SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

CASE STUDY

A Journey of Innovation and Success



CONTEXT

Alternative provision plays a vital role in supporting students whose attendance, behaviour, or engagement in mainstream settings has declined. Programmes like Re-Route demonstrate how a personalised, trauma-informed approach, delivered in a nurturing environment outside of school, can re-engage learners, rebuild confidence, and significantly improve attendance. By working closely with families and schools, alternative provision offers a structured pathway back into education, tailored to the individual needs of each student.

OBJECTIVES

- **Boost student attendance** through personalised, trauma-informed support.
- **Remove barriers to attendance** by working closely with families and schools.
- **Support sustained attendance** through tailored reintegration plans.

INTERVENTION

Re-Route is a 12-week alternative provision programme designed to support students who are struggling with attendance, engagement, or behaviour in mainstream education. Delivered at the Halliwell Jones Stadium in Warrington, the intervention provides a fresh start for learners through a trauma-informed, relational approach.

Students are referred by their schools, often due to persistent absence or risk of exclusion. Once enrolled, they join small teaching groups where the curriculum is tailored to their individual needs, focusing on literacy, numeracy, behaviour self-regulation, and personal development. The programme is supported by a team of specialist staff, including behaviour mentors, teachers, and therapists, with access to resources such as Speech & Language support and IDL literacy tools.

Throughout the 12 weeks, students benefit from safe spaces, consistent routines, and ongoing communication between Re-Route staff, families, and referring schools. Reintegration planning begins early, ensuring that each student has a clear pathway back into mainstream education with strategies in place to sustain progress.

OUTCOMES

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Better Attendance – Students move from as low as 15% attendance to over 75–100%.
Improved Behaviour – Fewer exclusions, better self-regulation, and stronger relationships with teachers.
Academic Progress – Students access the full curriculum and prepare for a full suite of GCSEs.
Confidence & Resilience – Learners return more self-aware, motivated, and optimistic about their future.

CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED

One of the key challenges identified through the Re-Route programme has been the late identification of students at risk of persistent absence. Many learners referred are already deeply disengaged, making re-engagement more complex and time-consuming.

A key lesson learned is the importance of earlier intervention, particularly in upper Key Stage 2, where patterns of poor attendance often begin. By working more proactively with primary schools, there is greater potential to prevent entrenched non-attendance and support smoother transitions into secondary education.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

If you're considering implementing a programme like Re-Route, here are a couple of key guidelines to support successful delivery:

Start Early: Prioritise early identification of students at risk of poor attendance, particularly in upper Key Stage 2, to prevent patterns of disengagement from becoming entrenched.

Build Strong Partnerships: Establish close collaboration between the alternative provision team, referring schools, and families. Shared planning and regular communication are key to successful reintegration and sustained progress.

Utilise Key Staff for Insight: Engage SENDCOs, behaviour leads, and pastoral teams to help identify underlying barriers to learning—such as unmet SEND needs or emotional challenges—that may be contributing to poor attendance.

FEEDBACK FROM YOUNG PEOPLE:

> "Before Re-Route, I didn't see the point in going to school. Now I'm there every day, I feel more confident, and I actually enjoy learning again."



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