

## Why It's Working

Many of the young people we work with have been excluded or absent from education for many years and often came from unstable families. Some struggle with addiction, have low literacy and numeracy skills, a lack of confidence and low self-esteem. The non-formal environment our YAFs provide has been created to suit the needs of these kinds of young people far better than a mainstream school setting. So after what can be a challenging settling-in period attendance of the students improves significantly along with marked positive behaviour changes.

The evidence we have gathered indicates that the majority of young people attending our YAFs are taking important steps back into education. The Foundations have successfully helped many to achieve awards and qualifications, and provided them with further positive exit routes.



When we compare local data on transitions of students out of the NEET category, YAFs are successful in helping to engage and retain students in education. For non-YAF students the most popular destinations out of NEET are employment (45 per cent in December 2010) and government supported training (34 per cent). For YAF students most known destinations are into further education (85.2 per cent), with relatively few students moving directly on to employment (13.1 per cent).

## The YAF Experience

John was referred to a Youth Achievement Foundation by his Local Authority. Aged 15 he had been permanently excluded from two mainstream schools and was also a young offender dealing with a myriad of issues beyond his education.

Even so once he became engaged with our non-formal curriculum he quickly gained confidence. Through a variety of activities and challenges such as mountain-biking, cooking and video production he started to really enjoy learning.

With this growing sense of self-belief he felt more comfortable attempting to gain formal qualifications. This in-turn enabled him to access mainstream college and go on to pursue a career in plastering.

John has gone on to volunteer as a mentor of other young people, helping them deal with the same challenges he once faced.

*"Here you get asked, not told to do something. You get shown respect, so you show respect back."*

*"It's a lot better than any other place I've been to. They're more tolerant, they seem to understand."*

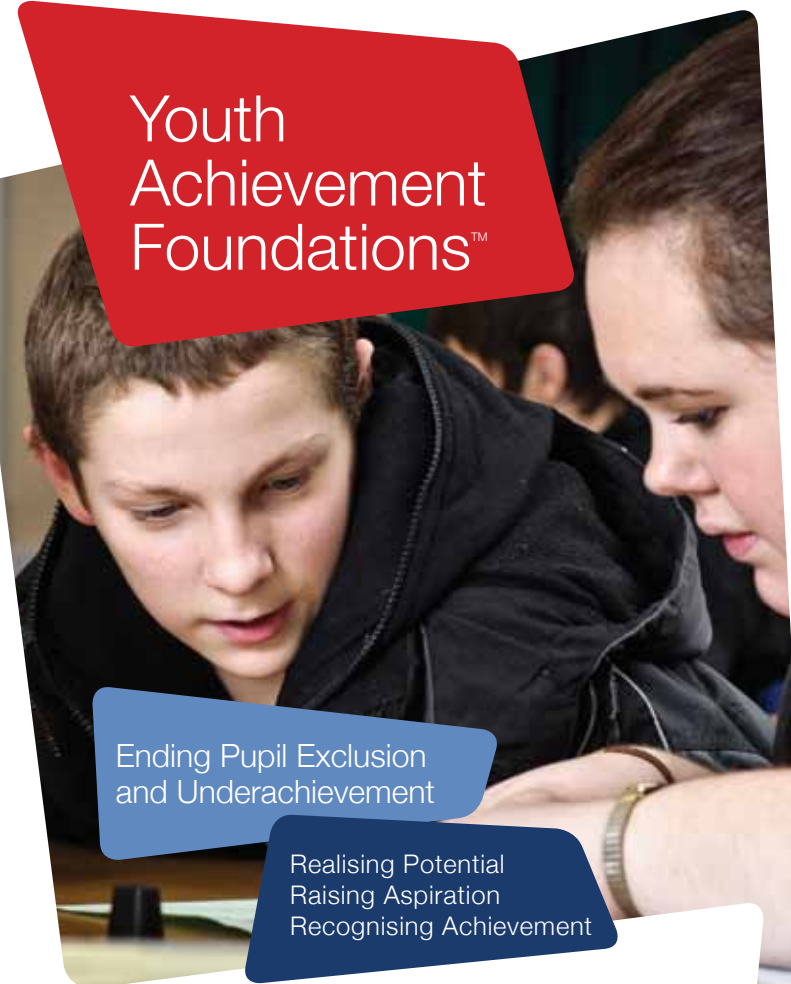
*"I've calmed down a lot since I came here. I used to be really in-your-face, but now I'm more relaxed."*

