a subject in its own right (e.g. through careers education or PSHE); incorporating career learning within other subjects, which should be audited, tracked and supported; organising career learning through extra-curricular activities (i.e. enrichment activities strongly connected to the formal curriculum). For further tips on planning and delivery of this benchmark, see the GBTS.

5. *Encounters with employers and employees*. Schools should form links with employers and build in opportunities for all students to learn from employers about work, employment and skills that are valued in the workplace. This could include involving community Mentors who are in prominent positions within the local regional community; i.e. local employers and town planners. Local business people are ideally positioned to offer insights and advice related to work opportunities in the region as well as the types of skills, aptitudes and experiences that employers require. Initiatives could include mentoring, careers talks, working on CV writing skills and practicing mock interviews, developing 'soft-skills' such as time management and the structuring of routines, and workplace visits. It is suggested that students should participate in at least one 'meaningful encounter' with an employer every year between Years 7-13. A meaningful encounter is defined by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation as 'one in which a student has an opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace' (CEC, p.31). Schools could work with the regional Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to make sure careers plans are aligned to the strategic economic plan of the region. For further tips on planning and delivery of this benchmark, see the GBTS. See also Action 7 for suggestions on supporting engagement with employers.

6. *Experiences of workplaces*. All students should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience. This helps them to explore career opportunities and create networks. The GTS specifies that a workplace visit enables students to experience a work environment first-hand, observe work processes and talk to staff about their roles. The visit could also be useful to inform a topic, issue or problem related to a subject they are studying. Work shadows involve a student following an employer or employee at work for a day or longer to find out what they do. This enables students to learn about aspects of a particular job they would not have access to through a work experience placement. Work experience involves students doing real work tasks in a workplace. This could be arranged in different ways, for example a student might do one day a week over a few months (e.g. as part of supported internships or technical courses for college students) or a one or two-week block. It is suggested that by the age of 16, every student should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have. By the age of 18, every student should have had one further such experience. Experiences of workplaces should not be an 'add-on' but rather part of a programme of work-related encounters at different stages of a student's learning pathway. Students should be supported by relevant school staff and by their families to choose workplace experiences that fulfil their needs and interests. All students should be prepared well for these experiences and supported during these. Schools need to work closely with employers to ensure that students' experiences are positive – this is important for motivating and inspiring young peoples' work goals. After the work experience, students should have the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned. One strategy to celebrate the achievement of young people in the role could be the co-ordination of an event whereby young people and their work line managers present to a community audience their experiences and gains. This could be held in a community space and serve the dual purpose of building links with the local community and networking (see action 7). Employers should also let the school know their perspective of how the work experience went and note any particular achievements in order to promote the sharing of good practice. For further tips on planning and delivery of this benchmark, see the GBTS.

7. *Encounters with further and higher education*. Students should know about a wide range of post-compulsory school options, including academic and vocational routes through further and higher education institutions, apprenticeships and other work-based training providers. They should have meaningful encounters with such providers through, for example, off-site visits and direct interactions with people in key roles, such as lecturers and current young people on apprenticeships. It is suggested that by the age of 16, every pupil

should have had a meaningful encounter with a provider of the full range of learning opportunities. By the age of 18, all students who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and students. Such encounters are important for raising aspirations and enabling young people to make the right choices for themselves. It is particularly important that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are supported. Furthermore, schools should start initiatives related to this benchmark early i.e. before students are at a point when decisions need to be made. Research suggests that from Year 7 or earlier, initiatives to raise aspirations and build resilience are effective. Early initiatives could involve providing key information and guidance and developing a planned programme of on-site and off-site encounters. Close cooperation with families and/or others involved in supporting young people to think about their options and make decisions is also key. For further tips on planning and delivery of this benchmark, see the GBTS.

8. *Personal guidance*. Careers guidance activities should be an integrated part of the overall careers programme and should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made and timed to meet young peoples' individual needs. All students should have opportunities for guidance interviews and career conversations with a Careers Adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level (i.e. they hold a careers guidance qualification at Level six (degree level) or higher). Support and advice should be personalised to each student's needs and abilities. Best practice suggests that every student should have at least one careers interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18. For further tips on planning and delivery of this benchmark, see the GBTS.

Enabling flexible learning pathways:

In terms of providing opportunities for flexible education and learning, this involves *institutional actions* such as (and see CEDEFOP c. for further ideas and tips):

- *One-on-one or small group support, tutoring, mentoring or counselling* (see Actions 1 and 2). The focus of this support could include travel training (see point below on travel training for further details), communication skills, planning and decision-making skills, team-work skills, and career-management skills that enable young people to plan and manage their learning and work life paths (see CEDEFOP b. for further details). These initiatives should be supported through some of the Gatsby benchmarks outlined above.

- *Organisational measures such as smaller class groups, grouping students according to their education, training and careers interests, and collaborative learning* (see Action 4). This would enable students with relevant interests to come together in a classroom environment to provide each other with mutual support, through peer and collaborative learning, while being overseen by the tutor. In this way they would be guided towards working together in different ways to develop their learning and careers pathways. The focus could be on discussing key ideas and exchanging important information in relation to their interests and working on projects.

- *Peer-peer learning, mentoring and tutoring*. Peer learning occurs when students learn collaboratively from each other. Action 4 focuses provides further details on the importance of this and provides a range of suggested approaches and activities that can be implemented to enable peers to collaborate in a learning situation. This includes peer tutoring and mentoring; the Proctor model; discussion seminars; peer support groups; cooperative learning methods; a buddy scheme; innovative learning cells; and work-place mentoring (see Action 4 for details).

- *Support with homework:* findings from the Orienta4YEL study highlighted that some young people at risk of Early Leaving do not have the space, time or resources at home to complete homework or learning tasks. This points to the value of a regular space created within the educational settings in order to support young people with their learning activities, e.g. school's homework club. This would be best supported by an adult with the resources to work in small on one-to-one groups in sharing and building upon young peoples' ideas. One possible strategy is to bring in university students or alumni to help with subject specific areas. This would also serve the dual goals of familiarising young people with the learning pathways older peers have taken.

- *Parental involvement in building knowledge of learning pathways.* Parents and/or primary carers are key champions in supporting young peoples' learning pathways. One of the key findings from the orienta4YEL study is that some families who have worked intergenerationally within key industries in the region (i.e. agriculture) do not see the value of further/higher education and training routes in alternative vocations

areas. Sharing knowledge about regional (and national) industry opportunities is also important in broadening parents' aspirations as to the range of (local) opportunities for young people.

- *Promoting positive teacher-pupil relationships in sharing young peoples' work and education aspirations*. The education and labour market aspirations that young people start to develop as a result of employer/education/community engagement activities are fragile and need to be nurtured and encouraged. This points to the importance of sharing young peoples' aspirations with key teachers and senior leaders (with young peoples' consent) in order that they be encouraged and built on in making connections with school/community opportunities that arise and within topics/curricular covered in key subject areas.

- *Participation in extracurricular activities after/out of school and during the summer break to increase motivation*. This could involve allocating designated spaces (both in schools and online) where families, young people (i.e. current students and alumni), employers and other community members can come together for a range of different after school clubs and activities to support students' learning in a structured but informal way. This helps to increase young peoples' motivation, develop interests, and build important skills that will facilitate their integration into society and the workplace.

- *Travel Training* to help young people (particularly those with SEND) develop the confidence and skills to travel independently on public transport and walking routes in order to get to education or work providers, other key services, or for leisure. This is an important life skill and should focus on developing young peoples' confidence, personal as well as road safety, how to use timetables and buy tickets, and how to deal with things that might go wrong (e.g. if a bus is late). This can be approached in a variety of ways including working one-to-one with young people, developing a training plan that meets the young person's needs, and getting feedback on progress.

- *Ensure that VET pathways can lead to progression*. VET pathways should enable learners to pursue further lifelong learning opportunities including routes into higher education. There are far less applications to HE from young people from VET pathways due to a combination of factors explored through the Orienta4Yel project (i.e. structural, instititional, personal, social, familial factors). Disadvantaged students face institutional barriers such as academic boundaries in terms of grades, subjects studied and requirements to get into a HEI. In addition, they tend to have a high degree of self-limitation, which affects their perceptions of what is available in terms of choice of institutions and subjects. As such, it is important that VET and HE providers develop links and collaborate early to ensure that existing and new VET pathways will enable students to move into HE and also to provide students with key information about different options and organise encounters (see Gatsby Benchmark 7).

Structural (alongside institutional) actions, such as

- *Second chance measures to return to education*. Second chance education opportunities aim to re-engage early school leavers by offering them the option to return to education and potentially gain a qualification; develop post-school career plans; and access second chance vocational pathways. Second chance learning can take different forms (e.g. individualised or group learning), pedagogies (e.g. alternative ways of learning to tradional classroom-based education) and formats (e.g. delivery outside normal study hours, on a part-time or full-time basis, through face-to-face, blended, online or distance learning) and have different aims (e.g. support young people to return to formal education or VET, find employment, or gain a qualification). Such programmes are normally provided through government intervention and can encompass a broad range of initiatives. Filmer and Fox (2014: 81-82) categorise second chance measures into three key programmes: 1) **Accelerated learning programmes**, which enable young people to catch up on missed education within a short period of time through intensive, flexible methods and schedules so that they can complete the curriculum quickly and re-enter the formal schooling system; 2) **Nonformal education programmes**, which focus primarily on essential learning needs and skills (e.g. literacy and numeracy) and can take place over a period of months or years, either full-time or part-time, depending on the young person's needs. This can take place either within schools or learning centres or via online learning; 3) **Equivalency degree programmes**, which are nonformal education programmes that enable young people to gain qualifications equivalent to those that would normally be gained through formal education. They vary in terms of admission, age, place, and pace, and can be delivered either face-to-face or via distance or online learning. CEDEFOP have developed an intervention approach on second chance measures (CEDEFOP a), which includes useful tips for policy-makers and practitioners involved in the design and delivery of second-chance programmes. These include: embedding second chance provision in the local community i.e.

through outreach and engagement work; creating an alternative learning experience and environment to that provided in mainstream education that is flexible and friendly; engaging and developing the 'whole person' that includes focusing on the physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing of the young person through provision of multifaceted support (e.g. counselling and mentoring) from a range of professionals (e.g. social and healthcare workers); assessment of prior learning and of young peoples' current knowledge, skills, interests and support needs in order to work with them towards their learning goals and overall pathway; providing opportunities for young people to gain qualifications to enable them either to return to mainstream education, develop key skills, or move towards employment; offering flexible provision such as alternative, achieveable, part-time attendance patterns and the avoidance of sanctions of non-attendance; promoting positive attitudes towards second chance measures amongst young people, their families, professionals and employers and a positive image of second chance education as a credible pathway towards educational achievement or employment; using appropriate teaching and learning methods, which could involve a hands-on approach to enable young people to see how their learning can be applied in practice; including motivational activities and social and emotional support so that young people can gain confidence and develop important soft skills. For further details and links to other useful resources, follow the CEDEFOP

a. link in the references.

- *Offer flexibility in programme delivery and learning arrangements*. This should be tailored to young peoples' needs and preferences and could take different forms (e.g. individualised or group learning), pedagogies (e.g. alternative ways of learning to tradional classroom-based education) and formats (e.g. delivery outside normal study hours, on a part-time or full-time basis, through face-to-face, blended, online or distance learning).

- *Modular learning and assessment*. This involves educational content being divided into a number of units or modules, each of which is examined separately (as opposed to the traditional linear assessment where students are examined at the end of a course). Modular assessment can occur at different times of the year (e.g. January, March, June) and any or all modules can be retaken if the student so chooses, with the highest mark for each module being retained. The advantages include curriculum flexibility in terms of the number and timing of modular examinations, short-term assessment goals, regular feedback, re-sit opportunities and increasing motivation for students (Rodeiro, C. L, V. and Nádas, R.).

- *Raising the status of Vocational Training routes*. For example, introducing and promoting the new Technical T-levels, which are coming in September 2020. T levels are two-year, technical study programmes, designed with employers to give young people the technical knowledge, skills and experiences needed for employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship. As part of this route, students are offered the opportunity to gain work experience through an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). They are equivalent to three A' levels and on a par with Apprenticeship degrees (see DfE, 2020).

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)***:**

☐ Internal agents (e.g. tutor, careers guidance counsellor etc.)
☐ External agents
☐ Timetabling
☐ Materials / Tools:
  – Interview guide examples and CV templates
  – SMART goals or other target setting worksheets
  – Templates and worksheets such as mind maps; self-assessment and self-perception tools
  – Diary to record notes, reflections, targets, progress, developments
☐ Others (specify): …………………………………………….

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Related protective factors identified from the Orienta4Yel project:
  - Developing a positive future vision for oneself that includes positive career choices
  - Individualised support when needed
  - Non-rigid learning environment; flexibility
  - Building trust
  - Building self confidence and self-esteem
  - Building students sense of a positive learner identity

ACTION 8. Learning pathway and careers guidance

- Young person autonomy and ownership; being trusted, supporting young person towards independence, student voice platform, too dependent upon school support
- Non-teaching pastoral support
- Raising aspirations
- Integrate child into the community
- Students perceptions that they are supported

TYPE OF ACTION

☐ **Prevention**   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**

- ☐ Low motivation, interest and expectations
- ☐ Low educational achievements
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Irregular transitions

☐ **Institutional factors**

- ☐ Lack of professional/personal/academic guidance
- ☐ Lack of school identification mechanisms for NEET risk
- ☐ Absenteeism / Exclusion of teaching lessons
- ☐ Institutional rigidity: school rules, strict daily routines, schools not inclusive

☐ **Structural factors**

- ☐ Educational policy / Educational system/structure
- ☐ Educational Administration (lack of support, school funding crisis, early identification mechanisms, etc.)
- ☐ Transition from school to VET / Access to options pathways for GCSE: the difficulties for accessing to programmes that become an alternative to GCSE before the age of 16

ACTION LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**

☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**

☐ **Educational system level (educational system actions)**

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ Families   ☐ **Community**

☐ ………………

INVOLVED AGENTS *(Who is going to implement the action?)*

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ **Teaching staff**   ☐ **Other internal staff (e.g. SENCO)**   ☐ Families

☐ **Young people**   ☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution**): **Leadership team**

FORM of delivery *(how do we group?)*

☐ **Individually**   ☐ **In pairs**   ☐ **Small groups**   ☐ **Class group**

☐ **According to needs of young person**

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the action is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ **At the end of the academic year**

☐ **Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education (VET/Baccalaureate)**

☐ Other (specify): ………………………………………………….

