



North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area

Scarborough | Whitby | Filey | @coastOA

NYCOA Year 5 – Sustainable Development

Critical Enabling Themes

- Skills for employment and professional development
- Ambition and aspiration
- An outstanding education workforce
- Children and young people’s mental health

Programme Director
Richard Benstead

Project Manager
Gavin Hayman

Project Overview

The extension of the project into a fifth year will allow further work to support the critical enabling themes that underpin the priority areas of the NYCOA.

The foci outlined below have sustainability at their core. Various projects that link to each of these foci will continue to build a more inclusive approach across the area and further develop schools’ effectiveness in supporting children and young people who may be at risk of disengagement, or who present with behaviour that challenges. We expect to see this work continue to reduce the number of permanent and fixed-term exclusions (suspensions) in the area.

60
vulnerable Year 6 pupils supported with weekly mentoring sessions to make a good transition to Year 7

24

schools and dozens of professionals trained in Nurture, promoting inclusion and accessing the Boxall Profile to support their pupils

A key challenge in this last year of the project is for the NYCOA to support schools, the Local Authority and others to work together to build on the momentum and sustain any gains achieved. Multi-school, cross-phase initiatives like the Sidewalk Y6-Y7 Transition Project are already having a significant impact. Going forward, such schemes will need to be led and managed locally; projects not yet conceived will require structures in which they can take root and strong, system leadership in order to develop and grow.

Project Foci

Following conversations with school and community leaders and an evaluation of the impact of NYCOA initiatives to date, we have selected five key strands for the fifth year of the project:

39%

fewer secondary FTEs in Scarborough and Whitby (20/21 cf. 19/20) with schools embedding positive, inclusive approaches, supported by the NYCOA

1. Develop and Support Access to Alternative Provision

We will continue work to increase the breadth and quality of local Alternative Provision that schools can commission to provide a wider and more focussed offer to young people at risk of exclusion and where schools see an opportunity to raise aspirations. NYCOA will continue to support schools financially to access bespoke AP.

Alternative Provision has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on schools and individual pupils, reducing exclusions, fostering improvements in school behaviour and supporting pupils to access tailored learning and support. Extending this access through to a fifth year is popular with school leaders and supports our project aims, given the challenges schools face re-integrating pupils into school routines and practices after a disrupted series of academic years.

2. Develop and Embed a Nurture-based Approach to Behaviour and Relationships

In schools that have adopted a restorative, relational approach, indicators of poor SEMH (such as high exclusion rates, poor attendance and disruptive behaviour necessitating sanctions) have reduced so we will continue to

support schools and settings to move towards a more relational, restorative and inclusive approach that promotes the social and emotional wellbeing of the whole school community.

In 2019-20, the NYCOA provided funding to individual secondary schools to enable them to pursue an approach to behaviour and relationships of their choosing. In 2020-21, in order to create a single, consistent approach and sow the seeds for sustainable development via supportive inter-school networks, the NYCOA commissioned training to develop a Nurture-based approach to behaviour and relationships, providing this to 24 primary schools in area. In the final year of the project, the NYCOA will work with stakeholders – including the Locality Board, Yorkshire Endeavour Academy Trust (YEAT) and schools already involved in the project – to grow and embed the Nurture approach. The NYCOA will continue to provide guidance and support to *all* schools in the area, regardless of their approach, to develop relational, restorative and inclusive practice that promotes social and emotional wellbeing.

3. Improve Transition and Provide Access to Mentoring for Vulnerable Pupils

The NYCOA has previously supported small numbers of pupils who have struggled with the transition to secondary school, via the Building Bridges project. In parallel, some schools have taken advantage of NYCOA funding to provide mentoring, using specialist organisations in the locality.

In 2020-21, the NYCOA developed the Y6-Y7 Transition Project to support pupils to make a successful move to secondary school. This involved weekly 1:1 mentoring sessions for 60 of the most vulnerable pupils in the area with the aim of reducing anxiety and improving behaviour and attendance outcomes at secondary school. Initial feedback from pupils, parents and school leaders has been overwhelmingly positive so we will continue to expand this project so more pupils can benefit from mentoring support as they move up to secondary school.

4. Develop Parental Advocacy to Improve Engagement with Schools

The NYCOA has provided significant funding for workforce development to improve behaviour. Research indicates that effective parental advocacy can also support schools to reflect on policies and approaches to improve behaviour and relationships and reduce exclusion rates. Where this approach has been implemented elsewhere, it has significantly improved home-school relationships, inclusion and exclusion rates.

The NYCOA would like to work with schools, the Locality Board and partners in Early Help, SENDIASS and elsewhere to develop a Parental Advocacy pilot and approach that works for everyone. Advocates will support parents to engage positively with school before difficulties develop and to make respectful and reasonable representations if matters progress to formal exclusion meetings. Similarly, schools will benefit from better relationships and independent support to reflect upon and adapt their approaches to be more inclusive.

5. Facilitate Communication, Project Support and Effective School/LA Relationships

Over the years, the Local Authority has changed how schools can access services. Understanding of these changes and take up of support (before and since restructuring into Locality Boards and Locality Hubs) has been variable. In addition, many NYCOA schools have gone through significant staffing, organisational and leadership changes. As might be expected, this has affected communication, information sharing and relationships.

The NYCOA has played a role in signposting LA and other support, developing and managing resources and creating or facilitating partnerships. In the final year of the project, we will continue to support better communication and relationships between schools ('school to school support') and between schools and the Local Authority, encouraging engagement via the Locality Board and Locality Hubs. We will also provide challenge to schools to improve existing networks and structures or create new ones to develop, drive and troubleshoot new projects and initiatives into the future.

These foci – and the many projects that link to each strand – emerged as a direct result of discussions with school leaders and an assessment of the impact of work undertaken over the preceding four years. With continued commitment and buy-in from the widest possible group of stakeholders in this final year of the project, we will move ever closer to our shared aim to improve outcomes for our schools, our children and young people, our families and our coastal communities.

Gavin Hayman, NYCOA Project Manager