



July 2024

# End of year newsletter

Inspiring Choices July Newsletter

Welcome to our end of 2023/2024 academic year newsletter. This year has been our busiest year yet, and we couldn't be happier with how it has gone!

Please, read through to see what we have been up to in the second half of the year, and to learn about a what we have upcoming.

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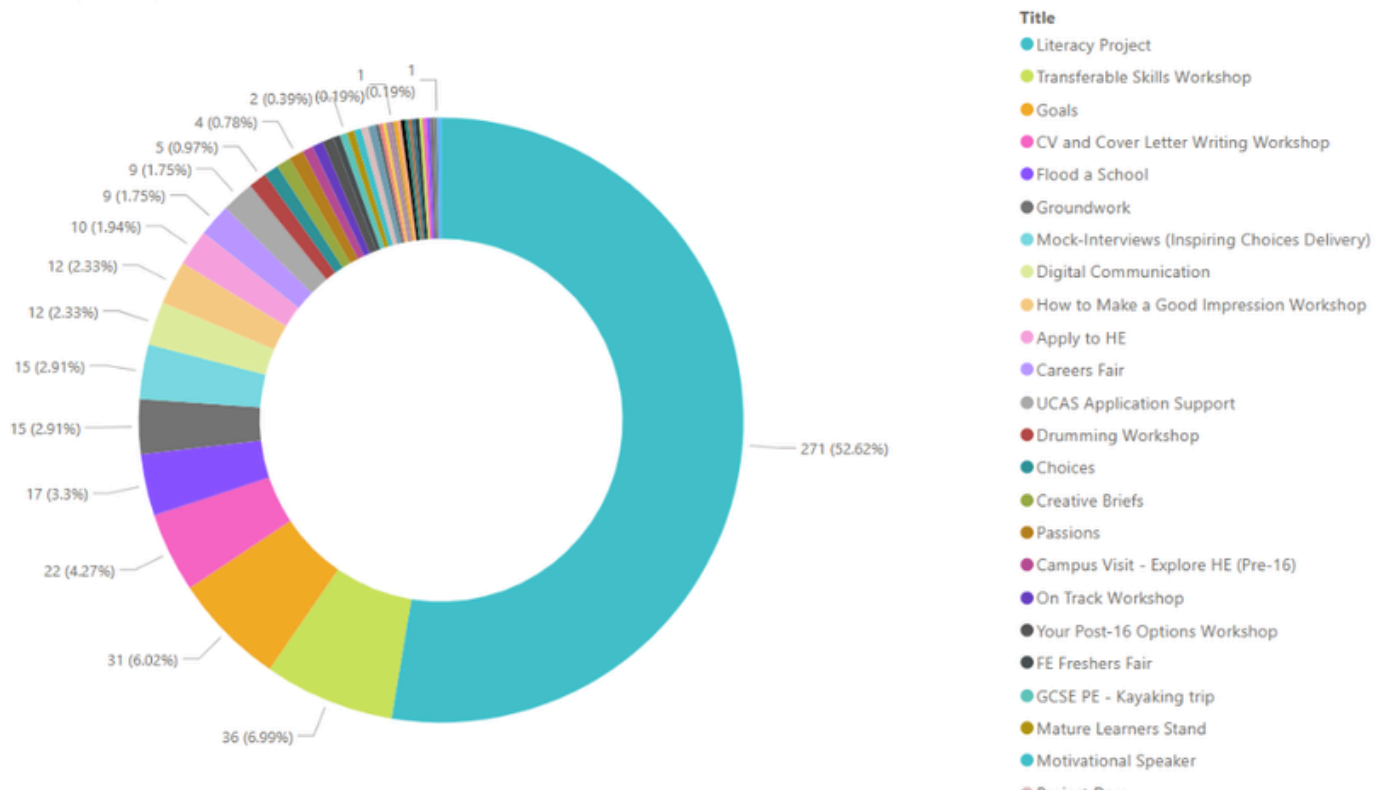
# Data snapshot from (most of) 2023/2024

With lots of activity going ahead in a busy final half term of 2023/24 there is still data for us to collect. However, up until May half term, Inspiring Choices had delivered 515 activities with learners from 18 schools and colleges in York and North Yorkshire. These activities accounted for over 440 contact hours. We have worked with over 2000 unique learners this academic year and registered over 4600 learners to our activities meaning we have worked with some learners on more than one occasion.