ACTION 8. Learning pathway and careers guidance

COST OF THE ACTION

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ **High**

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE ACTION

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ **Teacher**/Trainer   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)**   ☐ Families

☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution): Educational Administration**.

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Career Pilot. *Careers information and tools for 11-19 year olds, all in one place.* Available online at: https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/ [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEC.*The Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit for Schools*. Available online at: https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/1041_gatsby_toolkit_for_schools_final.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEC (2017). *State of the Nation 2017. Careers and enterprise provision in England's schools*. Available online at: https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/state_of_the_nation_report_digital_updated01.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEC (2017). *Transition Skills: Mock Interviews and CV workshops. What works*. Available online at: https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/our-research/transition-skills-mock-interviews-and-cv-workshops-what-works [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEC (2020). *Gatsby Benchmarks: What are Gatsby Benchmarks?* Available online at: https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/gatsby-benchmarks [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEC. *Compass Careers Benchmark Tool.* Available online at: https://compass.careersandenterprise.co.uk/info [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEC. *Tracker Careers Planning Tool*. Available online at: https://tracker.careersandenterprise.co.uk/info [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEDEFOP a. **Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. Intervention approach.** *Second chance measures*. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/second-chance-measures [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEDEFOP b. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. Intervention approach. *Guidance: Supporting youth to manage their careers***.** Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/guidance-supporting-youth-manage-their-careers [Accessed 01 July 2020].

CEDEFOP c. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Flexible education and training*. Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/flexible-education-and-training-systems [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Complete Careers (2018). *The Gatsby Benchmarks – A Summary by Complete Careers*. Available online at: https://complete-careers.com/gatsby-benchmarks/ [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Department for Education (2017). *Careers strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents*. Available online at: https://www.thecdi.net/write/Careers_strategy_Dec_2017.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020].

ACTION 8. Learning pathway and careers guidance

Department for Education (2020). *Guidance: Introduction of T-Levels*. Available online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Filmer, D. and Fox, L., (2014). *Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Africa Development Series. Washington, DC: World Bank. Available online at: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/16608/9781464801075.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Gatsby Foundation (2014). *Good Careers Guidance.* Available online at: http://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/gatsby-sir-john-holman-good-career-guidance-2014.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020].

King, S. L., (2018). *Doing great on Gatsby. What schools need to do to meet the 8 career benchmarks*. Avaible online at: https://schoolsweek.co.uk/doing-great-on-gatsby-what-schools-need-to-do-to-meet-the-eight-careers-benchmarks/ [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Rodeiro, C. L, V. and Nádas, R. E., *Effects of Modularlisation*. Cambridge Assessment. Available online at: https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/Images/109794-effects-of-modularisation.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020].

SWLEP (2016). *Strategic Economic Plan.* Available online at: https://swlep.co.uk/docs/default-source/strategy/economic-priorities/strategic-economic-plan---january-2016.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020].

SWLEP (2019). *Annual Business Plan 2019/2020*. Available online at: https://swlep.co.uk/docs/default-source/strategy/swlep-annual-business-plan-2019-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=3b13b0d3_2 [Accessed 01 July 2020].

Wiltshire Council Travel. *Travel.* Available online at: http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/local-offer-travel [Accessed 01 July 2020]. This website provides information on Travel Training post 16.

ACTION 9. Responsive crisis resolution for young people

AIM

To tackle early leaving by developing responsive services which focus on resolving or responding to the causes and consequences of young people's disruptive behaviours. Responsive services offer individualised support for young people's emotional wellbeing and reduce suspensions and exclusions.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

The importance of offering individualised support when it is needed was the most prominent of all support strategies in the Orienta4YEL findings. Developing responsive crisis resolution is a key strand in building an inclusive school culture (ref this other strategy) and an important prevention measures to reduce suspensions and exclusions.

This strategy involves offering short-term counselling interventions to:
- Resolve immediate conflicts/problems
- Respond to crisis events
- Intervene in school-specific situations that disrupt learning

Staff, learners, parents/family and community members can initiate these responsive services.

Examples of the crisis to be resolved might typically be a conflict between learners or between a learner and staff members; a relationship breakdown; a bullying incident or a disruption of learning. Equally, it may be a family crisis or problem from learners' wider lives.

Within the context of individual educational settings, these interventions could include

1. Short-term counselling interventions for learners
2. Restorative interventions
3. Staff training in restorative approaches to promote a positive climate

Two connected and recurring observations in the research findings were the signficance of mental health issues as a risk factor to early leaving and the importance, therefore, of supporting young-people's emotional well-being. Providing short-term counselling interventions for students at risk of early leaving ensures they have access to support as and when they need it. Where behaviours disrupt learning, space and time to discuss this in more depth can allow analysis of issues underpinning the behaviour, enabling more informed responses to resolve them. A counselling intervention could be as short as a reflective discussion in which a conclusion or resolution is reached, or it may be a more extended period of scheduled sessions. They key thing is that it is focused on resolving a crisis and that it supports the learner to work towards that.

Developing responsive crisis resolution services also requires some fundamental shifts in the way behaviour and conflict are viewed and responded to across the organisation. The Orienta4YEL findings highlighted the very negative impact of practices such as asking students to work in a corridor on students at risk of EL. Developing responsive conflict and crisis resolution strategies with the wider staff is essential in reducing the exclusion of learners on a day-to-day basis.

Staff training in restorative approaches is therefore an important part of this strategy. Rather than simply punishing bad behaviour, restorative approaches to conflict involve address also involve reflecting on the needs of those invovled, what needs to be done to put things right and how to avoid the same thing happening again. They promote accountability and seek to repair harm caused in a situation. Ensuring staff's needs and emotions are discussed considered, as well as learner's needs and emotions, is vital for the approach to work effectively.

This approach to conflict resolution should be combined with measures to promote behavioural change and allow the student to continue academic instruction. This might include courses to support students to develop their emotional, social and communication skills. Procedures must link improved behaviour and return to the regular classroom and be clear for student and staff.

ACTION 9. Responsive crisis resolution for young people

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY *(How can the strategy be achieved?)*:

This strategy can be developed in a range of different ways. The ethos of this approach is well-reflected by work in restorative approaches. Restorative approaches in educational settings have grown from work in the youth justice system. Rather than being a set programme of actions to follow, it is rather a set of principles governing the way we interact with others; whether learners or colleagues. This section outlines the principles of a restorative approach and gives examples of how this might be applied. The resources section below contains many links to work and research in restorative approaches to guide the development of the actions.

What are Restorative Approaches?
Restorative approaches aim to prevent relationship-damaging situations from occurring and resolve them effectively if they do. Usually, the thing to be restored is relational, something *between* individuals or groups of people. For instance:

- Communication
- Empathy and understanding of the other's perspective
- Relationship or friendship
- Collaboration
- Respect

It can be something *within* an individual, such as:

- Feeling secure
- Self-respect
- Self-confidence
- Dignity

They may restore positive or functioning relationships by helping somebody understand the impact of their behaviour on others, or by making reparations for material loss, damage or hurt. For students at risk of EL, a sense of belonging to a community (e.g class, school, peer group or family) has often been badly damaged, so restoring this sense of connection is key.

A set of questions that can be used to guide a restorative response include:

- What has happened?
- What were you thinking and feeling?
- What do you think and how do you feel now?
- Who has been affected by this?
- What is needed to put things right?
- How can we make sure this doesn't happen again?

How Can Restorative Apporaches Be Used?
This can be applied in different forms of intervention. They might take the form of:

Informal restorative conversation
These conversations occur spontaneously, as the need arises, perhaps in a corridor or an availble room. Using the questions above as a guide, a member of staff supports the learner in responding to a crisis such as an argument with a staff member or peer, or walking out of room. Training staff who respond in these crisis situations and ensuring they are well- supported to use this approach, will help make this part of the school culture. Alternatively, having a central point where students in crisis go in the first instance in these situation, where this approach is well-established, may help resolve the conflicts and crises which occur day-to-day.

A restoration planning meeting and agreement.
Where more serious, or prolonged conflicts occur, or where initial, informal restorative approaches are insufficient or unable to happen, a more formal meeting can be used. They can be used to talk through what happened (using the questions above) and make a plan of action to put things right. This could be led by a tutor, support-worker,

mentor, counsellor, or designated member of staff who was not involved in the conflict. For learners who are known to be at risk of EL, or for whom disruption to learning has become more regular, scheduling these regularly could help with continuity.

Restorative meeting circle following an exclusion or suspension.
A meeting with all involved parties to reintegrate the learner back into the school or classroom community.

Restorative Family Conference:
All stakeholders come together with the individual to discuss (see questions above) Depending on the nature of the situation, a trained facilitator may be required.

Other Considerations
Tips to bear in mind in order to develop a responsive services strategy:

- Introduce early warning systems to identify at-risk students (e.g. low attendance, declining grades)
- Establish clear classroom behaviour and management guidelines (clear rules, rapport, flexible teaching style, authoritative managing style, establishment of positive learner-teacher relationships)
- Create a welcoming and inclusive learning environment (see *Strategy 12: Promoting quality inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements*)
    - Offering sports and/or cultural activities to help create a positive climate and a sense of belonging for all learners
    - Creating common spaces to promote diversity
    - Promoting the use of shared facilities and spaces to build relationships between teachers, trainers, learners and parents
    - Ensuring all learners have access to teachers, trainers and other professionals who can support their educational and personal development needs
    - Celebrating learner achievement
    - Ensuring anti-bullying / conflict resolution strategies are in place
    - Engaging staff and young people in the educational institution surveys and evaluations
- Develop alternative arrangements to suspension or expulsion from school (*see Strategy 8. Flexible education*):
    - Counselling and onsite support with multidisciplinary teams. (for example through the appointment of in school Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) currently being trialled in trailblazer regions in England see NHS 2019)
    - Short courses to promote social skill development, conflict resolution, and behavioural change. These can address specific topics such as discrimination, sexual harassment, alcohol/drug use, inappropriate language or other.
    - Parental involvement, including better communication between school and parents and coordinated approach to behaviour change.
    - Behaviour contracts that specify expected behaviour, consequences of misbehaviour and incentives for appropriate behaviours. These contracts should be negotiated with the student.
    - Behaviour monitoring which can involve the use of behaviour checklists for students, parents and teachers, and feedback sessions focusing on positive behaviour when it occurs.
    - Restitution, such as an oral or written apology or the participation in activities to clean and improve the school environment.
- Facilitate timely access to external therapeutic support (e.g. relate mid Wiltshire offer free counselling for 13-18 years across mid Wiltshire, see references)

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)***:**

- ☐ Designated staff (tutor, counsellor, teacher staff, etc.)
- ☐ Safe spaces for meetings
- ☐ Timetabling
- ☐ Staff training time
- ☐ Materials / Tools:

ACTION 9. Responsive crisis resolution for young people

– Guidance documents for restorative conversations and meetings
– Tracking mechanisms
– Contract or agreement for restorative outcomes

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Related protective factors:
    - Positive self-perception linked to learning ability
    - Education achievement and attendance
    - Inclusive environment
    - Positive relationships
    - Health and well-being
    - Supportive school and family environment

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☐ **Prevention**   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ **Compensation**

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**

☐ Low educational achievements
☐ Disengagement
☐ Irregular transitions

☐ **Social relations**

☐ Difficult relationship in school (with tutors, teachers, peers, etc.)

☐ **Institutional factors**

☐ The school management of pupil behaviour
☐ Lack of school identification mechanisms for NEET risk
☐ The school or education environment

STRATEGY LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**
☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**
☐ Educational system level (educational system actions)

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young people**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ Families   ☐ Community
☐ ....

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ **Teacher/Trainer**   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)**   ☐ **Families**
☐ Other professionals (internal or external to the institution): ………………………………………..

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the strategy is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ **At the end of the academic year**
☐ Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education (VET/Baccalaureate)
☐ Other (specify): …………………………………………….

COST OF THE STRATEGY

ACTION 9. Responsive crisis resolution for young people

☐ **Low**   ☐ Medium   ☐ High

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Flexible education and training.* Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/flexible-education-and-training-systems [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Counselling to address barriers to learning.* Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/da/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/counselling-address-barriers-learning [Accessed 01 July 2020]

CEDEFOP. Toolkits. VET toolkit for tackling early leaving. *Comprehensive support to tackle complex needs.* Available online at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/vet-toolkit-tackling-early-leaving/intervention-approaches/comprehensive-support-tackle-complex-needs [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Gloucestershire County Council (2020). *Restorative Practice in Gloucestershire*. Available online at: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/restorative-practice-in-gloucestershire/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Hackney Services for Schools (2020). *Restorative Approaches.* Available online at https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/extranet/restorative-approaches [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Hendry, R., Hopkins, .B & Steele, B., (2011). *Restorative Approaches in Schools in the UK*. Available online at http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/restorativeapproaches/RA-in-the-UK.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

NHS (2019). *New mental health support in schools and colleges and faster access to NHS care* Available online: https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/cyp/trailblazers/

Moore, D., Benham-Clarke, S., Kenchington, R., Boyle, C., Ford, T, Hayes, R., Rogers, M., (2019). *Improving Behaviour in Schools: Evidence Review*. Education Endownment Foundation, University of Exeter. Available online at: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Improving_Behaviour_in_Schools_Evidence_Review.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Phethean, A., (2016). *Restorative Approaches, School Information Pack.* Available online at https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/101827/Introduction-to-restorative-approaches-for-schools.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Proctor-Legg, T., (2018). *How to become a restorative school – Part 1: The case for embracing it.* Available online at https://www.tes.com/news/how-become-restorative-school-part-1-case-embracing-it [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Relate mid Wiltshire *Children's and Young Peoples' Counselling* (Accessed 2020) Available online https://www.relate.org.uk/mid-wiltshire/children-and-young-peoples-counselling

Restorative Justice Council. *Restorative practice in schools.* Available online at: https://restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools#:~:text=A%20restorative%20school%20is%20one,steps%20to%20put%20it%20right. [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Roberts, L., (2017). *A Short Introduction to Restorative Approaches.* Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJJxbn1VjYo#action=share [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 10. Improving teaching practice: inclusive and participatory pedagogy

AIM

To increase the educational success of students at risk of early leaving by developing and sharing inclusive and participatory pedagogy within individual classrooms and amongst teaching staff. Key features of this include:

1. Encouraging collaboration and exploration rather than top-down, didactic approaches.
2. Encouraging active learning.
3. Engaging with multimodal learning.
4. Fostering engagement with different perspectives, ideas and point of view.
5. Developing a view of participation which acknowledges:
   a) that individuals draw on their own particular skills so participation might look different for different people.
   b) contributions in a wider range of forms and types * (i.e. not just verbal or written)
   c) the educational importance of members feeling some social connection to each other, caring what others think about their contribution and feeling that their contribution matters

   * this involves giving students scope to contribute ideas in different ways, e.g. visual, digital, multimodal texts. It also involves recognizing the meanings and ideas they convey through non-verbal means – gesture, tone, visual representation, expression or parody.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

Re-igniting an interest in learning is critically important for learners at risk of early leaving. The Orienta4YEL research identified making education more engaging and enjoyable as a key way of breaking down barriers at the institutional level. For those who have had negative experiences of learning, finding ways to increase engagement and positive experiences of learning is paramount. Transforming pedagogy and doing things differently will be important in both tackling young peoples' disengagement within lessons, and for maximising the chances of successful reintegration for learners who have dropped out of education for a period of time.

