



**North Area Council**

Darton East, Darton West, Old Town, St Helens

# Youth Resilience Fund Review

Unveiling Resilience: Case Studies & Feedback  
from the North Area Council Youth Resilience

2020 - 2024



# Youth Resilience Fund Review

Unveiling Resilience: Feedback from participants, teachers and parents

“ Youth work offers young people safe spaces to explore their identity, experience decision-making, increase their confidence, develop interpersonal skills and think through the consequences of their actions. This leads to better-informed choices, changes in activity and improved outcomes for young people. ”

National Youth Agency

## \*YMCA & Ad Astra's contribution to public health outcomes

### Improving the wider determinants of health

**Objective 1: improvements against wider factors which affect health & wellbeing and health inequalities**

- 1.01ii Children in low-income families (all dependent children under 20)
- 1.03 Pupil Absence
- 1.04 First time entrants to the youth justice system
- 1.16 Utilising outdoor space for exercise and health reasons

### Health improvement

**Objective 2: people are helped to live healthy lifestyles, make healthy choices and reduce health inequalities**

- 2.07 Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children (0 - 14 years)
- 2.08ii Percentage of children where there is cause for concern
- 1.04 Self-reporting well-being

# 20 30

How this commission is making Barnsley the place of possibilities

## Healthy Barnsley

- People are safe and feel safe
- People live independently with good physical and mental health for as long as possible
- We have reduced inequalities in health and income across the borough

## Learning Barnsley

- Children and young people achieve the best outcomes through improved educational achievement and attainment.
- People have the opportunities for lifelong learning and developing new skills, including access to apprenticeships.
- People have access to early help and support

## Sustainable Barnsley

- People live in great places, are recycling more and wasting less, feel connected and valued in their community.

## Growing Barnsley

- People have a welcoming, safe and enjoyable town centre and principal towns as destinations for work, shopping, leisure and culture.

## Enabling Barnsley

- Our underlying priority to ensure that our council is modern, inclusive, efficient, productive and high performing

# Youth Resilience Fund

## North Area Council

Darton East, Darton West, Old Town, St Helens

### Priorities



Anti Poverty



Changing the Relationship



Improving the local environment



Health & Wellbeing

## Purpose of the Youth Resilience Grant

The North Area Council Youth Resilience Fund has been established by the North Area Council for the academic year 2020/2021 to support the delivery of a range of positive after-school and holiday provisions (interventions/ projects/ activities/ sessions) that will contribute to building the emotional resilience and wellbeing of children and young people (aged 8-13). This resilience-building will prepare children in years 5 and 6, who are displaying additional emotional support needs, with extra skills that will prepare them to transition to senior school successfully.

The grant opportunity is currently delivered by two providers: YMCA and Ad Astra.

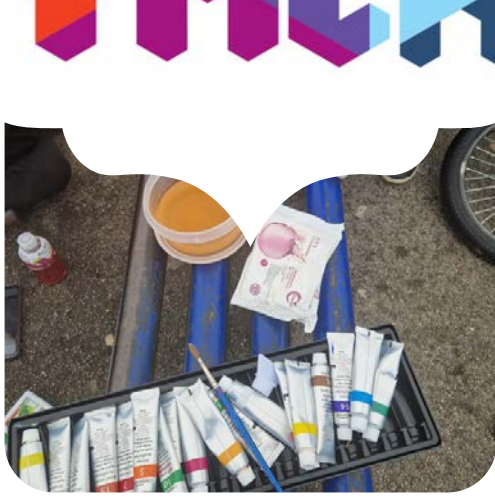
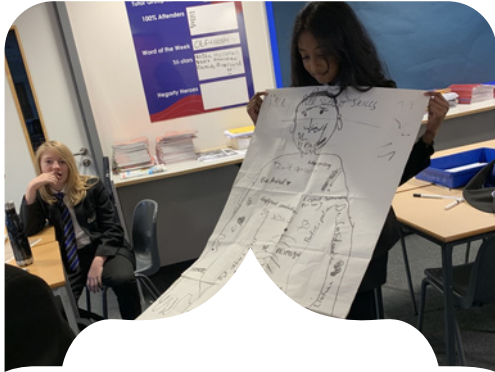
## Providers