<p>Activities</p> <h2 style="margin: 0;">515</h2>	<p>Activity contact hours</p> <h2 style="margin: 0;">441.39</h2>	<p>Learners registered to activities (non-unique)</p> <h2 style="margin: 0;">4637</h2>	<p>Unique learners</p> <h2 style="margin: 0;">2080</h2>
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As part of our Literacy Project, we delivered 271 one-to-one literacy sessions across two schools. Our Employability sessions which include Transferable skills, CV and Cover Letter Writing, How to Make a Good Impression remain as our most requested workshops. Our new Future Selves activities including Goals, Choices and Passions have also been popular workshops in this academic year.

Number of Activities by Activity Title



# Recent projects and events

## Podcasting Project

Over three sessions in May and June, Inspiring Choices worked with George Pindar School and Graham School in Scarborough to teach their students about podcasting!

Led by Jonathon Brown, course leader for Media Production and Journalism at York St. John, and with the help of three third-year students, groups from George Pindar and Graham School were given the opportunity to create their own podcast from start to finish.

Our first two sessions were hosted in-school, where the students learned what a podcast is, how they are created, and the types of equipment used. Getting to grips with recording was a must – students practiced recording different sounds in their first session, interviewing their friends, fighting to be heard over the sound of the windy sea breeze and noisy seagulls.

In their second session, Jonathon explained the format of a podcast, encouraging students to think about their topic, what specific questions could be asked, who would be the host, and more. There's a lot to consider when making a podcast! Once they had decided on a topic within their groups, it was time to practice the introduction. Hosts took charge, drawing their audiences in with exciting taglines and quite a bit of giggling. It was agreed by everyone that recording yourself is a little daunting, but everyone found their footing by the third session.

Lastly, both schools visited York St. John, where they recorded their full 10 minute podcasts. We heard a lot of fun subjects, including movie discussion, the Euros and England's chances, thoughts on music's Top-40, and even Bayer Leverkusen's undefeated (at the time!) season.

After that, students were given the chance to record a TV show! Taking on the role of news anchors, weather presenters, and behind-the-scenes crew, they were given the full experience of working on a news show. It was quick-paced and good fun for everyone involved.

Inspiring Choices staff also delivered a variety of activities and a campus tour of York St. John. Students reflected on their experience, the skills they had developed, and told us all about their opportunities for the future.

Inspiring Choices would like to thank Johnathon for sharing his expertise and time, creating a fantastic opportunity for these students, and perhaps inspiring future podcasts! We would also like to thank the student volunteers, Paige, Sophie and Todd for their hard work and help in creating the podcasts.

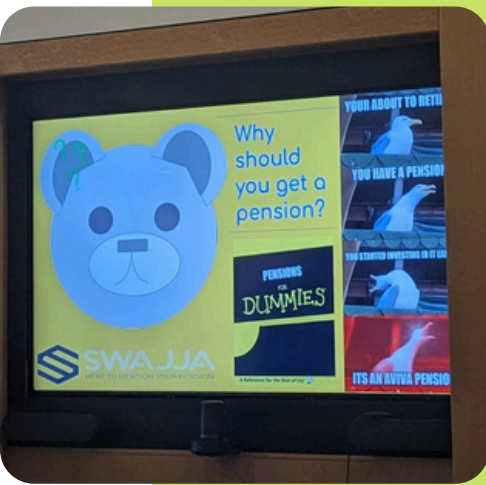
**Molly Crowe**

Outreach Coordinator



## Project Dare

Project Dare is run in partnership with [York Cares](#). The aim is for students to learn more about different types of employment and employers and to experience different types of workplaces. The Project also always includes some type of team challenge and public speaking / presenting. This aims to increase students' confidence levels and teamwork skills.



### February - Aviva

Back in February, students from Scarborough UTC participated in Project Dare which was run by Aviva.

Students came onto York St John University campus for 2 sessions to learn more about Aviva and hear from employees from different areas of the company. Alongside that students were tasked with making presentations on their chosen area of insurance and gear it towards young people. The final session included presentations in Aviva's boardroom and a tour of the building. Although some of the memes went over our heads, all of the students did a fantastic job!