As most learners spend the majority of their lives in classrooms, transforming pedagogy is a strategy which can be managed within the existing structures of the day. Inclusive pedagogy benefits all learners, so this strategy can help avoid the risks of stigmatisation and disruption, which can accompany strategies requiring withdrawal or targeted measures. Frequently mentioned in the Orienta4YEL data was the negative impact of austerity measures in terms of limiting time and resources available to stakeholders. Improving teaching practice does not come with the cost implications of creating alternative classes, groupings and opportunities.

Despite this, developing a more inclusive pedagogy is not a quick fix and is likely to require some fundamental shifts in the way learning and learners are viewed. The Orienta4YEL research findings highlighted that although stakeholders saw the vast majority of educators as highly dedicated and skilled, rising pressures from educational policy and performative requirements were negatively impacting on the best and most passionate educators. Less flexibility to respond to individual interests, a narrowing of the curriculum, and a focus on individual achievement, can reduce their scope to experiment, innovate and consider the relational and emotional aspects of learning.

The concepts of participatory culture and participatory pedagogy encapsulate the various, interrelated aspects of inclusive pedagogy which the Orienta4YEL research project identified as being of particular importance. In aiming to increase the participation of learners at risk of NEET in education, these concepts helpfully encourage critical reflection on the idea of participation and what we actually mean by it. This is important in overcoming old assumptions and prejudices, which can act as hidden barriers.

Participatory Cultures

Participatory Cultures were originally identified in relation to new media and technologies (see resources below). Exploring informal learning in digital and online settings, it was noted that a large percentage of teens created and shared media content. Rather than being passive consumers of digital material, they were participants and co-creators. They could engage in online settings creatively, influentially and collaboratively.

For instance, in online gaming chat rooms, they might ask questions about how to tackle a problem in a game, give other players advice, create memes, share digital artwork related to the characters or work arounds. Through this they gain experience of being part of an interest-driven community or 'affinity group.' Their behaviour, contributions, decisions and interactions are commented on by other members with a shared interest, giving them a sense of the community's feelings towards their contribution. In this way, technology can enable forms of citizenship and political engagement not otherwise open to them.

This theoretical perspective values and tries to understand the skills and knowledge young people gain through involvement with new media. It reveals that research focusing on the downsides and harmful aspects of young people's involvement with digital media gives us an incomplete picture. Understanding how learning occurs in these spaces, and why it is effective, may help educators and parents in supporting young people to learn in more formal contexts. It can also help educators support young people to develop capacities to participate effectively and safely in these spaces.

Participatory culture is described as one:

- with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement.
- with strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others.
- with some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices.
- where members believe that their contributions matter.
- where members feel some degree of social connection with one another.

These characteristics are particularly pertinent for youngsters at risk of early leaving for whom a sense of belonging is vital. A key finding of the Orienta4YEL research is that social relationships was viewed as the most significant risk factor for dropping out of school/training, by young people. Finding ways to build a sense of being part of a learning community within the classroom may be important in tackling the sense of alienation reported by the young people interviewed.

It is important to note that not all young people will have had the same opportunities to experience being part of these kinds of digital communities. Those from homes with limited access to technology will not have had the same opportunities to operate in and experience participatory cultures and affinity spaces. Given that career opportunities now demand these digital participation skills, it is important that educators engage with them in order to enable youngsters who might have had fewer opportunities to experience them. In addition, encouraging them to use the competencies they develop in these settings in their learning in more formal contexts may help students and teachers in supporting classroom learning.

Participatory Pedagogy

Theoretical ideas about participatory cultures were developed in informal learning contexts. Recent research (Flewitt et al (2018), Tapp (2014) *See Resources section below*) explores how these ideas might be applied within the classroom and in teachers' professional development and in non-digital or online communities.

Reflective and Exploratory

Participatory pedagogy encourages critical reflection and an exploratory approach. In the classroom, this might be enabled by open-ended learning questions for students to explore together, or by project-based learning approaches. In teacher development, it could involve teachers' critical scrutiny of their own practice; thinking deeply about unexpected outcomes, troubling or eureka moments, or how and why particular students responded in the ways that they did. Experiencing how different people resolve things differently or come to different conclusions can be a catalyst for developing new ways of thinking. The focus is not on right and wrong answers, but on exploring and evaluating different ways of making sense of things.

Active and Collaborative Knowledge Creation

A key finding in the Orienta4YEL data was that young people at risk of Early Leaving expressed a need for a more interactive pedagogical approach. Learning by doing, by actively experiencing and applying ideas can nurture a feeling

of active participation and involvement. Interacting with peers in collaborative small group and pair work allows students to experience peer's responses and think through ideas together before having to share thoughts in the larger and more intimidating whole class forum with the teacher (see action 4). The Orienta4YEL data suggests that students at risk of early leaving often struggle to operate within large classes, so enlisting smaller groups of peers to collaborate can help bridge this and alleviate this anxiety. Small group and pair work in which there is something active to be done, or to create, can also offer a wider range of ways to contribute than a straightforward discussion or purely verbal interaction.

In terms of teacher training, opportunities to work together to create a resource, or to reflect on an episode of learning, allows multiple ideas to be explored. This helps individuals move beyond their assumptions and consider new ways of acting or seeing.

Open-Minded View of Participation

In the classroom, students' participation can come to be equated with certain behaviours: putting their hands up, answering a question, completing the written work. However, as students have different levels of skill, experience and knowledge in different areas, and different levels of confidence, participation can cover a wide range of behaviours. In some circumstances, a student may speak little, or not at all, giving few verbal signs of participation. Nevertheless, they may be listening and reflecting on what others are discussing but not be ready to contribute verbally. In other situations, a student may be talking a lot about the topic, but not seeking or reflecting on other's views, suggesting they may need help to develop other participation skills such as how to seek other's input and deal with others' ideas. Contributing a piece of vocabulary, an idea, or helping resolve conflicts in the group by breaking the tension with a joke at a key moment, are all forms of valuable participation. Giving creative licence or flexibility around how a response can be presented, or how a problem or question can be tackled, gives students an opportunity to draw on the skills they do have and can enhance scope for participation.

The Orienta4YEL research identified encouraging autonomy and ownership as a significant support strategy. Participatory Pedagogy is particularly relevant here as it aims to increase student ownership of the learning by increasing scope for participation. It is important to note that this does not mean that students are not challenged or directed, rather that the students' contributions are the starting point and the teacher assists students to further unpick or interrogate their ideas in order to further develop their thinking.

Multimodal Pedagogy

Multimodality is a theoretical approach, which understands human communication (and therefore learning) to be about more than just language. Rather, interaction and meaning making occurs in multiple modes; visual modes such as colour and image; embodied modes such as gesture, gaze and touch; spatial modes and sound modes such as volume, tone and pace.

Recognising participation and contributions in modes other than the verbal also means acknowledging and valuing learning and work in modes other than the verbal – whether spoken or written language. Encouraging and enabling students to explore and present ideas multimodally - through the use of images, representations, diagrams, emojis, colour, enactment and movement for instance - allows them to draw on a fuller repertoire of meaning-making skills. It can also give teachers a better insight into students' ideas and thinking even when the students themselves struggle to verbalise these ideas clearly. This supports teachers in being able to engage with students' ideas and supports students in engaging with each other's thinking. Sometimes students can literally 'see' what a peer means though they are struggling to articulate it verbally. This is valuable in relation to Orienta4YEL's findings about the importance of developing autonomy and agency, as it can foster students' sense of having something to say. In addition, it supports students in engaging with other perspectives and viewpoints as they explore different ways of seeing and reacting to the same thing. While the value of thinking together, discussing and debating are widely appreciated, multimodal perspectives on learning draw attention to the ways other modes can support and speed up this inter-thinking.

A high percentage of students at risk of early leaving have additional educational needs, and are likely to be classified as having literacy difficulties. For these students, multimodal approaches are an important tool to enable them to engage in idea exchange and debate. Students' response and voice can be appreciated through visual representation

of their ideas or through the creation of multimodal responses comprising for instance, text, photos, emojis and symbols.

This approach is also valuable both in relation to the important work students do in developing their sense of an positive learner identity through their classwork and in terms of the ways it allows them to relate to others in the classroom. As noted earlier, students at risk of early leaving stressed the importance of social relationships as a risk factor. In addition, developing an identity as a learner is another key factor in educational inclusion and engagement. Allowing students to respond and work multimodally, whether that involves using digital technology, or non-digital approaches such as art, graffiti, drama or song, means they can personalise their work, representing aspects of themselves through the inclusion of subtle references to popular culture. This creative flair and self-presentation can help students find ways of being in the classroom which remain consistent with their sense of self outside school, while also engaging with academic concerns.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY *(How can the strategy be achieved?)*:

Implementing this action requires 3 strands:

- Teacher experimentation and exploration of new approaches
- Ongoing teacher reflection with the class about the impact on students' engagement and learning
- Teacher collaboration to reflect on and further develop the changes they are making

Teacher experimentation and exploration

The onus here is on teachers attempting to employ and apply ideas about participatory cultures and pedagogy in their teaching. A couple of illustrative examples include:

- Students work in small groups for part of a lesson to create a multimodal response to a problem or question on iPads. Using an App such as 30Hands or ShowMe for instance (see additional resources for ideas on useful apps), students present their views of a particular literary character, for instance, using an image, emoji, keyword and sound effect. Their multimodal text can be presented to the class later in the lesson with an explanation from the group about what they were trying to represent and show. The teacher can then use this to facilitate a whole class discussion to further explore and build on their ideas. This requires creative collaboration, reflection, engagement with curricular ideas. It offers an opportunity to influence the class' perception and subsequent discussion. In addition, students' originality, creativity and digital skills can are given a platform, inspiring each other.
  N.B. Providing an image bank for students to choose from on the camera roll can be more productive than asking them to search for images on the internet as it forces discussion and choice, rather than unfocussed browsing.
- Students work to create a multimodal text explanation of a concept, for instance, how the heart functions. They can use the functions on their phone or table to record, sketch, add images etc to demonstrate their understanding.
- Students create freeze frames or tableaux, using their bodies to illustrate a concept or idea. It could be the emotional impact of a particular conflict, or an attitude of particular groups at a historical period. This could be performed to the class or captured on mobile technology as a photograph to enable a detailed group discussion later one.
- Games with images representing human diversity where participants should describe the images and reflect about the notions and conceptions that emerged from that activity; videos to explore concepts;
- Longer, project-based collaborative challenges which are undertaken over a series of lessons. These may be more effective after some groundwork has been done to get students used to this way of working within the context of an individual lesson.

Ongoing teacher reflection with the class

These can be brief discussions at the end of a class, or a longer episode such as a survey or focus group. Students can respond anonymously using post-it notes, or contribute verbally face to face depending on confidence levels. This shared reflection is key in modelling the democratic aspect of participatory pedagogy to students. It helps them both reflect on learning, developing metacognitive skills (their understanding of their own cognitive and learning processes) and self-understanding, and understand that the teacher cares about their engagement, values

their input and is working with them. Metacognition, can provide valuable and unexpected insights for the teacher and help them overcome assumptions and improve their practice.

Teacher collaboration

There are two important strands to this aspect:

1. Critical reflection to enable teachers to reach fresh insights and understandings and overcome assumptions
2. Sharing good practice to develop pedagogy across the school

The first strand can be accomplished individually or in groups. Using the Critical Incidents approach (see resources section) can be a valuable way to support teachers to engage in this kind of reflection. This involved identifying a challenging moment, something striking or unusual that happened, or something puzzling in a teaching episode, and reflecting on and discussing in the hope of better understanding your own reaction and what could be done about it.

This second strand would need to be a longer-term strategy where small groups of teachers meet on a regular basis, enabling them to develop trust and understading. Rather than viewing this as an opportunity for some practitioners to tell others what works or what to do, it is rather an opportunity for staff to share what has and hasn't worked, discuss and explore together the reasons for this, and develop and refine approaches collaboratively.

Applying understandings of participatory cultures to developing the second strand may help it be more successful. Holding up certain examples of good practice for others to follow does not nurture a participatory culture among the staff. However, posing a problem, such as, 'how could we make multimodal pedagogy work in core subjects?' and allowing groups an opportunity to discuss, after having experimented in their own classrooms, means people could contribute particular lesson ideas, queries, doubts and success stories in a more collaborative fashion. Revisiting the question, or reformulating the question for the next meeting, can help foster a sense of development and avoid the sense of intiative fatigue.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ Designated person to lead on developing pedagogy (ideally this should be someone with: responsibility and experience of developing pedagogy within the school; authority to influence whole school approaches to learning and teaching; protected time to plan and resource the intervention over an extended time; positive relationships with the teaching staff
- ☐ CPD time at regular intervals to enable ongoing staff collaboration
- ☐ IT support and capacity to enable: engaging presentations during CPD; easy resource and ideas sharing for staff to share good practice; staff to access support when innovating with digital tools
- ☐ Adequate and comfortable space within classrooms for group work

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Staff may well be fearful about changing teaching methods, particularly fearing that young people will waste time and not perform so well academically if given greater freedoms and less didactic approaches. Initiative fatigue means there may well be resitance to what could be percieved as yet another demand. Starting with staff contributing themselves what they feel is unhelpful about the current approaches for young people and what they would be keen to experiment with if they had space and time, may be one way of ensuring this is framed in terms of a collaborative development, and not a top-down initiative.

