

## Supporting Service children in York and North Yorkshire - Inspiring Choices

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Inspiring Choices is a Higher Education Outreach Partnership and is part of the Office for Students Uni Connect Programme. This has been our busiest year yet with the projects we have delivered for Service children living in York and North Yorkshire and we could not be happier and prouder of how the year has been.

### **Military Service Children Project**

This year we have introduced a new project working with military service children from three schools across North Yorkshire. Throughout April, we visited each of the schools twice to introduce the project. During these sessions, students learnt about HE and the kind of support available to military service children. We then challenged students to work in teams to design their own University society. The students had some amazing ideas from a sponsored football society to a Lord of the Rings based society!

In May we invited all three schools to York St John University over the course of two days. While visiting the campus, students took part in budgeting workshops, had a tour of campus and had the opportunity to finish working on their society designs. We finished the campus visit with a trip to the University Arts Foyer, where the students presented their society designs to a panel of judges. Much like dragons' den, the students sold their designs brilliantly and creatively. However, prizes were awarded to the culture club, culinary society and Specops society for their imagination and ingenuity. Abbie Salkeld Outreach Coordinator Military Service Children Project Strategic outreach Launch of My Future: Young Carers programme.

We hope that all schools participating in the project had a wonderful experience. It was great to see such enthusiasm and teamwork in action throughout the project. A special thanks also go to the York St John widening participation team who co-ran the project.

### **Armed Forces Day for Children – Catterick Garrison**

On the 19th of June, Inspiring Choices were invited to attend the Armed Forces Day at Catterick Garrison. The day brought together schools from across North Yorkshire to learn about military service and meet people working in a variety of military fields. To start the morning, we saw a wonderful display from the Gurkhas showing their incredible skill. We were also excited to be invited to run a stall on the day for students

to get involved with. Inspiring choices set up a range of HE themed activities including giant Jenga, jeopardy, design your own military service shield and an escape room. We were delighted to see so many students getting involved and learning a lot throughout the day. Thank you to Catterick Garrison for hosting us and to Angela Campbell for inviting us to be a part of a very special day. We hope to be back again in the future!

### **Military Service Children Residential**

On the 11th of July, Inspiring Choices ran our first ever Military Service Child residential. A group of year 7 and 8 students travelled over to the Peak District to take part in two days of outdoor activities and skill building challenges. Through the company Lost Earth, students got involved in climbing, abseiling and Gorge walking. The group showed amazing teamwork and resilience as they tackled new challenges together. It was amazing to see the students face fears and support each other, despite the sometimes rainy weather. On the evening, students discussed their experiences of being military service children and found out more about their future educational options. Inspiring Choices would like to thank Lost Earth and Hartington Hall for their help in organising a brilliant residential.

Anyone interested in learning more about our projects can contact us at [inspiringchoices@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:inspiringchoices@yorks.ac.uk).