Ad Astra











# Youth Resilience Fund

Supporting



Kexborough  
Primary



Wellgate  
Primary



Delta Academy  
Darton



Summer Lane  
Primary

## Context:

The YMCA has dedicated six years to delivering youth programmes in the North Area, prioritizing the development of emotional resilience and equipping young individuals with tools for positive emotional health. These initiatives establish safe spaces for youth to navigate life transitions, explore identity, and bolster confidence, with a focus on tailored journeys that emphasize protective factors over merely addressing problem behaviours.

Led by committed staff, regular sessions aim to cultivate self-esteem, resilience, and positive relationships while imparting crucial life skills and offering early intervention opportunities. Youth-led delivery is central to the YMCA's approach, empowering young individuals to actively shape sessions and projects, fostering trust, and addressing identified needs through resilience and thrive models. This approach consistently exceeds targets, yielding significant outcomes for children and young people in the North Area.

Access to support from qualified and skilled youth workers is a cornerstone of the YMCA's approach, providing young people with opportunities to cultivate professional relationships with trusted adults. By fostering relationships based on trust, respect, and an understanding of young people's realities, youth workers encourage reflection, challenge, and support as young individuals navigate their goals and choices.

## School-Based Provision

Youth work sessions across several schools offer support during transitions and opportunities for positive activities, led by skilled youth workers who provide emotional and mental health support. The sessions include diverse activities to engage participants and focus on enhancing protective factors, resilience, and personal skills. Additionally, there are tailored Peer Support and Young Volunteer programmes aimed at providing training, support, and broader engagement opportunities.

## Street Based Youth Work

This project is a wonderful example of grassroots community development and has resulted in children and young people reclaiming and using green spaces, engaging in local social action, and leading activities with other young people.

It has generated broader impacts, fostering personal growth among parents who have been keen to get involved in the programme, access training, and become informal volunteers and community activists.

## School Holidays

A mixed model approach offering positive activities and opportunities serves as an alternative to engaging in risky or antisocial behaviours. This model aims to boost opportunities and aspirations while providing avenues to foster relationships and develop social networks.

## Youth Club

YMCA Barnsley's centrally youth clubs for young people aged 8-13 and 13-19 years.

[www.ymcabarnsley.org.uk](http://www.ymcabarnsley.org.uk)



# Youth Resilience Fund

## Summary of Data

### Participation



**537**

Young people engaged in the project

**5,682**

Number of times young people attended sessions



YMCA was fun and I enjoyed all the games and playing with my friends. I really loved doing dodgeball. It was great to all the prizes and it was the best school activity of the week and I would always look forward to Thursdays.



**Jack**  
Year 6



Being in YMCA has made me not as shy with other people and I enjoyed doing the arts and crafts. YMCA has helped me to make new friends.



**Autumn**  
Year 6

### Sessions delivered



**457**

Term-time session delivered

**74**

School holiday sessions delivered

**151**

Youth club sessions

### Engagement



**31**

Young volunteers engaged

**17**

Family members engaged in the project



I love YMCA. The activities and games were amazing. I love how Ellie and Katie were so nice. I love the laughs we had and the friends we made.



**Ella**  
Year 6



"I have really enjoyed it and just the thing that I knew I could express how I felt. It has been the best here. I will continue to go to the YMCA in Horizon. The staff have been lovely. We've gone outside, done mindfulness colouring and played a game with a balloon. I would rate it 5 stars and I highly recommend it to people with regular stress or overthink too much."



