



Aspire 2 Strategic Plan

2022 – 2027

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Purpose

Vision

That children in all areas of Reading have an equal opportunity to access enrichment activities that enable them to overcome the impact of social, financial and cultural disadvantage. Projects we fund develop skills that are essential to successful, happy, fulfilled lives.

Mission

To empower children and families to access non-formal learning and enrichment opportunities that will enable them to gain skills to improve their engagement with their local community and their future.

Goals

To work with children and families in disadvantaged areas of Reading, to develop their capacity and skills in such a way that, they are better able to identify and help meet their own needs and participate more fully in society. A key aim is to involve the community in our work and to empower families to aspire to improved futures for themselves and their children. Through activities that develop skills and aspirations, we aim to develop:

1. Increased social mobility
2. Better self-awareness and resilience
3. Improved self-esteem
4. Ability to make informed decisions

Drawing from the past

Background and history

Aspire 2 was established as a registered charity in 2007 when the government's Excellence in Cities funding ended and school leaders wanted to ensure the sustainability of enrichment activities for children attending the 11 collaborating schools which form the Whitley Excellence Cluster (WEC).

Aspire2 has consistently delivered a programme of activities aimed at developing a range of positive behaviours, social and emotional capabilities and soft skills for children, young people and families in the Whitley community, so that they aspire to having improved interpersonal relationships and a greater stake in society through improved education, choice, opportunity and challenge.

Past achievements and learnings

In order to enrich the lives of the young people living in this area, Aspire2's work has previously included the organisation of a residential programme at an outdoor activity centre, a variety of trips and excursions to places such as theatres, museums and the coast, arranging competitions and events at the University of Reading, funding inter school sporting events and holding an annual arts festival – Whitfest.

Children have enjoyed and benefitted from these activities, however formal monitoring of impact has been challenging to achieve, so this will be carefully considered when planning our programme moving forward.

Beneficiaries

Our core focus is on children in Whitley, as the area in Reading with the highest level of disadvantage (Index of Multiple Deprivation IMD 2019).

Approximately 5,300 children from South Reading attend the following 11 schools. During 2018-19 some 3,097 (74%) of eligible children attended an Aspire2 funded school trip.

The schools attended by our current beneficiaries include:

1. Blagdon Nursery
2. Christ the King Primary School
3. Geoffrey Field Infant School
4. Geoffrey Field Junior School
5. New Christ Church Primary School
6. Palmer Academy (primary)
7. The Ridgeway Primary School
8. Whitley Park Primary School
9. Reading Girls School (secondary)
10. The John Madejski Academy (secondary)
11. The Avenue Special School (Tilehurst based but draws pupils from South Reading and was originally located in South Reading when WEC and Aspire2 were formed, for pupils aged 2 to 19)

Considering the future

Needs analysis

In terms of enrichment opportunities for children and young people in our area of concern (Whitley), there are four key pillars of need (see Appendix 1 for more detail)

1. *Lack of facility*

There are limited opportunities for children to meet, play and socialise in Whitley, as evidenced in many research reports. Lack of financial means, low parental engagement, and the notion that outside spaces are dangerous for children to use have all contributed to increasing numbers of children with 'nowhere to go, nothing to do', contributing to a lack of soft skills, aspirations and awareness of opportunity. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic clubs, after school activities and trips have been reduced yet further, with many children not aware that out-of-school activities have ever existed. The pandemic has exacerbated this situation due to a combination of activities not running, and parental/school fear of infection for any clubs which have been able to reopen.

2. *Poverty and deprivation*

Reading is a town of contrasts, with some very wealthy areas and some, like Whitley, that are in the most deprived deciles in the country. Children growing up in these areas face social, financial and cultural barriers to taking part in enrichment activities that are enjoyed as a matter of course by children in nearby wealthier neighbourhoods.

3. *School Provision*

Schools are under increasingly harsh pressures, both financially and in terms of achieving results that will improve their standings in national league tables. The emphasis is very much on classroom

provision, with little space for additional activities that, although not contributing directly to exam results, have a significant impact on children's future opportunities to succeed. Schools in deprived areas feel this more keenly, as there are more challenging pupils and less ability for parents to offer financial support.