Pressure to raise attainment and a desire for quick fixes to ensure good positions on league tables mean that early attempts to adapt pedagogy may seen negatively. Some students may struggle to recognise what they are doing as 'learning,' having come to equate learning with written work in exercise books and practicing exam skills. Some staff may fear that students have done nothing of value as they encounter new types of work and students get used to working together in new ways. Students may take time to trust each other and work effectively in groups together, and this is not something that will automatically work well for students who are not used to working in this way. It is therefore important that teaching staff are supported and reassured by acknowledging this. Communicating that this is a longer-term project which will not result in immediate increases in grades or

ACTION 10. Improving teaching practice: inclusive and participatory pedagogy

transformed attitudes to learning will be important in keeping the team on board and encouraging willingness to innovate.

Existing scrutiny procedures, such as book-looks, and grade reporting, may run counter to attempts to developing participatory and inclusive pedagogy. The project lead should therefore reflect carefully how best to manage this so that staff are not pulled in different directions.

Related protective factors identified from Orienta4YEL project:

- Individualised support when needed
- Non-rigid learning environment; flexibility, time out of class when needed; reduced timetables, rubber boundaries, choice about homework, a break between lessons.
- Positive behaviour management system: Effective bullying strategy; patience with YP, consistent routines; managed moves
- Building trust
- Building self confidence and self-esteem
- Inclusive school culture; a caring ethos, school as a safe space
- Building students sense of a positive learner identity
- Young person autonomy and ownership; being trusted, supporting young person towards independence, student voice platform, too dependent upon school support
- Improving learning environment; increasing staff to student ratio, small class sizes, elective seating plan, comfortable chairs; ear defenders
- Integrate child into the community
- Students perceptions that they are supported
- Increasing quality of educational provision: Positive or fun activities, time outside and in nature, motivational teachers or guest speakers; broad creative curriculum

TYPE OF STRATEGY

- [ ] **Prevention**
- [ ] Intervention
- [ ] Compensation

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

- [ ] **Personal challenges**
    - [ ] Lack of motivation, interest and expectations
    - [ ] Low educational achievements
- [ ] **Institutional factors**
    - [ ] The syllabus and their development specially related to teaching strategies and/or methodologies
    - [ ] Institutional rigidity; need for a more inclusive school environment

STRATEGY LEVEL

- [ ] Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)
- [ ] **Institutional level (institutional actions)**
- [ ] Educational system level (educational system actions)

BENEFICIARIES

- [ ] Young people
- [ ] **Teachers/Trainers**
- [ ] Families
- [ ] Community
- [ ] ....

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

- [ ] Tutor
- [ ] Teacher/Trainer
- [ ] Support staff (e.g. Counsellor)
- [ ] Families
- [ ] **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution):**

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE *(When the strategy is going to be implemented)*

ACTION 10. Improving teaching practice: inclusive and participatory pedagogy

☐ At the beginning/welcoming   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year
☐ Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education (VET/Baccalaureate)
☐ Other (specify): …………………………………………………………….

COST OF THE STRATEGY

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Birmingham City University (2020). *Example Critical Incident Reflections*. Available online at:
file:///C:/Users/aliso/Downloads/Example+Critical+Incident+Reflection+-+Handout.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Efthymiou, E. and Kington, A., (2017). *The Development of Inclusive Learning Relationships in Mainstream Settings: A Multimodal Perspective*, **Cogent Education, 4: 1304015.** Available online at:
https://www.cogentoa.com/article/10.1080/2331186X.2017.1304015.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Flewitt, R. et al, (2018). *'I enjoyed it because…you could do whatever you wanted and be creative': Three principles for participatory research and pedagogy*, **International Journal of Research and Methods in Education, 41:1, 372-386.** See additional resources on Moodle for access to this article

Jenkins, H., (2013). Henry Jenkins on Participatory Cultures (Big Thinkers Series). Available online at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gPm-c1wRsQ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Miss Alexis' Classroom (2014). *Multimodal Texts*. Available online at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=se3G8LV40gg [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Nelson Central School (2014). *Participatory Pedagogy*. Available online at:
https://www.slideshare.net/ncsroom8/participatory-pedagogy [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Simpson, J., (2018). *Participatory Pedagogy in Practice: Using effective participatory pedagogy in classroom practice to enhance pupil voice and educational engagment*, **Global Learning Innovation Fund Research Series, Paper 5, UCL Institute of Education.** Available online at:
https://www.academia.edu/37902568/Participatory_Pedagogy_in_Practice_Using_effective_participatory_pedagogy_in_classroom_practice_to_enhance_pupil_voice_and_educational_engagement_Global_Learning_Programme_Innovation_Fund_Research_Series_Paper_5 [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Tampere University of Applied Sciences (2016). *Participatory Pedagogy in Vocational Teacher Education*.
Available online at:
https://www.tamk.fi/documents/10181/20324/TAOK_osallistava_peda_en_www.pdf/dd76ff4a-26a3-400e-bfd6-39a1ca324e59[Accessed 01 July 2020]

Tapp, J., (2014*). 'I actually listened, I'm proud of myself.' The effects of a participatory pedagogy on students' construction of academic identities*, Teaching in Higher Educaiton, Vol 19 (4), p323-336.

ACTION 11. Support with mid-term and end of key-stage educational transitions

AIM

To give young people, who are at risk of Early Leaving (EL), personalised support to alleviate the inherent risks posed by educational transitions, by empowering them to steer their own educational pathway effectively and enabling smoother transitions between training and/or educational institutions.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Findings raised by the Orienta4YEL study highlighted that young people at risk of NEET are at particular risk of disengaging in education/training in the period before, during and immediately following an educational transition. This is particularly the case when transitions are 'mid-term' (also referred to as 'turbulent' or 'irregular' transitions), meaning that they take place outside of the normal admission and exit point for the learner cohort. Support with 'mid-term' and end of key-stage transitions refers to support with the planned and unplanned transitions of the young person, in order that they experience the transition positively, including in the period before, during, and following the transition point. Support will include working with a number of stakeholders including; teachers, administrators and leadership teams across the setting and well as in the receiving institution; parents/care-givers; the young person, their friends and peers. Fundamentally, support with educational transitions has to ensure provision is responsive to young people's needs, which may differ according to cultural background, family background, material resources, social and emotional support, academic achievements and talents and interests. This action requires the young people's active involvement, with the support of a designated person, in co-ordinating all aspects of the move.

Key challenges to address for young people to experience transitions successfully:

Resources

Transitions can be very difficult for teachers and schools, especially where young people require specialist or additional educational needs and do not have the resources they need (for example in the case with Traveller children for whom frequent moves can interrupt their application for an Education Health and Care Plan).

Empowerment and ownership

Young people need to be empowered to feel positive about the move. It is especially important to recognise that young people at risk of NEET are the least likely student group to feel a sense of control over an educational transition and that it may not be welcomed either by themselves or their parents/caregivers.

Supporting relationship development and maintenance

Research shows that one of the critical factors in young people experiencing transitions as positive or negative is the impact on their relationships with family, educators, members of the community, and particularly on friendships. Support should, therefore, involve managing existing relationships and developing new ones (see action 13). For young people experiencing economic hardship, it is much harder to maintain pre-transition relationships following the transition. This can lead to a) a sense of low-value and feeling forgettable as a person, b) developing insecure attachments when developing new friendships, c) avoiding building new relationships, and d) severing relationships before a transition (Brown 2012). However, transitions can also create positive opportunities, like ending previous negative relationships and creating positive new ones. Support should therefore include help in navigating old and new relationships.

Creating a sense of continuity

In recognising the significant changes that the young person will experience (e.g., different curriculum areas, settings) it is especially important to strive to create as much of a sense of continuity as possible. The more information about a young person that can be presented before the transition (or at least at point of entry) the more they are able to be supported. To this end, research suggests that a designated person (transition manager) who takes responsibility for all aspects of the move (as opposed to designating actions to staff in different posts) is particularly valued by the young person (and their family) (Demie et al. 2004).

Creating a sense of academic progress

It is also important to build on a young person's educational trajectory positively, since this impacts how students' feel about themselves as learners. This recognises the pragmatic challenges involved in transitions; where curriculum areas can be disconnected and where performance and achievement are difficult to track. It is therefore important

ACTION 11. Support with mid-term and end of key-stage educational transitions

to facilitate young people's recognition for their achievements while at the sending educational setting, as well as their hopes and aspirations for the receiving educational setting. Efforts to manage young peoples' positive sense of legacy at the sending institution,-and receiving institution,- can support a sense of progress in young peoples' educational, training and labour market trajectories. Generating a sense of progress through previous educational settings contributes to the fundamental goal of supporting young people in developing a sense of ownership over (and positivity about) their future plans.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION *(How can the action be achieved?):*

Support for educational transitions can be achieved through a range of methods relevant to the different phases of the transition. The below actions are distinguished between the two different types of transition. The actions that suit both types of transition are highlighted in bold.

1. Supporting end of key-stage transitions to further or higher education, VET or training. These support actions have been devised to facilitate making new educational settings familiar to young people quickly.

1. *Taster-days at follow on settings* (school/college, VET setting, apprenticeship provider, Higher or Further education institute) to be organised individually or in a group depending on needs and preferences of the young person. One example is the residential autism summer school at the University of Bath (UoB 2020)
2. **A peer-led guided tour:** Forming part of, -or as an alternative to,- a taster day, a peer led guided tour can be an effective strategy for familiarising the young person with the key spaces as well as the informal rotuines and norms of the setting, particularly in the case of social spaces. These are most effective when the tour guide is sensitive to the importance of their role as ambassador to the setting and as a point of contact for the young person. Guided tours may be complimented with campus maps or plans of the setting, an indicative timetable showing daily/weekly routines, and key contact people.
3. *Travel training.* Familiarising the young person with bus routes or helping them to construct a concrete travel plan to arrive at post transition /work experience/ taster-day setting (see Rospa 2006, for a Travel Training in key stage 3 and 4 resource document; and SENDinfo.org 2020 for a list of apps and resources to assist travel training with children and adults with SEND).
4. *Warm handover*. When a tutor accompanies a young person to a new education/training setting on their first point of contact and/or first day, and introduces them to a point of contact in the new setting.
5. **Communication skills training**: A range of activities designed to build the young person's communication skills. For example, providing indicative introduction statements and/or guidance in how the young person can best present themselves to different teachers, peers, employers and leadership team staff; how to listen and ask questions (e.g. see blog from Universal class 2020); how to address and correspond with employers, tutors, members of the community; role play scenarios to practice making introductions.
6. **Develop individual learning or career plans:** i.e., a road map to the pathways and actions needed to achieve educational and career goals (see action 1).
7. **Address other learning support needs**: working with the support staff, teaching staff, external agencies, special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure additional resources are available at the outset, following the transition.

2. Supporting mid-term (irregular school transitions; turbulent moves) that happen within key stages. This type of transition requires support strategies that involve information sharing between educational settings and preparing the young person to experience the transition positively. This includes specific actions such as:

1. **Compiling an up to date record of young person's academic achievements and educational pathway (curriculum and academic progress):** This can be useful both to share with the receiving educational setting as well as for the young person's own records (see action 1).
2. *Compiling a personalised profile of key information on family and personal circumstances*. This includes an understanding of a young person's domestic and family situation, interests and talents, significant relationships, pets, preferred learning arrangements (individual, group work), examples of good work, and any additional learning needs (below the threshold of an EHCP) that may be important for educators to know. The personal profile should comply with data protection guidelines and therefore may be held by the young person.

3. **Support with navigating relationships** *(see Action 13):* This is particularly important to engage in as soon as school is informed of a transition. This can involve one-to-one support in practical, social and emotional guidance about how to end and maintain relationships as well as how to start new ones (see Kidscape 2020).

4. **Generate an active alumni directory where each new student has an entry**. This is important so that outgoing and incoming students can feel that they have a legacy at the educational setting and therefore contributes to the young person's likelihood to see themselves as a valued learner.

5. **Initiate contact between the sending and the receiving educational setting and the young person.** This is best achieved while the young person is still registered in the current setting. This is important so that the young person (and their family) can receive a virtual introduction prior to transition; send and receive information to assist inclusion such as campus maps, photos of teachers, building and learning area; and be provided with a named contact at the receiving educational setting, with whom to share the personal profile.

6. **Organise a skype welcome and catch up with peers between sending and receiving educational settings**. This is important for young person to feel welcome before transition, but it also important in generating a sense of feeling valued with previous peers/friends following transition.

7. *Small group and whole-class discussion/support groups on the impacts of educational transitions.* This is especially important in cases where several students may be moving (e.g. service children). Incoming and outgoing transitions impacts can vary by student cohort and it is important to consider social or academic impacts for those 'left behind'.

8. **IT support and training.** This is especially important for students in economic hardship. Training involves ensuring a student is familiar with email platforms, has an email address and knows how to store the email addresses of friends and valued relationships (see Future Learn 2020 for guidance on free digital skills courses). More fundamentally, does the young person have access to a computer/laptop, or the resources needed for Skype/Zoom (microphone, camera)?- The DfE (2020) have just announced the provision of free laptops to disadvantaged young people, also see the blog choose.co.uk (2019) for information on where to source refurbished and heavily discounted laptops and PCs. Is it possible to provide a communication device (pay-as-you-go sim and mobile phone)?

9. **Regular one-to-one 'settling in' meetings:** To be conducted by a pastoral lead or school counsellor at various intervals following the transition (i.e. following; the first week, the first month, three months, six months). This can prompt the young person to reflect on their progress in settling in and enables any key issues to be tackled before the escalate. It is especially effective for key groups (i.e. service children) who have a tendency to internalise any adjustment issues and are more reluctant to seek help or express a need for support.