**AW**



# Youth Resilience Fund

## What is your favourite thing about working with YMCA?

Making friends  
 talking about feelings  
 Interacting with others  
 Being with friends  
 Games  
 having fun  
 Being talkative  
 Arts and Crafts  
 Pirate game  
 Playing games  
 socialising with people  
 being able to talk to youth workers  
 Laughing  
 doing fun activities  
 YMCA is fun  
 fun

## Do you have any concerns about your future, or for the year ahead?

i wouldn't want the group to stop as it gives me something to do i think there should be more days like this and it gives kids something to do.

how to get a job  
 talking in public  
 making friends  
 Exams next year  
 No, I am happy



# How has coming to YMCA helped with transitioning to secondary school?

Learning different ways to help manage my emotions

Meeting new people



I am more confident



Happy

Growing up

Learning about our stress buckets



YMCA has helped, me to become more confident and start to feel more comfortable with going into Yr7.

Staying in touch with friends from primary school





# Youth Resilience Fund

Since attending YMCA groups I am...

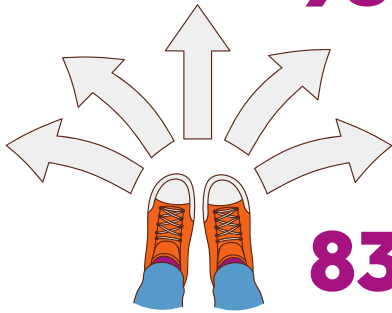
feeling happier

93.6%



better at talking in groups

85.1%



83.7%

better at making positive choices

better at friendships and relationships

83.6%



Through coming to YMCA I have...

tried new

**THINGS TO DO**

aspirations/things I want to do

61.6%



87.7%

overcome challenges

65.9%



had an opportunity to be a young leader/peer supporter

87.7%





# Youth Resilience Fund

**What does the word 'resilience' mean to you and how does it make you feel?**

be confident Getting help when you need it Being brave  
 not giving up being strong Pushing yourself when  
 you need it Keeping on  
 stand up for yourself Not giving up trying when  
 things are  
 happy be confident when you getting touch  
 Bouncing back proud want to  
 don't give up To bring yourself back when things go wrong

**When you have been in one of the sessions with YMCA, how do you feel afterwards?**

refreshed  
 confident  
 and after happy  
 happy  
 i was upset before

**What are you excited about this year?**

Doing stuff

Showing people I can do better than last year

Going on a residential with the ymca club



# Youth Resilience Fund

## What has your child got out of coming to YMCA?

Before coming to the YMCA, K was quiet and shy, he wouldn't speak to other people. I had seen the work YMCA had done with previous Yr 6's, I suggested to K about going to YMCA, he was unsure whether he wanted to go to the group but after I explained what they got up to K said that he was intrigued and wanted to try the group out.

Since K has been attending the group at the end of each session he rushes out excited to tell me what he has been up to. Since K started coming to YMCA his confidence has improved, he will talk to more people and has got better at managing his emotions, before YMCA, K struggled to manage his emotions when other young people would annoy him, however, now he has got better at managing his emotions and is able to ignore and move past when people start to annoy him. He has become more mature because of the support he has received at YMCA. It is the highlight of his week going to the YMCA after school club.

J Parent of a young person at Kexborough After School Club.

## What are you excited about this year?



“The things we are most excited for is summer. when we get to do activities outside such as rounders and other games.”

“Getting to beat Jeff (youth worker) at Dobble”

“We have lots of plans of things to do with the group”



“Drama activities with the group”



“Starting back at school”

“My birthday – celebrating with the group”



“The big group games with others (organising games with other young people)”







## Provider



# Youth Resilience Fund

## Supporting



- Satisfactory quarterly monitoring report and contract management meeting.
- Milestones achieved
- Outcome indicator targets met
- Social value targets met
- Satisfactory spend and financial information
- Overall satisfaction with delivery against contract



## Project Summary:

Working in three primary schools in the St Helens Ward, we work with the schools and students to build a flexible programme that meets their needs. Alongside the work in the schools, we offer a youth club session for up to 13-year-olds to participate, and we will also offer volunteer placements for older young people. We have lunchtime referral and drop-in sessions for Y7 pupils at Outwood Carlton. During the school holidays, we offer activities that include a healthy meal.