4. *Life skills (soft/interpersonal skills)*

Employers are increasingly looking for life skills and experiences alongside exam results, and candidates who offer skills such as confidence, communication, leadership and resilience are more likely to find success in employment and in life. Independent schools are well known for instilling these skills in their pupils, however children in low income families and schools in deprived areas do not benefit from activities that nurture these essential life skills

Principles of provision

Research shows that extra-curricular and non-formal learning opportunities has a significant impact on the key areas that are key to the goals of Aspire2. As such, Aspire2 only funds activities beyond the national curriculum. It is our ambition that all children should receive some benefit, but not all provision will be evenly allocated to all children.

Environment analysis

Aspire2's current target community of Whitley includes three neighbourhoods which fall into the top 10% of deprivation in the country. Half of this area (five out of ten neighbourhoods) is in the most deprived decile for education, skills and training, including three areas in the 2% most deprived in England (Index of Multiple Deprivation IMD 2019).

Partners

Aspire2 works with a range of partners to deliver our projects, and is always seeking to develop new partnerships. To date, partners have included:

- Reading University
- Ufton Court
- The Earley Charity
- Reading Cultural Education Partnership
- Connect Reading
- Reading Rep
- The Rock Academy
- Rabble
- John Sykes Foundation
- Reading Voluntary Action
- WCDA
- Holy Brook Associates
- Pangbourne College
- Reading Football Club

Strategic aims

Building on our success, Aspire2 now wants to fund a wider portfolio of extra-curricular enrichment opportunities - those non-statutory but vital educational activities such as after-school activities and trips that, because of recent budgetary pressures, schools have found it increasingly difficult to provide. To ensure

that cycles of inter-generational inequality are broken, we want to ensure that our youngsters do not get left behind due to lack of choice and opportunity.

As a small charity, our annual development needs core focus. Our key areas of focus over the next five years are:

Year 5 - 2026/7					Corporate and major donor development
					Consultations for future development
Year 4 - 2025/6				All phases trips programme	
				Develop private school partnerships	
Year 3 - 2024/5			Develop sports and active programme		
			Develop family and community work		
Year 2 - 2023/4		New residential opportunities			
		Cultural festival			
Year 1 - 2022/3	Reinstate pre-Covid activities				
	Launch music programme				
All years	Collaboration with families and the local community				

Delivering the goals

Impact analysis

It is always challenging to measure impact in terms of SROI, however there is comprehensive research to demonstrate the impact of the sort of activities Aspire2 provides for local children and families. Moving forward, strategies are being developed to monitor feedback and assess impact for future activities, so reporting can be improved and developed.

Published research demonstrating the impact of enrichment activities shows impact in three key areas (see Appendix 2 for more details):

1. *Happiness/aspiration*

Being involved in enrichment and extra-curricular activities is proven to have a positive effect on children’s happiness and mental wellbeing. Having hobbies and attending activities outside the main school curriculum reduces screen time, and promotes higher levels of optimism and satisfaction, whilst also lowering symptoms of anxiety and depression. Although there is no lack of aspiration amongst younger children in deprived areas of Reading, there is a sense that as they grow up these aspirations shrink, and the effect of poverty starts to limit young people’s ambition. Given the increasing rates of poor mental well-being amongst children, happiness promotion is a key issue.

