



End of term newsletter

Inspiring Choices December 2025 Newsletter

Welcome to our newsletter for December 2025. We kicked off the autumn term with lots of activity, delivering in-school sessions and welcoming students to York St John University for campus visits. Have a read through our newsletter to find out what we've been up to since September.

We hope you have a restful time off, enjoy the holidays and have a happy new year!

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Stakeholder Consultation, January to July 2025

Jessica Ely, Impact Evaluation Assistant

Thank you for completing the July stakeholder consultation. Your feedback and suggestions are instrumental in ensuring our programme meets the needs of the communities and young people we work with. **Read the full report [here](#).**

100%

of responses agreed that they understand the **aims and objectives** of the Inspiring Choices programme.

100%

of responses agreed that Inspiring Choices are **effective in their communication**.

100%

of responses agreed that Inspiring Choices **understands and takes account of the local priorities in my area**.

100%

of response agreed that Inspiring Choices **added value to the work of their school or organisation**.

Responses suggested **campus visits** were the most **successful** activity.

Stakeholders explained that campus visits were the most successful because they showed the young people **opportunities** and gave them **aspiration**.

Responses suggested Campus Visits, Careers Fairs, and our Employability sessions were delivered the most.

All the stakeholders who responded to the consultation **agreed** that we are catering for the **accessibility needs** of the young people we work with.

50% of stakeholder responses said they **wouldn't change** or improve our activities and **50%** made **helpful suggestions**.

Stakeholders suggested: a postbox could be provided for young people's private thoughts to be written down; the design a society task would be better in the middle of campus visits; the Disabled Student Allowance talk could be more visible at Destinations Festival; and the military service residential could have more activities.

Quotes from the Stakeholder Consultation

“The team design and deliver inspiring workshops, events and activities that engage young people in underrepresented groups in opportunities that can help them to make decisions about their future education and careers. Their work aims to close gaps in higher education and to raise aspirations and opportunities.”

“The aim of Inspiring Choices is clear that you want to help young people overcome barriers to accessing further and higher education. These include those related to academic attainment, sense of belonging and lack of knowledge about their future options.”

“The Inspiring Choices programme has raised awareness and profile of MSC [Military Service Children] across schools and colleges.”

“Thank you for all your hard work this year. I cannot stress how much support we get as a smaller HE institute, in helping us to reach out to more underrepresented students than we would have the capacity to do so with our WP and student recruitment team.”

In January, we will be in touch with our first stakeholder consultation of the 2025/26 academic year, which will focus on our delivery between September and December 2025. Thank you in anticipation for your responses!

Further, on **Tuesday 24th February 2026**, Inspiring Choices will be hosting our first **twilight Stakeholder session** inviting valued contacts from schools, colleges, community groups and our partners to an informal event at York St John University. It will be an opportunity, outside a school or college setting, to review our offer, celebrate achievements and share ideas to shape activities going forward to ensure we are meeting stakeholder needs.

Recent delivery and events

SCIP Alliance Conference

On a very cold, wet Tuesday in November, three of the team headed north to Glasgow to attend the annual SCiP Alliance Conference.

It was fantastic to be in Scotland and meet many of our Scottish colleagues who work in the sector. We all participated in some very interesting and collaborative workshop sessions - a highlight was hearing from a group of young people from armed forces families who were taking part in their own fringe event.

We have come away with some new ideas of how to develop our own work with military service children.

Louisa Dobson, Head of Inspiring Choices

Penny Garner, Outreach and Partnerships Manager

Abbie Salkeld, Outreach Coordinator



Creativity Lab

In December, a group of creative media students from York College visited the Creativity Lab at University of York for a two hour workshop. It was a brilliant opportunity for the students who are familiar with creative technologies to stretch themselves within an HE environment, whilst also having some fun with handheld 3D printers and Lego building. The visit also included lunch in one of the canteens and a tour of the university campus and a chance to chat with student ambassadors.

We would like to thank our colleagues at York Cares and the University of York for organising and delivering another engaging session.

Louisa Dobson, Head of Inspiring Choices

Campus Visits

Alongside our recent visit to University of York, we have hosted several campus visits at York St John University this academic term.

We've had a wonderful time welcoming groups of Year 10 students to campus, introducing them to higher education and what they might want from HE. Its been great to work with the student ambassadors at YSJ, alongside the Allied Health and Policing departments to provide taster sessions for our schools and colleges.

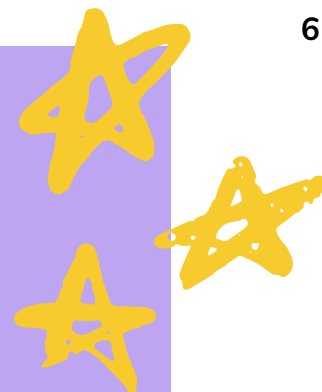
We look forward to hosting more visits in the new year!

