

Impact of funded Enrichment Summer & Autumn Programme

The Enrichment Summer and Autumn Programme, delivered in partnership between St Mary's Church Youth Chaplain and Enrichment Manager from Witney College, has made a significant and measurable difference to the confidence, skills, and future prospects of young people in our community. Across both programmes, students engaged in high-quality learning experiences that strengthened their wellbeing, expanded their opportunities, and provided vital support at key transition points in their education.

During the **summer programme**, **12 young people** took part in creative workshops, team-building activities, and community-focused projects. These sessions helped participants develop resilience, self-expression, and positive peer relationships—skills that are essential for navigating both education and early adulthood.

The **autumn programme** built on this foundation, with **15 students** receiving targeted support at Witney College. Sessions included CV writing, job applications, interview preparation, and personal development. These activities equipped learners with practical tools for employment and further education, directly addressing local skills gaps and supporting young people to take confident next steps.

A particularly significant outcome emerged from this cohort: **Out of the 15 young people who took part in the autumn programme, 4 successfully gained employment using the CVs they created during the sessions.**

These students also reported that the programme helped them understand what employers look for when hiring, giving them the confidence and insight needed to present themselves effectively and secure real job opportunities.

For some students, the release of summer exam results brought disappointment, particularly for those who did not pass English or Maths GCSE. However, the programme played a crucial role in helping them process these emotions and understand that their pathways remain open. Through reassurance, guidance, and encouragement, students recognised that they could resit their exams and continue progressing to the next level of their course. This support restored hope, motivation, and a sense of direction at a pivotal moment.

Together, the summer and autumn programmes created a safe, empowering environment where young people could explore their strengths, gain new experiences, and receive consistent encouragement from trusted adults. Many students reported feeling more prepared for employment, more connected to their community, and more confident in themselves. These outcomes demonstrate the programme's lasting impact and highlight the importance of continued investment in youth development initiatives.

Programme Timing and Engagement Challenges

The late release of funding for the Enrichment Programme created unavoidable delays in promoting the offer to young people. As a result, the team was unable to advertise the summer provision early enough to reach Year 11 students transitioning to college—an important group who would have particularly benefited from the additional support, confidence-building activities, and structured transition opportunities.

However, once funding was confirmed, the team acted quickly to ensure the programme reached as many learners as possible. This enabled delivery across both **Witney College** and the **Common Leys campus**, ensuring that students from the wider college community could still access meaningful enrichment opportunities.

Although the timing meant a key cohort was missed, the programme still achieved **strong engagement**, and the learning from this experience will support **earlier communication, wider reach, and even greater impact** in future years. This adaptability demonstrates the programme's resilience and the team's commitment to ensuring young people receive the support they need.

Enrichment programme at a Glance

- **12 young people** took part in the **Summer Programme**
- **15 students** engaged in the **Autumn Programme**
- **4 young people gained employment** using CVs created during the programme and the knowledge gained about employer expectations
- A balanced mix of **creative, confidence-building, and skills-focused** activities
- Targeted support included **CV writing, job applications, and interview preparation**
- Students who did not pass English/Maths GCSE said the programme helped them understand their **options to resit** and continue progressing
- Many reported feeling **more confident** exploring different areas of training and college courses
- Students felt **better prepared for employment and more connected to their community.**

Summary and Next Steps

The Enrichment Summer and Autumn Programme has demonstrated significant impact, equipping young people with confidence, practical skills, and meaningful support at key moments in their educational journey. With **27 students engaged across both programmes**, and **4 young people gaining employment** directly through the CVs and employer-insight sessions delivered, the programme has proven its value as a targeted intervention that strengthens wellbeing, employability, and community connection.

The learning gained from this year's delivery—particularly around timing, communication, and reaching key transition groups—will inform stronger, earlier engagement in future cycles. Despite the late release of funding, the programme achieved strong participation across both Witney College and the Common Leys campus, demonstrating adaptability and clear demand from young people.

Looking ahead, the Enrichment Programme will not stand alone. It will form a core part of the **new Youth Café initiative**, alongside the **Cherish Your Wellbeing workshop**. Together, these strands will create a joined-up, year-round offer that supports young people's personal development, emotional wellbeing, and readiness for future education and employment. By integrating enrichment, wellbeing, and a consistent after-school safe space, the new initiative the 'Youth Café' will provide a holistic support pathway that meets the needs of young people across Witney and the surrounding area.

Sustainability

The Enrichment Programme has shown measurable success, including **4 young people gaining employment** using CVs created during the sessions, and many more reporting increased confidence, clearer pathways, and improved readiness for further education and work. The Cherish Your Wellbeing workshop adds a vital layer of emotional and mental-health support, helping young people build resilience and navigate the pressures of adolescence.

To maintain and expand this integrated offer, **investment in staffing and infrastructure is critical**. The initiative currently relies on limited facilitator hours and volunteer capacity, which cannot sustain the scale of need or the depth of relational work required. Funding is therefore needed to secure the employment of dedicated staff—particularly a **Youth Chaplain**—who can provide consistent leadership, safeguarding oversight, programme delivery, and long-term relational support for young people. A staffed model is essential for continuity, quality, and the ability to respond to the complex needs many young people are facing, including food insecurity, mental-health pressures, and barriers to employment.

The next steps include:

- **Embedding the Enrichment Programme and Cherish Your Wellbeing workshop into the new initiative Youth Café's annual delivery plan.**
- **Strengthening early communication and outreach to ensure Year 11, 12 and 13 students and other key groups are reached in time.**
- **Building on employer-focused sessions to expand opportunities for work experience, mentoring, and employment pathways.**
- **Continuing to gather youth voice to shape future sessions and ensure the offer remains relevant, accessible, and impactful.**
- **Exploring funding opportunities to sustain and expand the Youth Café, including staffing, resources, and specialist workshop delivery.**
- **To maintain and expand this integrated offer, investment in staffing and including staffing, resources, and specialist workshop delivery.**
- **Seeking investment to employ a Youth Chaplain, ensuring consistent leadership, relational support, and long-term programme development.**
- **Developing partnerships with local councils, schools, and community organisations to widen reach and strengthen impact**