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## Youth Achievement Foundations™



Ending Pupil Exclusion  
and Underachievement

Realising Potential  
Raising Aspiration  
Recognising Achievement

## Exclusion: It's expensive and it isn't working

England remains the biggest excluder of young people in Europe. The most recent figures show there were more than 330,000 fixed-term and 5,740 permanent exclusions.

### Crime

A survey of 15-18 year-olds held in custody found that 90% of young men and 75% of young women had been excluded from school.

### The Riots

On average young people involved in the August 2011 riots missed almost 1 day of school per week. 36% of them had at least one fixed-term exclusion.

### The Cost

The average cost of intervention after a young person has entered the criminal justice system is £79,000 p.a.

Excluding young people is extremely costly & there is no need for it. UK Youth has established a proven alternative.

## Our Approach

In 2008 UK Youth set up its' first Youth Achievement Foundation (YAF). This independent centre was run in partnership with an expert local education provider. It offered an engaging vocational and activity-based curriculum of personal development, alongside literacy, numeracy and other core subjects.

It proved so successful that we have since gone on to build a national network of YAFs from Hampshire in the south to Middlesbrough in the north. Our YAFs have become a robust and effective way to engage marginalised young people at the fringes of mainstream education.



**Student Attendance**  
Students are typically referred with attendance records of well below 50%. Foundations quickly turn this around and average attendance across our network is above 77%.

After YAF

Before YAF

**Accredited Outcomes**  
Young people often arrive with a zero-outcome rating. This too is resolved - 100% of YAF students gain accredited outcomes, frequently achieving equivalence of a GCSE C grade.

## An Affordable Option

Secondary schools often have significant budgets and need appropriate options when commissioning alternative places for pupils at risk of exclusion. Forming school partnerships can increase budget flexibility and allow the varied needs of students to be met. Some can be educated annually for £4,000, others at between £8,000-£15,000, while a few individuals with therapeutic needs can cost over £20,000. A YAF is able to meet the needs of all these challenging students at two thirds of what a Pupil Referral Unit will charge and deliver excellent educational outcomes.

The advantages are considerable for vulnerable young people and YAFs are an effective way of keeping them engaged with education up to and beyond school leaving age. For a small short-term investment there are significant long-term savings to be made.

## Success Stories Youth Achievement Foundations



Working in partnership with expert local education providers UK Youth has established a network of Youth Achievement Foundations that are supporting hundreds of young people up and down the country. Set up under the previous government the YAF model has proven so successful the current administration has renewed funding to ensure further expansion.

Here's what people are saying about our Youth Achievement Foundations:

"Leaders and staff at the Bristol YAF have gone that extra mile to maximise opportunities for all." Ofsted Report.

"Until Charlton came in I had given up all hope on my son becoming anything but since starting there he loves it. His attendance is up from 20% to 100%, and he is on course for the equivalent of

7 GCSE's. The staff have supported me in finally accessing the support he was entitled to. Words don't it justice - Thank you!" Parent.

"St Thomas's provides an ideal place for young people to re-engage with education, gain qualifications and plan for a positive future." Dudley Local Education Authority.

"The level of wrap around care and the outcomes achieved with these young people means I would not hesitate to recommend the Sheffield YAF." Education Welfare Officer.

"I have been particularly impressed with how far staff at the Teeside YAF take their duty of care and how well they work with parents. They are really responsive and always seek to find a solution." Assistant Headteacher.