

**Developing the Young Workforce - Interesting Practice in Skills (3-18) exemplar:**

**‘Workout’ Programme at South Ayrshire Council**

The following document provides a brief summary of the key elements of this project.

For more information please access this exemplar on the National Improvement Hub here: <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/searchresults?k=DYW>

**1. Introduction**

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| **Establishment** | South Ayrshire Council |
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| **About the establishment:** | Local Authority |
| **Main tags** | Secondary,  ASN  Employability  Employer engagement  Training provider  Equalities and inclusion  Parents  Skills Development Scotland  Senior phase |

**2. Current developments:**

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| **Overview** | ‘Workout’ is an innovative and successful programme that is delivering sustainable positive destinations for targeted young people in the senior phase of curriculum for excellence in South Ayrshire. The programme provides a curricular option for young people who are identified as at risk of failing to progress to a positive post school destination through an early intervention approach and is a key element of South Ayrshire’s activity around Developing the Young Workforce. The programme supports young people to develop skills for learning, life and work through long term, supported work placements which offer opportunities for accredited learning.  Workout provides long term work placements for up to 100 young people in S4-S6 across all secondary schools in South Ayrshire.  **Selection:**  Young people are selected for participation on a targeted basis through each school’s MCMC partnership. MCMC partnerships use the Click and Go 16+ risk matrix to identify young people at risk of failing to make a positive transition due to risk factors including attainment, attendance, additional support needs, behaviour, looked after status, social deprivation etc. The risk matrix supports the school to identify an at-risk cohort and this is used to inform selection for Workout and other MCMC interventions. The selection process takes place in the spring term and young people are selected on the basis that the school and partners believe there is a significant risk that they will leave school without an offer of further learning, employment or training and that participation in Workout will support them to develop confidence and work readiness skills. Once identified, young people take part in an informal selection interview to ensure that they understand the programme and the expectations of participants. This includes the expectation that their participation in Workout depends on their continued attendance and commitment to other elements of their curriculum.  **Placement matching:**  Each school has a link Employability and Skills Officer who in addition to providing transition support to targeted young people, supports the delivery of Workout in that school. Following selection, young people identify their preferred occupational areas and during the summer the employability and skills team engage with placement providers to match young people to placements. Young people are placed within a range of workplaces across local employers, South Ayrshire Council and community planning partners. In order to meet the increased demand following the expansion to all schools, the employability and skills team has increased the range of placements available and currently has an employer engagement database of 276 local employers. The team also engages closely with Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce, who support the delivery of the council’s mainstream school work experience programme to identify suitable placements.  **Work placement:**  Young people’s participation in Workout involves a one-day-a-week placement between September and the Easter break. In order to give young people a realistic experience of the world of work the placement will follow the working pattern of the placement provider. For example, young people placed with local golf courses start work at 7am. During the course of the programme the young people engage regularly with their link Employability and Skills officer who offers ongoing support to ensure they get the most out of their placement. For some young people this may involve changing placements. Young people are supported to access their placement through either travel passes or taxis where required.  **Personal development / accredited learning:**  In addition to the work placement element, Workout participants take part in personal development and accredited learning activities. This includes participation in team building activities at Dolphin House, completion of youth achievement awards through fundraising activity and completion of core skills SQA units. Following discussions with schools through the strategic MCMC group the employability and skills team are piloting the delivery of the Introduction to Workplace Skills SQA award for Workout participants in Marr College in 2015/16.  **Transition**  Following a review of the programme, the support to participants is now provided by a link Employability and Skills Officer in each school. Previously one officer supported the programme across all schools. This change was put in place to better offer individual support to participants and critically to provide a continuity of support to young people as they reach transition point. During the course of the programme the employability and skills officer works with the young person in partnership with Skills Development Scotland to identify their plans for the end of the programme. This may include progression to employment, further education, training or returning to school. |