## Buddy Training

Afterschool sessions will allow us to offer creative ways for the young people to put into practice the skills they have learnt in their Buddy Training session. Some of the areas we cover in our Buddy training are as follows:

- Buddy Rules and skills it takes to become a buddy
- Listening and Communication skills
- Confidentiality and who to turn to if you need help (signposting)
- Anti-Bullying workshops

## Transitions Work

For Y6 Pupils, we will offer the same time scales of 3 x 6-week sessions with a transitional theme of working with schools for groups and individuals. The themes will cover :

- Social Adjustments – Relationships /making new friends, etc
- Institutional adjustments – getting used to a new school and new routines
- Curriculum interest – favourite tops and what will be new

## Year 7

For Outwood pupils, the lunchtime period is classed as their free time, and although it is still within school hours, afterschool sessions are often a problem for secondary pupils due to transport/ getting home etc. and if we were in school, staff could refer and any issues, the young people had could be dealt with much quicker.

## Youth Club

From New Lodge Community Centre, we will offer Youth Club sessions for children and young people aged up to 13, offering a wide range of creative and educational activities with opportunities for young people to become Peer Supporters for Ad Astra.



# Youth Resilience Fund

## Summary of Data

### Participation



**6,356**

Number of times young people attended sessions

**608**

Young people worked with in the community

**768**

Young people worked with in schools

**339**

Term-time session delivered

**28**

School holiday sessions delivered

### Hygiene packs



**500+**

Hygiene and activity packs delivered to the community during the Pandemic

**897**

Hygiene supplied to schools

### Volunteering



**250**

Young volunteering attendances

**26**

Young volunteers trained during the project

**1,040**

Volunteering hours

**£14,248**

Cashable value of volunteering times

“ We love our kids coming to Ad Astra – they offer so much. We are also volunteers now and help with the Food Parcels – Tinky Play and the Youth club.

Michelle gets us a food parcel each week and this really helps - when I was struggling last year Michelle found some money so I could pay my electric. Our kids did Buddy Training in Laithes and they loved it – both of us have put their certificates on the wall. Michelle has helped us do a Maths course and were also doing our food safety course and next year we are going to do first aid

Sadie and Violetta  
Parents and Volunteers





# Youth Resilience Fund

## What do you enjoy about working with Ad Astra?

I learnt to be a good friend

I enjoyed that we played games

I enjoyed meeting Rebecca and Dawn

I learnt to listen, help others and be kind. I'm looking forward to helping in school. I liked they played games to tell us about team work and stuff

I have learnt to be kind and helpful

I enjoyed having free biscuits

I enjoyed talking to you

I have learnt how to be resilient

I have learnt to be more social, listen to other [and] how to be resilient

I enjoyed learning how to be a good buddy

Helping each other

Always being by their side and caring for each other

I enjoyed playing games, talking with Rebecca and Dawn and I especially enjoyed gobbling up all the biscuits

During the lunchtime drop-in session for mental health week at Carlton met some year 7's we had worked with in primary school, asked them how having transition workshops in year 6 helped them

Felt more confident

They said that all those who had covered rules and di

Really enjoyed made it much easier to navigate round school

Knew what to expect

Didn't find it as overwhelming





“ Why aren't you coming into our school now – it's my classes turn to do that buddy training ”

### Youth Club Attendees



“ We've just moved into the area from Cubley Penistone and one set of my twins (12-year-olds) have started going to the youth club and the meet and eat session – they really enjoy all the activities – We also now receive a food parcel and have received some washing powder which also helps as we have a low income. ”

Kerrie





# Youth Resilience Fund

At Athersley North we asked our pupils what they thought of their time with the Ad Astra team.

“We learnt how to be a buddy and how to be the best buddy.”