These activities require action and commitment on the part of; the designated transition support worker, young people, teachers, leadership teams and administrators, in guiding, helping and supporting the young person through the entire process prior to, during, and following, transition. **Therefore, the designated person supporting students must have the capacity to co-ordinate transitions actions**.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ Designated person (tutor, counsellor, family liaison person, SENCO)
- ☐ Private space for one-to-one meetings with young person and peer group
- ☐ Social (i.e. relationship) and emotional specialist (e.g. ELSA, educational psychologist, school counsellor and nurse)
- ☐ External agencies (e.g. social worker, health practitioner, virtual school officer, traveller liaison worker)
- ▪ Materials / Tools:
  - ☐ Academic record sheet
  - ☐ Personalised information record
  - ☐ Internet facility and communication platform e.g. Skype, email account
  - ☐ Alumni directory and online (password protected) forum or blog
  - ☐ Camera and facility to take, send and print photos,
  - ☐ Pay-as-you-go sim (and access to mobile phone)

ACTION 11. Support with mid-term and end of key-stage educational transitions

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Transition effects those left behind as well as those involved in the transition. This is especially the case where student cohorts move (i.e. with respects to service children) or where friends left behind are vulnerable (in care, have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH)).

Related protective factors for this action include:

- Individualised support when needed
- Managed moves
- Building trust
- Student guidance when needed
- Supporting teachers to support students
- Warm handover
- Building students' sense of a positive learner identity
- Non-teaching pastoral support
- Raising aspirations
- Building support networks
- Strategies for navigating friendships; developing positive friendships
- Integrate child into the community
- Students' perceptions that they are supported

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☑ **Prevention**   ☐ Intervention   ☐ Compensation

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

Personal challenges

- ☐ Low motivation, aspirations and expectations
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Irregular transitions
- ☐ Lack of travel training

Social relations

- ☐ Difficult relationships in school (with tutors, teachers, peers, etc.)
- ☐ Feeling not cared about by teachers (and school staff)
- ☐ Low peer group expectations for the future

Institutional factors

- ☐ Key stage transitions risky: Post 16 transition risky
- ☐ Need for further signposting to FE and training pathways
- ☐ Need for further personal-professional-academic guidance
- ☐ Need for further trust and support of the institution

Structural factors

- ☐ Educational policy: compulsory education and training to 18
- ☐ Transition from school to VET: The difficulties of accessing programmes alternative to GCSE before the age of 16; unclear transition destination on leaving school; unclear VET pathways
- ☐ Being outside of or disengaged from the system
- ☐ Flawed referral process
- ☐ Lack of continuity

ACTION LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**

ACTION 11. Support with mid-term and end of key-stage educational transitions

☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young Person**   ☐ Teachers/Trainers   ☐ **Families**   ☐ Community
☐ Other beneficiaries:……………………..................……

INVOLVED AGENTS *(Who is going to implement the action?)*

☐ **Tutor/a**   ☐ Teaching staff   ☐ **Other support staff (e.g. counsellor)**   ☐ Families
☐ Young people   ☐ Other professionals (internal or external to the institution): …………………………………

FORM of delivery *(how do we group?)*

☐ **Individually**   ☐ In pairs   ☐ Small groups   ☐ Class group
☐ **With friendship groups** ……………………........................

IMPLEMENTATION Timeline *(When the action is going to be implemented)*

☐ At the beginning/welcoming   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year
☐ **Transition between key stage**   ☐ ……………………………………………….

COST OF THE ACTION

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE ACTION

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ **Support staff (e.g. counsellor, family liaison officer, careers' advisor)**
☐ External expert   ☐ …………………….

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Brown, C., (2012). *Exploring how social capital works for children who have experienced school turbulence: What is the role of friendship and trust for children in poverty?,* International Studies in Sociology of Education, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 213-236. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2012.737688

Brown, C., James, C. and Lauder, H., (2011). *Managing Mobility to Maximise Learning. Nottingham:* National College for Leaderships of Schools and Children's Services: Available online at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/339990/managing-pupil-mobility-to-maximise-learning-summary.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Choose.co.uk (2019). *Where can you get a free computer or laptop?* Available online at:: https://www.choose.co.uk/guide/free-computer-schemes-on-benefits.html [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Demie, F., Dobson, J., Lewis, K., McAndrew, Eileen, Power, C. Strand, S. Taplin, A. and Thompson, A., **(2004).** *Pupil Mobility in Lambeth Schools: implications for raising achievement and school management*, Lambeth LEA.

Department for Education and Employment (**2000**) *Pupil Mobility in schools.* Available online at: http://www2.geog.ucl.ac.uk/mru/docs/pupil_mobility.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Department for Education (**2020**). *Guidance Get technology support for children and schools during coronavirus (COVID-19)*. Available online at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#how-to-apply-for-this-support [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 11. Support with mid-term and end of key-stage educational transitions

Department for Education and Skills (2003a). *Managing Pupil Mobility;* Available online at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/0780-2003.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Department of Education and Skills (**2003b**). *Managing pupil mobility: a handbook for induction mentors.* London: DfES.

Future Learn (2020). *The complete guide to digital skill.* Available online at: https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/the-complete-guide-to-digital-skills**.** [Accessed 01 July 2020]
Professional services firm Accenture has teamed up with FutureLearn to provide a suite of free digital skills courses. Covering topics such as web analytics, social media, and artificial intelligence, Accenture Digital Skills is a free, interactive series of courses which help and prepare people to build the digital skills necessary to gain a job or start a business. These courses are designed to equip learners with essential digital skills for the modern century workplace.

Kidscape (2020). *How to make new friends*. Available online at: https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-young-people/friendships-and-frenemies/how-to-make-new-friends/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Pollack, D. and Van Reken, R., (**2009**). *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds.* Boston MA/ London: Nicolas Brealey Publishing.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) (2006). Travel Training Key Stage 3 and 4. Available online at: https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/teachers/travel-training.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]
This resource booklet consists of a range of dedicated worksheets covering a range of topics concerned with indepdent travel including; Journey planning, risk, keeping safe, and cycling

Royal Society of Arts (**2013**). *Between the cracks: Exploring in-year admissions in schools in England.* Available online at:
http://www.thersa.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1527316/RSA_Education_Between_the_cracks_report.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

SENDinfo.org. **Travel Training Resources for SEND families**. Available online at: https://www.sendinfo.org/send-tools/travel-training-resources [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Universal Class. *Etiquette for Young Adults: Meetings and Introductions; Conversation and Listening Skills.* Available online at: https://www.universalclass.com/articles/self-help/etiquette-for-young-adults-meetings-and-introductions.htm [Accessed 01 July 2020]
Practical guidelines for young people in how to introduce themselves and others to friends, family, and new acquaintances. Includes useful guidance on listening skills and how to initiate, direct and end conversations.

University of Bath (**2020**). *Autism Summer School:* Available online at: https://www.bath.ac.uk/events/autism-summer-school-2020/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]
> This annual residential event at the University of Bath allows students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to experience aspects of university and student life.

ACTION 12. Promoting inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements

AIM

To promote inclusive learning for young people, who are at risk of Early Leaving (EL). According to the Higher Education Academy (2020) "Inclusive learning and teaching recognises all student's [young person's] entitlement to a learning experience that respects diversity, enables participation, removes barriers and anticipates and considers a variety of learning needs and preferences." Within the scope of this action these principles apply to the aspects of social, emotional and mental health systems and learning environments for formal learning institutions as well as in 'alternative provision' settings such as Vocational Education and Training and non-formal education providers.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Young people at risk of NEET are at particular risk of disengaging in education/training. They often find it difficult to engage with the formal learning environment of school or college and as such may experience education as isolating or inappropriate to their learning needs. The action promoting *inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements* is therefore specifically orientated towards those young people for whom full-time formal education/training is difficult or not appropriate.

This action is best achieved through the leadership of an identified person with both the knowledge and power to review and address the inclusivity and appropriateness of organisational systems and learning environments for young people at risk of EL. This person should also be able to co-ordinate alternative learning arrangements for young people for whom full time learning in school/college in not appropriate.

Culture of inclusivity

Key to the objective of facilitating 'inclusive learning' is that the culture of inclusivity (recognising and celebrating the diversity of learners' needs) must be embraced across the institution including leadership teams, teachers, support staff and pupils. The literature on intercultural education focuses upon positive interactions between people from different cultural backgrounds. Inclusive education practices aim to support learners to reflect upon their own identities and the identities of others, as well as how this relates to diferent modes of behaving towards 'other' cultural groups. This is conceptualised as a lifelong process (see resources section).

Through the Orienta4YEL findings we identified three important aspects that can lead to a culture of inclusivity within a learning setting: effective and transparent social/emotional and mental health systems such as behaviour management or wellbeing/pastoral approaches, aspects of the building or space that create the environmental conditions for optimal learning, and inclusive teacher practice (see action 10).

Systems to support young peoples' social, emotional wellbeing and mental health

Regarding behaviour management, young people in the Orienta4YEL study reported that unclear, inconsistent, and didactic behaviour policies made them feel alienated, frustrated, and less likely to trust the educational system. This was especially the case with respect to how bullying is dealt with in the institutional setting. This points to the design of pastoral policies in consultation with students, where students are a) clear on the processes, b) confident that they will be followed through consistently, and c) involved in discussion and mediation as resolution strategies. Some schools involved in the research were trialling novel wellbeing approaches including in-school access to mental health professionals, peer mentoring programmes, non-teaching staff with a remit to support student wellbeing, and dedicated 'safe spaces' for young people to have regular access to (see development of the action). These were highly valued by students, but there was inconsistency in young people's understanding of the mechanisms through which they should pursue support. Clear, consistent wellbeing approaches are therefore fundamental. Further research in the same region has highlighted a common approach to wellbeing promotion across 7 schools in the South West; that of resilience building. While resilience can be understood in many ways, students in these schools identified a common narrowly defined definition (termed 'push on through' Brown and Dixon 2020) that they saw schools to promote. This referred to resilience as being a product of individual mental strength, self-sufficiency and ability to cope with educational (and other) failure. In these narrow terms, resilience was understood as children's individual application to their work and a willingness to assume responsibility to meet performance targets. Young people complained that this definition missed the social and environmental aspects to resilience, failed to recognise the

limits to individual effort and may even dissuade children from seeking support. The implications of this research highlight the importance of defining clearly the key terms upon which wellbeing policies are formed, in consultation with all stakeholders in schools (teachers, support staff, parents and of course, young people).

Inclusive learning environments

A recurring observation that emerged from our research in the Orienta4YEL project was that students with particular educational, social or mental health difficulties struggled to engage with full-time formal education and found the traditional classrooms of 30 students challenging. This challenge frequently presented as a) disruptive behaviour or conflict, b) refusal to engage in learning, c) the student being removed from the group (to learn separately). Where human resources were scarce, students removed from classrooms could be placed within inappropriate and unsupervised learning environments,-such as the corridor,-to protect the learning environments for the remainder of the learner cohort. Students who had experienced being removed from the classroom (for example to work in the corridor, outside a teacher's office, in the reception area or in the 'isolation room' for poor behaviour) reported a significant negative impact upon their learner identity; they felt they did not belong in school/education.

A key aspect of this action therefore concerns tackling students' assumption that they do not deserve a quality education and that they are not cut out for learning, by facilitating the building of a positive learner identity. This involves making the adjustments necessary where possible to the learning environment (e.g., small group learning, peer learning) to tackle the rigidity of institutional settings so that learning environments become inclusive for learners of all needs, and recognise the individual and group characteristics of diverse learners. Given there are limits to how flexible schools can be within the rigidity of national structures, *promoting inclusive learning* also involves attending to these aspects of inclusivity within 'alternative learning arrangements' for young people in other non-formal education settings.

Inclusive teaching practice

Inclusive teaching practices engage and stimulate the learning of all students (not just those at risk of EL) while recognising that all students differ in their educational and learnings styles. Features of excellent teaching are multiple (see action 10). In recognising that the vast majority of teachers are highly dedicated and demonstrate good practice, our research from the Orienta4YEL project highlighted stakeholders' concern with the rising pressures of educational policy and performative requirements (see Brown and Carr 2019) which, in turn, were impacting negatively on the best and most passionate teachers. Therefore, this action involves two steps: firstly, working with the young person to help them identify their barriers to learning (see Action 1 for more detail) and preferred learning activities; secondly, acting as an intermediary with key teachers in incorporating the young person's identified pedagogical actions across the curriculum.

Managing expectations in alternative learning arrangements

In addition to the above considerations, in the case of alternative learning arrangements findings from the Orienta4YEL study highlighted the importance of managing all young people's and educators' expectations regarding the purpose, objectives, norms and rules for the alternative setting, as well as the reason why that setting has been identified as appropriate for the young person. Clear expectations prior to the first visit to the alternative setting were seen to help ease assimilation and set the precedent for how the setting is experienced by the young person. Whether the young person sees their placement as a 'punishment' or an 'opportunity' can have an important bearing on how they feel about themselves as a learner. Therefore, efforts to link the opportunities presented by the alternative setting to the skills, interests and past achievements of a student can help to generate a sense of continuity in young peoples' educational, training and labour market trajectories. Generating a sense of progress over previous educational trajectories also contributes to the fundamental goal of supporting young people in developing a sense of ownership over (and positivity about) their future plans.

In summary, *promoting inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements* has to ensure provision is responsive to young people's needs, which may differ according to cultural background, family background, material resources, social and emotional support, academic achievements, abilities, talents and

interests. This action requires the young people's active involvement, with the support of a designated person, in co-ordinating all aspects of promoting inclusive learning. Support will include working with a number of stakeholders including; teachers, educators, administrators and leadership teams across both formal and non-formal educational institutions; parents/care-givers and the young person and their friends and peers.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION *(How can the action be achieved?):*

Promoting quality inclusive learning can be achieved through a range of methods relevant both to formal and informal learning settings. The below actions are distinguished between the two different types of educational setting; formal learning environments (such as school/college) and alternative learning provision (such as non-formal education settings). The actions that suit both types of inclusive practice are highlighted in bold.