### June - Nestle

Just a couple weeks ago now, students from Richmond School participated in Project Dare with Nestle. The first session was at York St John University where they were introduced to some Nestle employees and learned more about the company. The students were surprised to learn just how many brands and products Nestle oversees.

The second session was at the Nestle factory in York. Students took part in 'CEO for a day' activities, where students were tasked with making big decisions, keeping in mind finances, communications and sustainability. Lastly, we got to check out the KitKat factory (my favourite bit!).

### Annie Smith

Finance and Comms Administrator



## NEON Symposium

Back in June a few members of our team went to the University of West London for the NEON Summer Symposium. We were proud to present two of our projects: Attainment raising literacy project and our care leavers London Residential and partnership with John Lewis. Please get in touch if you would like to know more about either of these amazing projects.

### Annie Smith

Finance and Comms Administrator



## STEM Conference

STEMming from the successes of previous years, the Inspiring Choices team in partnership with the National Railway Museum put their sySTEMs in place for the 2024 annual STEM conference. STEMmed from a desire to champion opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, our usually STEM abSTEMious team approached the NRM and some fantastic STEM employers from the county to sySTEMatically produce a fun day of talks and activities celebrating all things science.

Despite the diSTEMperature of the chilly July day, the epiSTEMic activities started with a visit to NRM's recently opened Wonderlab where the year 9s in attendance could let their ideas take STEM and experiment with the interactive gallery to their hearts content. After, the schools were split into two groups, one to explore a careers fair, the other to attend an ex-STEM-porary (that one was bad, I know) employer panel featuring staff from the National Railway Museum, Fera Science LTD, and our very own Laura Fenwick from Inspiring Choices. The collective panel talked about how their chosen careers in STEM had STEMmed from their educational journey, and gave some invaluable insight into what future STEM enthusiasts can look forward to. After a brief intermission for lunch, our guests split into three groups for a carousel of activities ran by NRM including a museum tour, stop motion Lego challenge, and an explosive demonstration in the Wonderlab! All in all, it was a sySTEMatic success, and we sincerely hope that future opportunities and events can STEM from this wonderful day.

**Alex Hargreaves**

Outreach Officer



## Strategic outreach

### Launch of My Future: Young Carers programme

This summer term sparked the launch of the 'My Future', a programme specifically designed for pupils with caring responsibilities who secondary schools. As part of this new strategic group, the programme consists of visits to further and higher education institutions and the opportunity to meet other young from various secondary schools across York and North Yorkshire.

I've visited four schools -ranging from Selby High to Risedale School to introduce the project to young carers at the schools.

The project is set to commence, with the launch at York St John University on Tuesday 15th October, we look forward to networking with young carers.

**Lydia Macpherson**

Outreach Coordinator

### Military Service Children Project

This year we have introduced a new project working with military service children from three schools across North Yorkshire. Throughout April, we visited each of the schools twice to introduce the project. During these sessions, students learnt about HE and the kind of support available to military service children. We then challenged students to work in teams to design their own University society. The students had some amazing ideas from a sponsored football society to a Lord of the Rings based society!

In May we invited all three schools to York St John University over the course of two days. While visiting the campus, students took part in budgeting workshops, had a tour of campus and had the opportunity to finish working on their society designs. We finished the campus visit with a trip to the University Arts Foyer, where the students presented their society designs to a panel of judges. Much like dragons' den, the students sold their designs brilliantly and creatively. However, prizes were awarded to the culture club, culinary society and Specops society for their imagination and ingenuity.

We hope that all schools participating in the project had a wonderful experience. It was great to see such enthusiasm and teamwork in action throughout the project. A special thanks also go to the York St John widening participation team who co-ran the project.

**Abbie Salkeld**

Outreach Coordinator



## Armed Forces Day: Catterick Garrison

On the 19th of June, Inspiring Choices were invited to attend the Armed Forces Day at Catterick Garrison. The day brought together schools from across North Yorkshire to learn about military service and meet people working in a variety of military fields. To start the morning, we saw a wonderful display from the Gurkhas showing their incredible skill. We were also excited to be invited to run a stall on the day for students to get involved with.