Molly Crowe, Outreach Coordinator



The Spark Programme

After a successful pilot last year, we have started delivery of the Spark Programme in two of our schools. The Spark Programme works with a small group of Year 11 boys, encouraging them to think about their future aspirations and their Post-16 education.



Delivery of the programme will continue into the new year, with a variety of sessions on motivation, apprenticeships, and a few campus visits!

Molly Crowe, Outreach Coordinator

Literacy Project

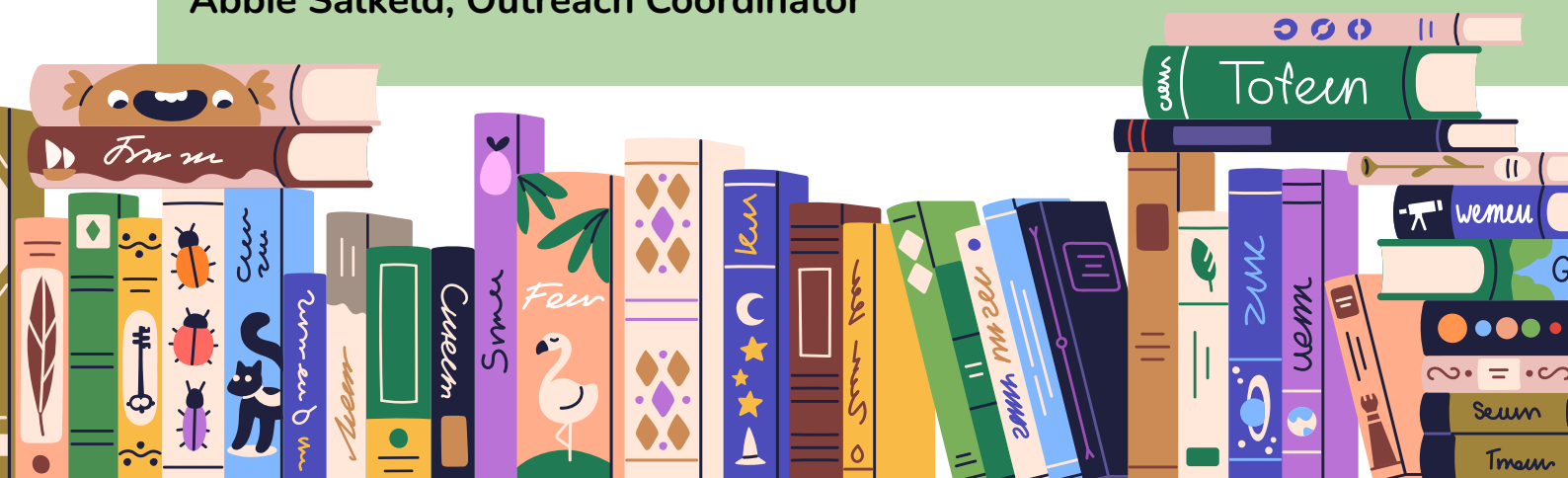
For the third year running, we have launched the Literacy Project in one of our North Yorkshire schools.

Currently, there are nine young people attending one to one sessions, twice a week, to improve their confidence in literacy skills, using a structured programme designed by Catch Up Literacy®.

Having completed their assessments, students are now choosing books to read with us, with everything from 'The Worlds Worst Teacher' by David Walliams to 'The Last Bear' by Hannah Gold.

It is a great opportunity, not only to improve literacy skills, but to encourage discussion about a wide range of books and make reading enjoyable.

Penny Garner, Outreach and Partnerships Manager
Abbie Salkeld, Outreach Coordinator



Website and Social Media Updates

Over the past several months, the Inspiring Choices team have been working hard on our website and social media platforms, ensuring that our communication platforms are up-to-date with important information and accessible to all. We continue to regularly update our website and social media accounts.

Our website has been updated with a new **Meet the Team** page, where you can learn all about us – from why we chose to work for Inspiring Choices, what our ideal workday looks like, and even what television show we'd like to star on (we're big fans of Taskmaster in the IC office)!

We have also created our **Accessibility** page, as we are dedicated to making our work accessible and inclusive to all. Information on workshops and campus visits are available, detailing the steps we have made and continue to make to improve accessibility. A range of resources and advice is also featured on this page. We welcome any feedback and suggestions concerning our continued commitment to accessibility and inclusivity.

Alongside our website, we continue to post regularly on our **Instagram** and **LinkedIn** accounts, and invite you to tag us in your own posts when working with Inspiring Choices.

We have also launched our new **TikTok**, where we aim to engage with students and offer advice when it comes to higher education, employability, and more.

Molly Crowe, Outreach Coordinator



Happy holidays!

As always, the Inspiring Choices team would like to thank all of our stakeholders, partners and schools for your continued support throughout 2025.

It has been a great start to the academic year. We always enjoy working with young people across York and North Yorkshire, and look forward to continuing with our delivery in the new year.

In the meantime, we wish you a happy holidays and hope you all have a wonderful time off. See you next year!

Inspiring Choices

Get in touch with us



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inspiringchoices@yorksja.ac.uk



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