1. ***Actions that can support promoting inclusive learning within learning environments.***
   These actions that can be taken through tutorial action in the role of an 'inclusive learning lead'. These actions aim to generate a culture of inclusive learning across all physical and material aspects of the educational setting. This is by no means an exhaustive list but may include:

a) In the classroom/learning space:
1. *Reviewing the seating plan with the young person:* to ensure that young people are grouped with seatmates who they deem to be effective learning partners (and recognising that this may fluctuate). This leads to the 'inclusive learning lead' acting as an intermediary with teachers in order to adjust seating/grouping arrangements where necessary.
2. ***Ensuring that the learning environment is comfortable*** for young people and conducive to learning; is the temperature too hot or too cold? Are the chairs comfortable? Can all learners see, hear, and engage in the learning activities? Learners will differ in their sensory engagement in learning spaces, this action encourages the inclusive learning lead to prompt the learner to consider their sensory experience of learning, in identifying adjustments that can be made.
3. ***Ensuring that young people have the resources they need*** *to access the curriculum/learning objectives.* In response to reviewing the learning environment, what resources may be possible to improve the sensory experience of learners, e.g. 'ear defenders' (too protect against audio over stimulation), 'voice recorders', 'class/lecture capture facilities,' 'stress-balls'.
4. *Regular review and negotiation of reduced timetable*: To be led by student voice but to include teachers and families where appropriate in these discussions.
5. ***Ensuring that 'comfort breaks' or 'time out' arrangements are negotiated in advance*** *with teachers/tutors.* This may involve displaying a 'time-out' card, or a 'toilet-pass' as a proxy to a verbal request. It also involves considering the impact of special arrangements on other learners and how this is communicated to the cohort. It is important that all learners understand the justification for individual adjustments in appreciating that equity in learning does not always involve equality of experience (i.e. give all learners what they *need*, not necessarily the *same* learning experience).
6. *Ensuring that under NO circumstances are young people removed from class to learn in the corridors.* If young people need to be removed from a classroom, it should be done in a way that minimises the damage to their perceptions of themselves as a learner. At the heart of this is the understanding that learning adjustments are motivated from the perspective of supporting the learning experiences of the young person in question, not for the benefit of the cohort that remains in the traditional learning space.

b) Pastoral (social, emotional, or mental health) policies
1. ***Policies devised in attendance to the young person's and teachers' voice****:* Students and teachers should have the opportunity to opt into the behaviour policy and comment on the adjustments the policy may require. This includes in negotiating agreed definitions for key terms that underpin mental health policies (e.g. wellbeing, resilience, character, thriving). One way of achieving this is evident in the methodology utilised in the study described in Brown and Dixon (2020) where young people were asked to photograph images that represented mental health terms and in using these to facilitate discussions both online and in guided focus groups (@youngpeoplesmentalhealthstudy).

2. *Signposting pastoral support mechanisms*: The process for responding to social, behavioural, psychological and emotional issues is transparent. It also identifies key persons and their responsibilities, and is followed consistently.

3. *A clear student-informed bullying policy,* which includes definitions of and responses towards the multiple types of bullying including; physical, verbal, 'cyber', and relational aggressions (exclusion by subtle methods such as ignoring, smirking or dismissing victim's attempts to be included) and micro-aggressions (commonplace or casual daily assaults such as verbal, or behavioural, indignities, whether intentional or not, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups)

4. *Rubber boundaries*: The concept that while rules apply to all, they can be bent to accommodate individual difference. It is the principle of reassuring learners who try to be excluded that their efforts will not be effective. It is a way that educational settings let students know; 'we can change and we will help you to make positive change in order that that you can feel you belong here'.

5. *Access to a 'safe space'*: A designated space where young people can visit when feeling overwhelmed or in need of support. Ideally this would be a private space with therapeutic resources to alleviate anxiety (comfortable seating, calming wall displays, access to a pastoral staff member). Can the inclusive learning lead champion the provision of a designated space?, if this is not possible can they negotiate and/or facilitate a 'safe space' during a regular appointed time? N.B. safe spaces are not just physical/material and are also social spaces. In the case of home-learning (RE adjustments made in response to Covid-19) can a group/therapeutic space be created online at a time that learners can plan for?

c) Building a positive learner identity

1. *Working one-to-one with the young person* **to enable them to see themselves as a valued learner.** This may involve recounting and recording their educational and biographical histories, as well as their significant relationships, with the goal to identify, record and refer back to their gifts, talents, interests and achievements. At the heart of this approach is a 'reflective listening' approach to enable the young person to build trust in their teachers and in the education system.

2. *Working one-to-one with the young person* **to understand their individual barriers to learning**; whether they are specific to subject areas, the physical learning environment, teaching, peer groups, the structure of the school day, access to 'time-out', or the sensory aspects of school (noise, smells, bustle, visual stimulus).

3. *Ample opportunities for asking and forming questions*: Knowledge holds more meaning when learners take ownership for learning. This includes a balance between seeking the answers from knowledgeable others (i.e., teachers) and (where possible and appropriate) seeking out the answers independently and particularly as part of a team (see action 4).

4. *Develop individual learning or career plans*: i.e., a road map to the pathways and actions needed to achieve educational and career goals (see action 1)

5. *Communication skills training***:** For example in providing prompt sheets and/or guidance in how the young person can best present themselves to different audiences e.g. teachers, peers, employers and leadership team (see action 11); how to listen and ask questions; how to address and correspond with employers, tutors, members of the community).

6. *Celebrate and display learners' achievements***:** For example, in temporary exhibitions and on more permanent display within the school/learning environment. Orienta4YEL findings showed that many students at risk of Early Leaving were not used to being recognised or receiving achievements of any kind. Even small recognitions, such as a personalised certificate indicating completion of a course or significant task, can have a positive impact.

d) Creating an inclusive culture within the student body

1. *Education that recognises the social and educational value of diversity of learners***:** Inclusive education requires firstly, an understanding of the subordination, exclusion and discrimination of key groups within society going beyond the 9 protected charactertics (e.g. by race, gender, 'ability', sexuality, and ethnicity or cultural group). Secondly, developing an appreciation of diversity in society and the opportunities for learning. Thirdly, opportunities for transforming the learning environment and culture in order to celebrate individual and group diversity. Where possible links to issues current on a local, national, or international

level, are fruitful, for example the recent; Black Lives Matter, Me Too/ Everyday Sexism Project, The Trevor Project (see resources section).

2. **Small group and whole-cohort *education on what is an 'inclusive community'*.** While being careful not to single out individual children, the focus is on celebrating the diversity of learners and skills, and the value of diverse sections of society (such as those experiencing SEND and those from non-majority socio-cultural groups).

3. ***Anti-bullying seminars and guided discussions:*** possibly through PSHE or 'relationships education' where different types of bullying are discussed in whole-group, small group and paired discussion activities, with an objective to generate a sense of empathy, respect and tolerance among students.

4. *Student voice platform:* a representative body (or council) responsible to bring student issues to the school leadership team. It is important that student representatives reflect the diversity of learners (not just those most engaged in education).

5. ***Mediation or restorative justice approaches to social relational challenges or bullying:*** Working with young people to aid their communication in response to social issues (see action 13).

6. ***Student-led projects about wider problems that concern them***. This refers to educational activities that explore and seek to develop strategies to address issues of current local, national and global concern.

2. Promoting inclusive alternative learning arrangements:

This action concerns the inclusive learning environment of 'alternative' education providers aimed at young people for whom full-time formal education is not appropriate. Inclusion in this context includes specific actions such as:

1. ***Knowledge of the 'local offer':*** knowing about all the provisions available for young people with Education, Health and Care plans in the local area***.***

2. ***Compiling an up to date record of young person's curriculum and academic progress*** *(see action 1*)

3. *Travel-training* (Familiarising the young person with bus routes or travel plans to arrive at a new setting/work experience/taster-day for educational/training/work purposes (see action 11).

4. *Warm handover-* when a tutor accompanies a young person to a new education/training setting on their first point of contact and/or first day, and introduces the student to a point of contact in the new setting.

5. ***An educational log***: a record that documents the young person's educational journey in order to cross reference achievements and progress educationally, personally, and socially.

6. ***A personalised record of achievements and learning requirements: skills, interests and learning needs***. This is particularly relevant for those young people who fall under the threshold for an EHCP, or have yet to receive it. This document serves as a proxy record outlining any additional learning needs or requirements. However, it is important that this record does not only focus on what the young person finds challenging but also captures their achievements and skills (which include personal, social, emotional, 'soft skills'). The record could include examples of good work.

7. *Taster-visits at alternative learning providers* to be organised individually or in a group depending on the needs and preferences of the young person.

8. *Contract of participation.* To be compiled prior to the young person's commencement at the alternative education provider, this involves working individually with the young person to identify their aspirations, objectives, motivations and purpose for participation. It should also include a section completed by the educator 'key person' laying out their expectations, what they offer and how they see the young person adding value to the aims and aspirations of the provider (see action 1).

These activities require action and commitment on the part of both the designated inclusive learning co-ordinator, young people, peers, teachers, leadership team, support staff and administrators in ensuring that inclusive learning is at the heart of the school's culture and ethos.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)***:**

ACTION 12. Promoting inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements

☐ Designated person (ideally this should be someone in a leadership role who has the authority to guide policy and employ inclusive action in building a whole-school inclusive culture)

☐ Private space for one-to-one meetings with young person and peer group

☐ Teachers responsible for social and emotional curriculum areas (i.e. PSHE; Relationships Education; Health and Wellbeing education; Character and civic education)

☐ External agencies (e.g. social worker, health practitioner, virtual school officer, traveller liaison worker)

▪ Materials / Tools:

☐ Software and hardware to develop key documents; education log, contract of participant record of achievement etc.

☐ Academic performance tracking software

☐ Internet facility and communication platform for young person e.g. Skype, email account

☐ Inclusive education training programmes (e.g. roots of empathy)

☐ Adaptations to make learning environment comfortable; ear defenders, comfortable chairs, lesson capture facility;

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Young people at risk of NEET who find it difficult to engage in full-time education in formal learning settings may display their frustration in ways that can have a negative impact upon the rest of the learning community. It is important therefore to take steps to ensure that the actions taken to support individuals do not have a negative impact upon other learners. 'Special arrangements' must be communicated to the classroom community in a way that welcomes discussion in the context of building an inclusive community. Suggested actions taken in isolation and not routed within a whole-school approach are unlikely to be effective.

Related protective factors identified from Orienta4YEL project:

- Individualised support when needed
- Non-rigid learning environment; flexibility, time out of class when needed; reduced timetables, rubber boundaries, choice about homework, a break between lessons.
- Positive behaviour management system: Effective bullying strategy; patience with YP, consistent routines; managed moves
- Building trust
- Building self confidence and self-esteem
- Inclusive school culture; a caring ethos, school as a safe space
- Building students sense of a positive learner identity
- Young person autonomy and ownership; being trusted, supporting young person towards independence, student voice platform, too dependent upon school support
- Improving learning environment; increasing staff to student ratio, small class sizes, elective seating plan, comfortable chairs; ear defenders
- Warm handover
- Non-teaching pastoral support
- Raising aspirations
- Integrate child into the community
- Students perceptions that they are supported
- Increasing quality of educational provision: Positive or fun activities, time outside and in nature, motivational teachers or guest speakers; broad creative curriculum
- Targeted support mechanisms

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☑ **Prevention**   ☐ Intervention   ☐ Compensation

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

ACTION 12. Promoting inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements

☐ **Personal challenges**

- ☐ Low motivation, aspirations and expectations; unrealistic expectations, worry about the future
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Low self-esteem or self confidence
- ☐ Negative academic self-perception or learner identity

☐ **Social relations**

- ☐ Feeling not cared about by teachers (and school staff)
- ☐ Isolation
- ☐ Feeling different or singled out

☐ **Institutional factors**

- ☐ Institutional rigidity; school rules rigidity, need for a more inclusive school environment
- ☐ School or education environment: classroom environment: building too warm or too cold; class size; classroom too overwhelming; not feeling safe in school
- ☐ School management of pupil behaviour; School environment that can't accommodate student behaviour,
- ☐ School exclusion; the impact of disruptive students
- ☐ School segregation; working in the corridors
- ☐ Need for further trust and support of the institution

☐ **Structural factors**

- ☐ Alternative provision in the region: lack of continuity, limited availability;
- ☐ Being outside of or disengaged from the system

ACTION LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**

☐ **Institutional level (institutional actions)**

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young Person**   ☐ **Teachers/Trainers**   ☐ **Families**   ☐ Community

☐ Other beneficiaries:………………………….......................

INVOLVED AGENTS *(Who is going to implement the action?)*

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ **Teaching staff**   ☐ **Other internal staff (e.g. SENCO)**   ☐ Families

☐ **Young people**   ☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution**): **Leadership team**

FORM of delivery *(how do we group?)*

☐ Individually   ☐ In pairs   ☐ Small groups   ☐ Class group

☐ **According to needs of young person**

IMPLEMENTATION Timeline *(When the action is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year

☐ **Transition between key stage**   ☐ ………………………………………………….

COST OF THE ACTION

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE ACTION

ACTION 12. Promoting inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ Support staff   ☐ **External expert** (e.g. educational advisor, educational psychologist   ☐ **Leadership team (e.g. SENCO)**

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Council of Europe (2020). Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters. Available online at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/autobiography-intercultural-encounters.
There is a version for younger learners: https://rm.coe.int/autobiography-of-intercultural-encounters-for-younger-learners/168089f4d8 [Accessed 01 July 2020]
The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters is a resource designed to encourage people to think about and learn from intercultural encounters they have had either face to face or through visual media such as television, magazines, films, the Internet, etc. In addition to the resource above there is a version for older learners and an online self-study course for educators who want to learn how to work with this autobiography. It is also translated into several languages including Spanish.

Brown, C and Dixon, J,. '*'Push on through': Children's perspectives on the narratives of resilience in schools identified for intensive mental health promotion'*, *British Educational Research Journal*, pp. 1-20.https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3583

Brown, C and Carr, S., (2019). 'Education Policy and mental weakness: a response to a mental health crisis', *Journal of Education Policy,* vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 242-266. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2018.1445293

Bilingual Kidspot. 15+ Multicultural Children's Books that all kids should read. Available online at: https://bilingualkidspot.com/2019/07/22/multicultural-childrens-books/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]
Includes book recommendations for; babies to pre-school, early elementary and older elementary. Young people could be encouraged/supported to read these books to their younger siblings, family members or younger learners these experiences could inform facilitated discussion of reflection upon what makes an inclusive culture, as well as what types of books learners would like included on their syllabus.