Inspiring choices set up a range of HE themed activities including giant Jenga, jeopardy, design your own military service shield and an escape room. We were delighted to see so many students getting involved and learning a lot throughout the day. Thank you to Catterick Garrison for hosting us and to Angela Campbell for inviting us to be a part of a very special day. We hope to be back again in the future!

**Abbie Salkeld**

Outreach Coordinator



## Military Service Children residential

On the 11th of July, Inspiring Choices ran our first ever Military Service Child residential. A group of year 7 and 8 students travelled over to the Peak District to take part in two days of outdoor activities and skill building challenges. Through the company Lost Earth, students got involved in climbing, abseiling and Gorge walking. The group showed amazing teamwork and resilience as they tackled new challenges together.

It was amazing to see the students face fears and support each other, despite the sometimes rainy weather. On the evening, students discussed their experiences of being military service children and found out more about their future educational options.

Inspiring Choices would like to thank Lost Earth and Hartington Hall for their help in organising a brilliant residential.

**Abbie Salkeld**

Outreach Coordinator



## Stakeholder consultation


Thank you so much to our stakeholders who responded to our survey in February. We gained fantastic feedback on how our activities and workshops had been received by staff and students.

The survey covered Inspiring Choices' run activity, bespoke, third party, and strategic outreach that we had delivered and been involved in between August 2023 - February 2024. Responses were high and positive, with 60% of responses strongly agreeing that we are effective in our communication, have added value to their organisation and are focusing on the priorities within stakeholder's local communities.

Stakeholders praised Inspiring Choices for 'making a big difference to many students' lives and aspirations on the Yorkshire coast' and as 'outstanding for the opportunities and grants as well as support they have offered us'.

Employability and HE assembly were considered the most successful Inspiring Choices (IC) led activities on offer to students. What is HE?, Beginners guide to HE and careers fairs were the most popular IC led opportunities. Stakeholders reported Unifrog as successful as it has 'enabled students to independently explore career options' and Grofar as successful as it has 'enabled student's career engagement to be tracked'.

We are incorporating suggested alterations from the June 2023 and February 2024 stakeholder consultations into our provision for the next academic year. We are also excited to receive and disseminate the results of the live July 2024 stakeholder consultation, which can be found [here](#).



Please can you get your responses in by 31st July. Thank you, in anticipation for your participation. Presentations of the findings from both the June 2023 and February 2024 stakeholder consultations can be found [here](#).



# Upcoming residential

## Care leavers' London residential

Inspiring Choices are very excited to be teaming up with North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council again this year for our second annual Care Leavers London residential!

Alex, Annie, and Penny will be shepherding 16 care leavers from the two authorities around some of London's most exciting HE providers and employers for a 36 hour whirlwind trip around the capital. If you haven't heard about last year's trip, here's a quick [recap](#); 13 young people, 3 council staff, and the IC team covered 25.8 combined miles of four different tube lines, and walked (approximately) 19283 steps over two days to visit the John Lewis Partnership, Kings College London, and the Financial Ombudsman as well as going on a sightseeing walking tour and exploring Covent Garden to learn about different opportunities at big big companies. We even learnt what futurology was; yes that is a real opportunity! And now this award winning trip (insert bashful reference to humility) is coming back on the 16th-17th July 2024! And we're back and better than ever, having learnt from some teensy weensy teething problems from last year.

We'll be visiting the University of the Arts London, the world famous Science Museum and we'll be getting the insider info from John Lewis's flagship department store on Oxford Street to learn about product design. What a jam-packed couple of days. If I remembered more stuff from our futurology session last year, I could have looked forward a few weeks and given a detailed report of all the gossip from the adventure, but alas I may have misunderstood what futurology is. So for now it is just a little preview of an exciting article for a future newsletter. So be sure to have a butchers at the next newsletter to find out. Yes, I had to get a laboured cockney rhyming slang reference in to sign off.

**Alex Hargreaves**  
Outreach Officer



## Thank you!

We wanted to take a minute to acknowledge all of our partners, schools and stakeholders for their collaboration in our work. We know our work would not be possible without all of you supporting us and believing in the importance of our work.

From massive events and residentials, to delivery sessions in schools, none of it would be possible without you, so thank you! We are beyond excited to see what we can achieve in the next academic year.

We hope you all have a happy, relaxing (and hopefully a bit warmer!) summer.

**Annie Smith**

Finance and Communications Administrator

## Get in touch with us



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