Lacie

“We learnt different ways of communication.”

Eve

“We learnt what secrets to tell and what not to tell.”

Emily

“We learnt how to be a good friend and what to do in different scenarios like someone being bullied.”

Lewis

“We learnt lots of ways to stop bullies.”

Jude

To whom it concerns,

I Appreciate everything the Ad Astra team do for my child since she was 11 years old both in school and out. She has had a lot of support around her confidence due to bullying and self esteem due to body shaming, also so personal family matters where the team have supported her also myself and my other children.

The activities the team do i.e dance, youth club etc helps her to socialize in a safe environment as she finds this difficult. The staff are very approachable and easy to talk to if I had concerns about her. I'm glad that she is now a young volunteer within the Ad Astra as it is also helping her decide what she wants when left school, and I feel that if she had not had this extra help, support and safe place to go she would be a totally different child and glad that she can continue with the team for a few more years. So from Year 6 at Primary School to Year 9 we have had difficulties in concentrating as he is under the ASDAT team and the staff of Ad Astra manage to keep him on Target and interested in what they are doing.

In my personal opinion what Ad Astra has done for my family through support from Primary Schools and secondary and in the community and also myself, I know other families that would and could do with the extra support in and out of school.

Thank you

Parent of z of the children and a member of the community





# Youth Resilience Fund

## *Letter to The North Area Council*

I write to you as it is my understanding that you are currently conducting an evaluation of the impact of the funding that was allocated to Adastra, and other providers, to work in conjunction with schools, which is due to end in July.

Working with the Adastra team has been of real benefit to us at Athersley South and we firmly believe there has been a positive impact. Despite initial challenges, as the project was launched during the Covid-19 pandemic, which we all appreciate had significant consequences for everyone, as a result of effective communication and a shared drive and vision to achieve the very best for the children of Athersley South, we navigated through the challenges and the outcome has been a strong and positive relationship which has enabled us to facilitate support for over eighty pupils each academic year.

Adastra have worked with us to personalise the programme to meet the needs of our community and our Year 5 children have benefitted from sessions which have complimented and extended our curriculum offer. The focus on peer relationships, managing these and developing the children's skills to enable them to become peer supporters/buddies for other children in school has raised the self esteem and skills of the Year 5 participants. In addition, there have been further benefits to our whole school community as the children have subsequently taken on responsibilities in school, supporting peers at lunch and break. This has had a positive impact on behaviour, with younger children in particular now engaged in activities facilitated by the Y5 children.

Transition to secondary school, and managing the complex emotions and feelings associated with this, has long been recognised as an area which our Y6 children need a lot of support with and working with Adastra has allowed us to add another tier to our support package.

Adastra have been able to reinforce key messages that children have already heard in school, but from non-school based adults which can be more impactful in some instances. Adastra have also been able to personalise and tailor support, working with smaller groups of children, and identifying and addressing specific elements of transition that are not so easily covered when children are accessing whole class curriculum lessons, particularly because our children transition to five different secondary schools. One such example is exploring, discussing and familiarising children with walking routes to school, accessing public transport, start and finish times and specific individual school expectations.

As stated above, our collaboration initially began during the pandemic, which brought challenges, but the pandemic itself has also had a significant longer lasting impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our children and this impact remains evident now. In response, we as a school have continued to refine our curriculum to best support our community and we are very grateful for the role that Adastra have played, providing another element of support which has been well received by our children and their Parents and Carers.

Mental health and wellbeing continues, and will continue to be, a major focus for our work in schools in the coming years, both as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, but also our society and its expectations and advances in technology which, while of great benefit, also exposes children to more risk and additional pressures. We would hope very much that we can continue to work in partnership with Adastra, to support our children's mental health and wellbeing, giving them the knowledge and skills to grow alongside a toolkit to manage and overcome challenges that they face, so they become well equipped, well rounded young people who will achieve well both academically and personally.

*Emma Sanderson*

Headteacher  
Athersley South