Boxall Profile. Available online at: https://www.nurtureuk.org/introducing-nurture/boxall-profile [Accessed 01 July 2020]
The Boxall Profile Online is described as: "an assessment tool for social emotional and behavioural difficulties for children and young people. It is a resource for the assessment of children and young people's social, emotional and behavioural development. The two-part checklist, which is completed by staff who know the child and young person best, is quick — and, very importantly, identifies the levels of skills the children and young people possess to access learning".

[The] Equality Act 2010 and Schools (2010). England Department for Education government advice for school leaders, school staff, governin bodies and local authorities**.** Available online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Fischer Family Trust (2020). *FFT Aspire Pupil Tracking tool.* Available online at: **https://fft.org.uk**
The Aspire tracking tool comprises two trackers integrated into one system. The assessment tracker is designed to Convert and compare DfE tests, standardised tests, teacher assessments, targets and FFT estimates in one single tracking system and the Curriculum Tracker aims to Record and track pupil objectives using our ready-made curriculum templates or your own customised curriculum plans.

[The] Inclusion Lab (2017). *8 ways to show young children that diversity is a strength*. Available online at: **https://blog.brookespublishing.com/8-ways-to-show-young-children-that-diversity-is-a-strength/** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 12. Promoting inclusive learning environments and alternative learning arrangements

[The] PiXL club (Partners in Excellence). Available online at: https://www.pixl.org.uk/ In particular these [programmes were recommended; PiXL secondary https://www.pixl.org.uk/page/?title=PiXL+Main&pid=9 and PiXL Character: https://www.pixl.org.uk/edge [Accessed 01 July 2020]
PiXL (Partners in Excellence) is a partnership of over 1,400 secondary schools, 450 sixth forms, 900 primary schools and 50 providers of alternative education. Through our support for schools together we share best practice to raise standards and to give students a better future and brighter hope. PiXL is now the largest network of schools in England and Wales

Roots of Empathy. Available online at: https://uk.rootsofempathy.org/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]
Roots of Empathy is an international organization that offers empathy-based programs for children, with research to prove impact. It is a leader in the empathy movement. It has shown significant effect in reducing levels of aggression among schoolchildren by raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy. The program is designed for children ages 5 to 13.

Show Racism the Red Card, **Education: resources and activities**. Available online at:
    https://www.theredcard.org/resources-and-activities [Accessed 01 July 2020]
In school workshops, teacher training and education packs and resources available for racisme awareness education in school. The resources included dedicated education packs on tackling key race issues such as; islamophobia, tacklism far right extremism, combatting myths about assylum seekers, racism towards Gypsy, Roma, and Travellers, Homophobia and guidance for initial teacher trainers. Resources include guidelines for evaluting the school and culture, guide for reporting a suspecting racist incident in school, factsheet on cyber bullying and racism.

The Trevor Project. Available online at: https://www.thetrevorproject.org/education/model-school-policy/
    [Accessed 01 July 2020]
The Trevor Project is the leading US organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer & questioning (LGBTQ) young people under 25. It provides a free online learning module with a video, curriculum, and teacher resources for middle school and high school classrooms, trainings for youth serving professionals and a model school policy.

UK Feminista: School resource hub. Available online at: https://ukfeminista.org.uk/resources-hub/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]
A free online resource hub for teachers, students and parents on tackling sexism. The teacher section includes resources for a whole school approach to tackling semsim including: an audit tool, a template action plan, policy guide, classroom activities on gender stereotyping, sexist langue and harrassment, and practical tips for teachers. The student section includes tools to help students tackle sexism such as a campaign planner and guide for setting up a feminista group.

Welsh Government. *Introduction to the Equality Act (2010) Factsheet for schools.* Available online at:
    https://static1.squarespace.com/static/574451fe37013bd0515647ac/t/5b5ec981575d1fa8d655e7ae
/1532938639604/Equality+Act+2010.pdf [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Wiltshire Council (2020). Local Offer Wiltshire, *Services for young people up to age 25 with special educational needs and/or disabilities.* Available online at: http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/local-offer [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 13. Support in building and navigating healthy peer relationships

AIM

To support young people, who are at risk of Early Leaving (EL) in building and maintaining positive and healthy peer relationships. 'Peer' relationships refer to various forms of social relationships with other young people including friendships, learning and co-working relationships and romantic relationships.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

One of the key barriers that causes young people to drop out of education or training, raised in the Orienta4YEL findings, is the social challenges they face in terms of building and navigating healthy relationships with peers. This action therefore concerns a range of strategies that can be employed in order to support young people in navigating healthy relationships. This has a number of aspects;

a) Firstly, in recognising what are healthy and unhealthy relationships (social, learning, working, romantic).
b) Secondly, support in building healthy new relationships, alongside support with in ending negative or 'unhealthy' relationships. This is important in that young people require a social support network in order to effectively end unhealthy relationships.
c) Thirdly, strategies to support young people in 'navigating' relationships. This refers to their understanding of conflict and disagreement as a fundamental part of 'doing' relationships, as opposed to seeing it as a signal to end the relationship (and the associated risks of leaving or changing the educational/ training setting). It also concerns the strategies of collaboration, communication, compromise, give and take, as key aspects in maintaining positive peer relationships.

The impact of friendship on learning

The importance for young people in having secure friendships has been indicated by empirical research that has explored the impact of friendship on learning. This has identified a range of benefits including; better adjustment to school following transition, the formation of pro-schooling values, consolidating learning through the giving and receiving of help with school and homework, and in sharing and developing thoughts and ideas. However, the link between friendship and achievement in school is not inevitably positive, friendship can also act as a barrier to learning. For example, not all friendships are founded upon pro-schooling values, such that there may be a disjuncture between the values of the friendship group and that of schooling and education. Furthermore, the link between friendship and school achievement is complicated by a need to understand the processes of social inclusion and exclusion that characterize friendship patterns for boys and girls (see Brown 2014, chapter 2 p14-23).

Understanding the gender dimension to friendship

In examining the friendship processes for young people it's important to recognise that there are in broad terms often differences between the function of exclusion within boys' and girls' groups. Whereas boys are more likely to form part of extended social groups, girls are more likely to form close one-on-one alliances within tightly structured friendship hierarchies. Social psychological research into the formation of boys' friendship groups has shown that an important element in earning your stake within a given friendship group is the denigration of other boys' friendship groups founded on different values. This suggests that boys may feel compelled to exclude young people children in other friendship groups in order to achieve a secure peer group position. Sociological research into girls' friendships, -on the other hand,- has highlighted that social exclusion is more likely to take place within the friendship group, as opposed to outside of it. Girls' friendships are more likely to be characterized be frequently shifting alliances between group members, associated with friendship bust-ups, divisions and reformulations, often with a high degree of emotionality. These changing alliances can be seen to reflect power struggles, where group members strive to be on the inside,- as opposed to the one on the periphery of,- the friendship group. At the heart of this action is an understanding that strategies may need to be tailored by gender in order to best support young peoples' understanding of,- and orientation towards,- navigating friendships.

Educational policy on supporting healthy relationships

Government education policy has recently demonstrated a renewed interest in the importance of supporting young peoples' social relationships, as indicated in the new curriculum area Relationships and Sex Education curriculum as part of schools' Personal, Social, Economic and Health programme in England. This action could therefore sit alongside or form part of schools' statutory curriculum. However, this must be contextualized against former policy guidance that has tended to focus on the individual nature of Social and Emotional wellbeing (e.g. New Labour Social

and Emotional Aspects of Learning- SEAL- programme and the recent Character Education Framework). In contrast to individualizing perspectives, this action emphasizes friendships and peer dynamics as reciprocal and co-constructed. This points towards the importance of education approaches that look at relationship issues within paired and small-group activities. This refers to a systemic way of working which treats relationships as systems whereby an impact on one relational tie has knock-on impacts upon others.

Beyond friendship: other important considerations for building healthy social relationships

Another aspect of this action concerns educating about healthy romantic relationships. For example this could include; consideration of the ways in which young people use technology and social media and the inherent risks and threats associated; and, Sex education that addresses the social, emotional and long-term impacts of contraception as well as the more pragmatic support and guidance in accessing and incorporating contraception into daily life routines.

More generally, psychological research has demonstrated the importance of early friendship experiences on later relationships including in the workplace and community, particularly in developing the ability to trust and feel trustworthy. Underpinning this action is a principle of 'doing friendship' as an ongoing process, and 'building healthy peer relationships' as a core aspect of supporting young peoples' social and emotional development. This action has the potential to positively contribute to the new statutory Relationships and Sex education (from Sept 2020) Key issues could include;

- a) an understanding of conflict and resolution in peer relationships,
- b) juggling social demands with other expectations (like work); and,
- c) navigating relationships through key transition points such as when new learners join and leave.

This action also aligns with systemic therapeutic (also known as family therapy) approaches that focus upon the social group or relational system in illuminating understanding of how each member of the group contributes towards the group dynamic and how changes must also be thought out in terms of their effects on each individual. This action is understood to play a key role in tackling students' assumption that they do not deserve a quality education and that they are not appropriate learners, by a focus upon strengthening the positive relationships through which young people can feel part of an educational or training community.

To this end, support in building and navigating healthy peer relationships has to ensure provision is responsive to young people's circumstances, which may differ according to cultural group, gender, age, material resources, social and emotional and mental health needs, special educational needs and disabilities. This action requires the young people's active involvement, with the support of a designated person, in co-ordinating internal and well as external expertise and practice. Support will include working with a number of stakeholders including; teachers, educators, counsellors, health practitioners, educational psychologists and leadership teams across both formal and non-formal educational institutions; as well as the young person and their friends and peers.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION *(How can the action be achieved?):*

The action *supporting young people in building and navigating healthy peer relationships* involves a range of strategies and resources to be employed at the institutional, classroom and small group level, as well as engaging support from specialist external services. The following is by no means an exhaustive list, but may include:

Activities to foster social and emotional development

1. *Social and emotional education that focuses upon the reciprocal dynamics of friendship* as opposed to just the facilitation of individual skills and competencies. This includes a critical lens on social and emotional learning programmes that risk being too individualistic and overlooking the ways in which relationships are co-produced.
2. *Identifying what are 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' relationships:* Young people who have experienced childhood abuse or neglect may not have experienced healthy relationships in their childhood. It is therefore imperative that young people are able to identify what are the features of healthy and unhealthy

relationships as a precursor to actions to alter, or end, existing relationships and in developing new relationships (e.g. The Terrence Higgins Trust 2020; Bluestein and Katz 2013; Ledford 2017)

3. *Guidance in using and engaging responsibly in social media and mobile technology:* This includes raising awareness of the threats and risks (e.g. sexting- sending indecent images) see the resource NSPCC (2015), as well as developing a respectful and responsible etiquette in using such platforms.

4. *Strategies for ending and starting relationships:* Young people will invariably be unable to initiate building healthy relationships while they are still immersed within unhealthy peer relationships (and vice-versa). This action involves recognition for the mental, emotional, social and pragmatic impact of key relationships and strategies for ending as well as developing new relationships. One example could be the forming of a 'healthy relationships' peer-support group, whereby young people opt into a within-setting programme, where participants could form a network to support each other along the journey of ending and building healthy relationships. The support of external agencies (see below) could usefully be enlisted.

5. *Education programmes that emphasise the importance of collective values, respect, empathy and tolerance:* See 'Roots of Empathy' programme in the resources section as well as the inclusive learning principles outlined in action 12

6. *Informed and reflective class grouping arrangements:* Grouping decisions are often made according to students' performance and attainment tracking mechanisms. But within class young people's seatmates can make a significant difference to their experience of the classroom environment and their participation in either helping or hindering. High 'ability' groupings can cause unhealthy competitiveness, while mixed 'ability' groupings can help the lower achieving learner through peer guidance in mastering the learning objective, and for the high achiever this guidance benefits the learner by consolidating the learning objective. One strategy involves regularly prompting learners to reflect on how they are working in their group and submit their evaluations in a closed-box whereby only the teacher/educator can review seating arrangements at regular intervals. Learners may also conduct termly appraisals of the seating and grouping arrangements work best for them.

7. *Teaching social boundaries and empathy.* Whole class, or small-group discussions on what social boundaries are and how they may be supported (e.g. see Price Mitchell 2019)

Leadership strategies for supporting peer relationships

1. *Timetabled opportunity to address social relationships issues* and respond within whole-class and small group activities that promote the importance for young people in maintaining longer-term healthy relationships that can accommodate positive change.

2. *Critical reflection upon 'quick-fix' friendship interventions in school policy* e.g. the 'best friends ban' employed by some schools in London and the US whereby one-to-one friendships are discouraged due to the perceived disruption on attainment (particularly) for girls following friendship fallout. Such short-sighted policies do not recognize the importance of long-term close friendships upon children's later positive navigation of other types of relationship, including in the labour market.

3. *Signposting pastoral support mechanisms:* The process for responding to social, behavioural, psychological and emotional issues is transparent, identifies, key persons responsible, is followed consistently (see action 12).

4. *A clear student-informed bullying policy,* e.g. one in which different forms of bullying are made identifiable including; physical, verbal, 'cyber', and relational aggression (exclusion by subtle methods such as ignoring, smirking or dismissing victim's attempts to be included (see action 12).

5. *The shift from individual to collective assessment activities:* Students are de-incentivised to build collaborative relationships because they are rewarded only in terms of individual merit and performance in assessments. Assessments that include group work and collaborative learning elements emphasize the value of 'doing' relationships (seeing relationship management as an ongoing process not an achieved end). These skills have been shown to be at least as important as cognitive ability for the labour market.

6. *Low-cost or community-sponsored residential school trips:* Research shows that the effects of (non) participation in school trips and excursions on relationships in school are far reaching in building close bonds with friends and teachers. Can schools/settings partner up with local businesses, cultural/educational

providers to provide free places for low-income families? Even low-cost is too much for some families. A number of schools in Windy County acknowledge this and use Pupil Premium funding for school trips.

7. *Applying restorative justice approaches to address behaviour issues in school.* Particularly as an alternative to exclusion. This may be effective in responding to bullying or social exclusion practices within peer cohorts (see 'we are teachers' blog 2019 in resources).

8. *Instilling within teachers a recognition for the value of friendship management:* Peer relationships operate within the formal as well as the informal parts of school. It is therefore important that teachers also recognize the importance of supporting young peoples' peer relationships in informing the way they may respond to friendship issues within the classroom.