| **Impact** | The Workout programme has delivered consistent, positive outcomes for young people in South Ayrshire. This includes progression from the programme to positive destinations of continued learning, training or employment as well as softer indicators around improved confidence and communication.  In 2014/15, 93% of young people in the programme progressed to a positive destination. 100 placements were initially available to schools and 72 young people participated in the programme. Of those, 67 progressed to a positive destination: 33 moved to college, 25 returned to school, 6 entered employment, 3 took up training and 5 had an unknown destination. This follows similar results in 2013/14 when out of 74 young people: 29 returned to school, 28 moved to college, 11 entered training and 5 entered employment with 1 young person destination being unknown.  These outcomes highlight the positive impact of an early intervention approach and the benefits of increased vocational and work experience options to support young people to maintain engagement in the curriculum. Young people who remain at school for a fifth and sixth year are more likely to enter a positive destination when leaving and the approach taken through Workout has supported significant numbers of at risk young people to remain engaged with education and continue school-based learning. For other young people, early engagement with the employability and skills team through Workout has supported them to make choices about their future learning pathways and move directly to further learning or training without becoming disengaged and being picked up post-school through an activity agreement or other informal learning opportunity.  In addition to the positive quantitative outcomes of the programme, Workout achieves clear soft outcomes for young people in terms of the positive impact it has on them individually. Evaluations were carried out with participants, parents, schools and placement providers and were overwhelmingly positive:   * 100% of participants said the programme improved their confidence * 100% of parents said the programme improved communication skills * 90% of participants said the programme improved their attitude to school * 81% of participants said the programme improved their attendance at school * 67% of parents said the programme improved attitudes to studying / homework * 86% of participants said the programme gave them a good understanding of an occupational area * 100% of workplace supervisors said they saw an increase in confidence from participants and 100% said they would be happy to take another placement. |
| **Best piece of advice** | The Workout programme is integrated within South Ayrshire’s approach to ensuring at risk young people are supported to make a positive transition from school. All schools have strong MCMC partnerships which are led by the school and attended by the Employability and Skills team, Skills Development Scotland, Community Learning, Ayrshire College and third sector partners.  Part of the success of Workout has been the partnership approach to identifying appropriate young people for the programme, supporting their participation and working in partnership to plan their transition at the ned of the programme, whether this is a return to school or progression to post-school learning or employment. |
| **Curriculum links** | The Workout programme helps young people develop the key skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work detailed in BTC4.  The preparation, selection, training and placement components of the Workout programme promote skills development in literacy, health and wellbeing, personal learning planning, career management skills, working with others, physical co-ordination and movement skills all with a clear focus on employability. |
| **Wider DYW context** | Workout is delivered by South Ayrshire Council’s Employability and Skills team who provide a range of youth employability focused activity including MCMC Partnership support, Activity Agreements, Employability Fund, Modern Apprenticeships and Employer Recruitment Incentives.  Young people’s participation supports the planning of post-school destinations and can ensure an effective transition to these options. Engagement with the Employability and Skills service through Workout can support young people to ‘miss a stage’ on the employability pipeline, for example by progressing directly from Workout to a Modern Apprenticeship. |
| **Partnerships** | MCMC partnerships have been established in all secondary schools and are attended by the Employability and Skills Team, SDS, CLD, Ayrshire College and other partners including Police Scotland, Active Schools, Community Safety and local voluntary organisations.  The Employability and Skills team works extensively with local employers and has a placement database of 276 employers. |
| **Next steps** | The Employability and Skills team are piloting the delivery of the Introduction to Workplaces Skills award for Workout participants at Marr College and are exploring opportunities for increased delivery of accreditation through the programme |
| **Quotations** | *I like talking to people more now and it has made me realise I would like a job working with others. The programme has made me see the importance of school. I have enjoyed it and it has let me see what the world of work is like. I know you must attend every day and get there on time!”*  ***Workout participant – Queen Margaret Academy***  *“Blair has become more confident in his ability to take on new challenges and has more self-confidence in general. Taking part in the programme has reinforced Blair’s wish to get into the work-place as soon as possible. I think the programme gives youngsters a great, informative insight into the world of work and would endorse it for more young people”*  ***Parent – Girvan Academy***  *The Work Out! programme has provided a valuable opportunity for our young people.  It has allowed them the opportunity to develop ‘Skills for Work’ within the framework of a wider school curriculum.  It has also afforded valuable opportunities for some of our more vulnerable learners to develop increased self-esteem, confidence and positively increase their preparation for securing and sustaining positive destinations.*  **DHT – Kyle Academy** |

**3. Added value**

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| **Resources** |  |
| **Web links** | <http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/step.aspx> |
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