9. *Modelling appropriate relationships:* where adults working with young people demonstrate to each other and to learners what are the constituents of positive and respectful reciprocal relationships.

Individual, paired and group support for navigating relationships

1. *An approach to navigating friendships that draws on systemic/family therapy practice:* This involves considering the relational dynamics involved in the friendship dyad or group in order to consider how beliefs, actions, communication, and expectations of each member shape and impact upon others and inform relational processes (particularly concerning exclusion and inclusion). For example, training in how systemic therapeutic practice can be applied to the education context (e.g. see IFT 2020 who have run training sessions on applying family therapy to educational settings; also Pelligrini 2009 for a discussion of how systemic ideas may be applied in Educational Psychology Practice. This includes questioning and case study that could be adapted to friendship issues.)

2. *Peer Mentoring:* Older young people are well positioned to understand and relate to social relationship issues affecting younger learners. Peer mentoring must be underpinned by a recognised training programme in order that peer mentors are equipped to support young peoples' social and emotional concerns (see Kidscape Thrive peer mentoring programme in resources). This idea is further developed in action 4.

3. *Communication skills training*: particularly in providing a prompt sheet and/or guidance in how the young person can best present themselves to different audiences including; teachers, peers, employers and leadership teams; how to listen and ask questions; how to address and correspond with employers, tutors, members of the community (see action 11).

4. *Conflict management and resolution sessions:* This action recognises that some learners may need help and support in navigating friendship issues. Some staff within educational settings may think that these such issues are trivial or not within their role. However, mediation for friendship issues can play a key factor in recognising conflict, disagreement, and compromise as key aspects in managing relationships. These skills can also have direct application in navigating other types of peer relationship.

5. *Circle-time 'safe space' for addressing social issues:* a regular timeslot in the daily/weekly routine in order to raise, discuss and debate relational issues.

6. *Help in identifying the features of 'pro' and 'anti' educational friendship cultures:* a focus upon the values, expectations, norms and behaviours of the friendship group and to what extent they align with those of school, education of training. This is useful in order to depersonalise friendship or social group structures within a more general focus upon what makes healthy and unhealthy peer relationships.

7. *Identifying a panel of 'peer buddies';* Peer buddies are young people representatives that offer friendship and support for young people who have experienced challenges in making friends.

Support from external agencies or support organisations

1. *Working with organisations that provide education and support on the topic of healthy and unhealthy relationships.* One example is in providing specialist guidance in addressing key issues such as protecting young people from 'grooming'. This refers to exploitative attempts, often masquerading as older boyfriends, which lead young people into the sex industry. It also refers to the support necessary to recognize other types of physically, sexually or emotionally abusive relationships. Splitz is a local charity that includes individual resources but also an educational element on domestic abuse and consent (see resources).

2. *School nurse and local sexual health services.* Local authority webpages provide links to services that are available in their area. For example, see the resources section for links to Wiltshire council guidance and information on sexual health; and BANES council links, in particular; 'clinic in a box' and C-Card.

3. *National sexual health organisations* e.g. the Terrence Higgins Trust, the UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity. The youth arm, *Young and Free* provides advice and resources for young people regarding healthy and unhealthy relationships, and strategies for promoting sexual health (see resources).

In conclusion, it is important to recognize that strategies to support young people in building and navigating healthy peer relationships must be embedded within a culture of care, compassion and empathy. Strategies treated in isolation as an add-on or compartmentalized curriculum, will have less chance of being effective that if they are embedded within a whole-organisation culture that reflects and embodies the same principles. These activities require action and commitment on the part of the designated navigating healthy peer relationships' co-ordinator, young people, peers, teachers/trainers, leadership teams, support staff and external professionals in ensuring that positive healthy relationships are at the heart of the culture and ethos of the educational institution.

RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ Designated person (ideally this should be someone in a leadership role (e.g. pastoral lead or PSHE lead who has the authority to implement a range of strategies for supporting healthy relationships and in building a whole-school culture based on healthy relationships)
- ☐ Private space for one-to-one meetings with young person, friends and peer group
- ☐ 'Safe space/ or wellbeing room' – dedicated area for pastoral support,
- ☐ Social area – for young people to spend time in a relaxed and comfortable (personalised) environment
- ☐ Teachers responsible for social and emotional curriculum areas (i.e. PSHE; Relationships Education; Health and Wellbeing education; Character and civic education)
- ☐ External agencies (e.g. educational psychologist, health practitioner, school nurse, virtual school officer, traveller liaison worker)
- ▪ Materials / Tools:
  - ☐ Inclusive education training programmes (see resources and 'developing the actions' sections)
  - ☐ Group working resources e.g. round tables

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Schools must also be mindful of the difficulty of achieving a culture of respectful and healthy relationships within a neoliberal education context of what is called High Stakes Testing (HST). HST refers to the precedence that national tests and exams have in nations such as England, and the pressure upon schools, teachers and pupils to achieve in tests. This ethos based on comparison and competition between pupils and schools stand in stark contrast to an approach to supporting peer relationships that is founded on care, compassion and empathy. Suggested actions taken in isolation and not rooted within a whole-school approach are unlikely to be effective.

Related protective factors:

- Individualised support when needed
- Positive behaviour management system: Effective bullying strategy; patience with YP, consistent routines; managed moves
- Building trust
- Building self confidence and self-esteem
- Building young peoples' emotional wellbeing and welfare; advocating for young people, resolving problems quickly.
- Inclusive school culture; a caring ethos, school as a safe space
- Building students sense of a positive learner identity
- Young person autonomy and ownership; being trusted, supporting young person towards independence, student voice platform, too dependent upon school support
- Warm handover
- Non-teaching pastoral support

ACTION 13. Support in building and navigating healthy peer relationships

- Raising aspirations
- Integrate child into the community
- Students perceptions that they are supported
- Targeted support mechanisms
- Relationships Education: Teaching social boundaries, building team work skills, teaching empathy, modelling appropriate relationships.
- Building support networks
- Peer mentoring

TYPE OF STRATEGY

☑ **Prevention**   ☐ **Intervention**   ☐ Compensation

ADDRESSED RISK FACTOR

☐ **Personal challenges**

- ☐ Low motivation, aspirations and expectations; unrealistic expectations, worry about the future
- ☐ Disengagement
- ☐ Low self-esteem or self confidence
- ☐ Negative academic self-perception or learner identity
- ☐ Emotion Management issues; desensitisation

☐ **Social relations**

- ☐ Difficult relationships in school.
- ☐ Difficulty navigating friendships; friendship culture, poor friendship management skills, friendship expectations, not trusting friends, losing friends or difficulty retaining friends, not having friends around.
- ☐ Feeling not cared about by teachers (and school staff)
- ☐ Isolation
- ☐ Difficult relationships at work.
- ☐ Peer group challenges: low peer group expectations for the future, peer and social anxiety, peer pressure and feeling judged, peer pressure to take drugs/alcohol/smoke.

☐ **Institutional factors**

- ☐ Lack of personal, labour market, academic, social guidance
- ☐ Low trust and support of the institution

ACTION LEVEL

☐ **Individual level (psycho-pedagogical actions)**

☐ Institutional level (institutional actions)

BENEFICIARIES

☐ **Young Person**   ☐ **Teachers/Trainers**   ☐ Families   ☐ **Community**

☐ **Other beneficiaries: Other learners**

INVOLVED AGENTS *(Who is going to implement the action?)*

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ **Teaching staff**   ☐ **Other internal staff (e.g. SENCO)**   ☐ Families

☐ **Young people**   ☐ **Other professionals (internal or external to the institution**): **Leadership team**

FORM of delivery *(how do we group?)*

ACTION 13. Support in building and navigating healthy peer relationships

☐ **Individually**   ☐ **In pairs**   ☐ **Small groups**   ☐ **Class group**
☐ **According to needs of young person**

IMPLEMENTATION Timeline *(When the action is going to be implemented)*

☐ **At the beginning/welcoming**   ☐ **During the academic year**   ☐ At the end of the academic year
☐ **Transition between key stage**   ☐ …………………………………………………….

COST OF THE ACTION

☐ Low   ☐ **Medium**   ☐ High

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE ACTION

☐ **Tutor**   ☐ Teacher/Trainer   ☐ Support staff   ☐ **External expert** (e.g.   educational advisor, educational psychologist   ☐ **Leadership team (e.g. SENCO)**

REFERENCES *(related resources)*

Brown, C., (2014). *Chapter Two: The Educational Binds of Poverty' in Educational Binds of Poverty: The Lives of School Children.* Abingdon: Routledge (p17-23)

Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) Council (2020). *Sexual Health Advice for everyone*. Available online at: https://www.safebanes.com/help/emergency-contraceptionguidance   [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Boxall Profile. Available online at: https://www.nurtureuk.org/introducing-nurture/boxall-profile [Accessed 01 July 2020]
The Boxall Profile Online is: "an assessment tool for social emotional and behavioural difficulties for children and young people. It is a resource for the assessment of children and young people's social, emotional and behavioural development. The two-part checklist, which is completed by staff who know the child and young person best, is quick — and, very importantly, identifies the levels of skills the children and young people possess to access learning".

Bluestein, J and Katz, E., (2013). *Healthy vs. Unhealthy Friendships: Learning to tell the difference.* Available online at: https://janebluestein.com/2013/healthy-vs-unhealthy-friendships/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

FRIENDS for Life Youth (2020). (*Youth for teenagers) and Special FRIENDS (for children and young people on the autistic spectrum, aged 9-13 years).* Available online at: https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/learning-disabilities/our-work/employment-education/friends-for-life [Accessed 01 July 2020]
FRIENDS for Life is an evidence based educational programme that enables children to learn a range of social and emotional skills, including how to:•Identify "anxiety increasing" thoughts and to replace them with more helpful thoughts•Identify anxious (and other difficult) feelings and learn to manage them•Learn to overcome problems rather than avoid them. The programme has recieved a level 3 rating from the Education Intervention Foundation, which means that it has evidence from at least one rigorously conducted RCT/QED demonstrating a statistically significant positive impact on at least one child outcome.

Hill, A. (2016*). 'How the UK halved its teenage pregnancy rate',* the Guardian newspaper, Available online at: **https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jul/18/how-uk-halved-teenage-pregnancy-rate-public-health-strategy** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Hadley, A., Ingham, R., and Chandra-Mouli, (2016). '*Implementing the United Kingdom's ten-year teenage pregnancy strategy for England (1999-2010): How was this done and what did it achieve?' Reproductive Health*, (13) Available online at: https://reproductive-health-journal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12978-016-0255-4 [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 13. Support in building and navigating healthy peer relationships

Horvarth, M.A.H., Alys, L., Massey, K., Pina, A., Scally, M. and Adler, J.R., (2013). *'Basically... porn is everywhere': a rapid evidence assessment on the effect that access and exposure to pornography has on children and young people (PDF)*. [London]: Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC).

Institute of Family Therapy (IFT) (2020.) Training on applying systemic therapy principles in organisational contexts. Available online at: ***https://ift.org.uk/training/*** [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Kidscape (2016). *Thrive peer mentoring programme in Wiltshire*. Available online at: https://www.wiltshirehealthyschools.org/partnership-projects/kidscape/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Ledford, B., (2017). *How to know if you're in an unhealthy friendship — and how to get out of it.* Available online at: https://www.thelist.com/40945/know-youre-unhealthy-friendship-get/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

NSPCC (2015). *"Always there when I need you": ChildLine review: what's affected children in April 2014 - March 2015* (Updated 2019) London: NSPCC. Available online at: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/childline-annual-review [Accessed 01 July 2020]

NSPCC (2015). *'I saw your willy!' Video for young people on the risks to sexting*. Available online at: https://youtu.be/z1n9Jly3CQ8 [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Parker, I., (2014). *Young people, sex and relationships: the new norms*. Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) Survey. Available online at: http://www.ippr.org/files/publications/pdf/young-people-sex-relationships_Aug2014.pdf?noredirect=1 [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Pellegrini, D. W., (2009). *Applied systemic theory and educational psychology: can the twain ever meet?,* Educational Psychology in Practice, 25:3, 271-286, DOI: 10.1080/02667360903151841

Price Mitchell, M., (2019). *Teach Your Teen to Set Emotional Boundaries: Four tips that will increase your child's happiness*. *Psychology Today*. Available online at: https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/the-moment-youth/201904/teach-your-teen-set-emotional-boundaries [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Public Health England (2015). *Health promotion for sexual and reproductive health and HIV: Strategic action plan, 2016 to 2019*. Available online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-hiv-strategic-action-plan [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Public Health England, (2019) *Health Profiles -Children and Young People's Health, Under 18 conceptions*. Available online at: http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/4/gid/8000073/pat/6/par/E12000009/ati/101/are/E06000022/iid/20401/age/173/sex/2 [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Roots of Empathy. Available online at: https://uk.rootsofempathy.org/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Roots of Empathy is an international organization that offers empathy-based programs for children, with research to prove impact. It is a leader in the empathy movement. It has shown significant effect in reducing levels of aggression among schoolchildren by raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy. It is a leader in the empathy movement. *The Roots of Empathy*: As an international initiative started in Canada it is now employed in 11 countries worldwide. It aims to build SEL and empathy. The concept runs from pre-school to year nine and involves bringing a parent and baby from the community into school every 3 weeks alongside a guided empathy coach. The baby's social, emotional and cognitive development is the focus of the visits and through this, children reflect on and learn about healthy social and emotional development. Through the baby's bond with the parent they also learn about responsible parenting. The programme has received a 2+ rating from the ESF and a cost rating Level 1.

Splitz Support Services .Available online at: https://www.splitz.org/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

ACTION 13. Support in building and navigating healthy peer relationships

Splitz Support Service is a registered charity delivering support services to adults and young people experiencing the trauma of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Splitz delivers services across south-west England.

Terrence Higgins Trust (2020) *Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships*, Available online at:
https://youngandfree.org.uk/relationships/healthy-and-unhealthy-relationships/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

We are Teachers (2019). *What Teachers Need to Know About Restorative Justice:What is this alternative to suspension, and does it really work?* Available online at: https://www.weareteachers.com/restorative-justice/ [Accessed 01 July 2020]

Wiltshire Council (2020). *Guidance and information on sexual health*. Available online at:
http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-health-sexual-health; [Accessed 01 July 2020]