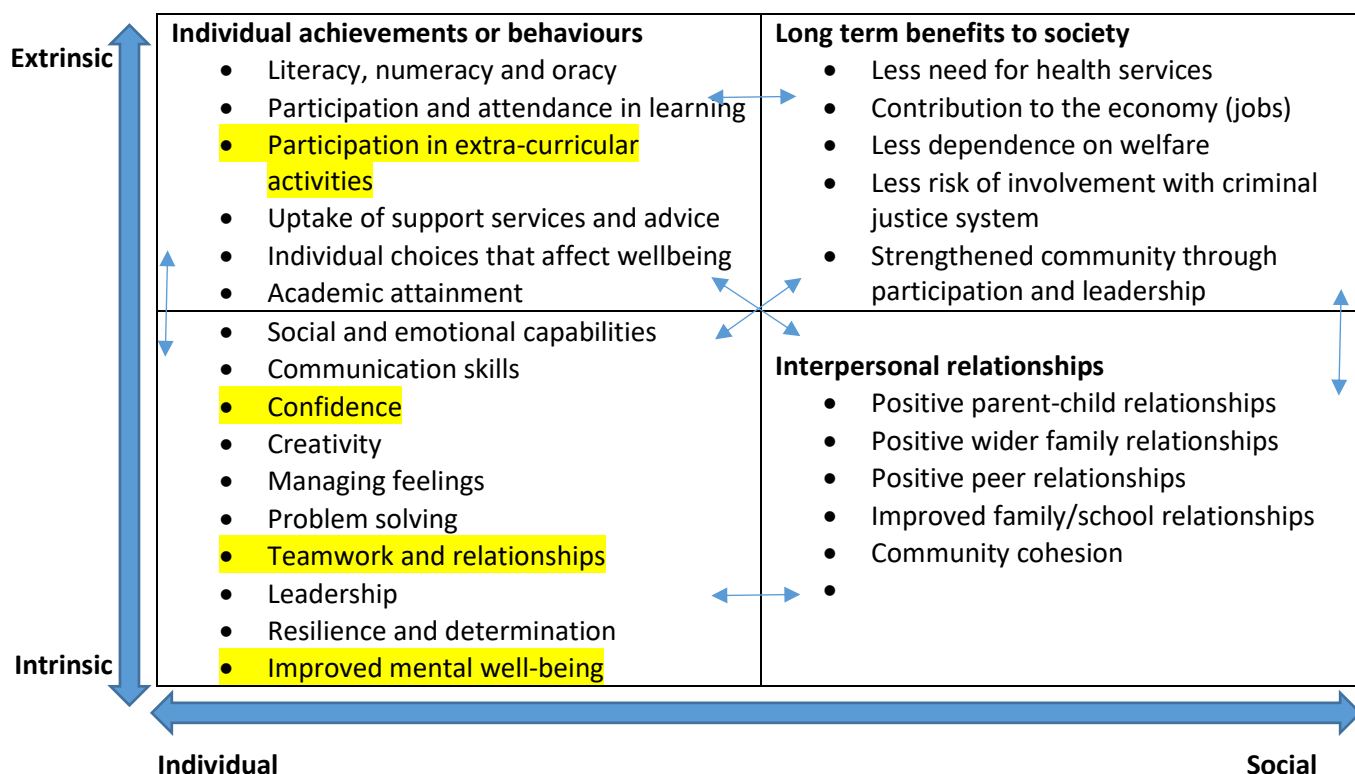
2. *Positive educational outcomes*

Taking part in extracurricular activities can have a positive benefit on children’s educational achievement, with raised expectations and aspirations leading to an improvement in attendance, study skills and ability to learn. There is much cross-fertilisation between skills needed for extra-curricular activities and those needed in school – for example mathematical skills are key for many sports, and for learning a musical instrument. Children who take part in extracurricular activities are also more likely to consider higher education. Moving forward the link between Aspire2 activities and educational outcomes is something we will work with schools to monitor.

3. *Development of key life skills*

Increasingly, ‘soft skills’ or key life skills are a more important factor than exam results for employers when recruiting. The CBI annual education and skills survey (2019) found most employers (45%) ranked aptitude and readiness for work as the most important factor they consider when recruiting school and college leavers. Additionally, 60% employers also said they rate broader skills such as resilience, communication, and problem-solving among their top three priorities when recruiting. The development of these skills is accelerated and improved through enrichment skills, and the state sector (especially in deprived areas) currently lags far behind independent schools in terms of nurturing these skills, primarily due to the discrepancy in enrichment activities and opportunities outside the main school curriculum.

Outcome measures



Theory of change

SITUATION	ACTION	STEPS	OUTCOME	IMPACT
<i>Issue</i>	<i>What – projects and activities</i>	<i>How – change mechanism</i>	<i>So that (short term)</i>	<i>So that (long term)</i>
			Individual achievements or behaviours	Long term benefits to society
			Literacy, numeracy and oracy Participation and attendance in learning Participation in extra-curricular activities Uptake of support services and advice Individual choices that affect wellbeing Academic attainment	Less need for health services Contribution to the economy (jobs) Less dependence on welfare Less risk of involvement with criminal justice system Strengthened community through participation and leadership
			Social and emotional capabilities	Interpersonal relationships
			Communication skills Confidence Creativity Managing feelings Problem solving Teamwork and relationships Leadership Resilience and determination	Positive parent-child relationships Positive wider family relationships Positive peer relationships Improved family/school relationships Community cohesion

Resourcing plan

Budget tbc

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Analysis of need

Lack of facility

- 16% of young people mentioned a lack of things to do and a lack of facilities in Reading (Growing up in Reading report, RVA, March 2021)
- 37% wanted more things to do and places to go (Growing up in Reading report, RVA, March 2021)
- Many students have limited interaction with their wider community, after-school clubs and experiences outside Whitley (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Accessibility to extra-curricular activities in Whitley is increased if they are local, free and promoted via the school. Collaboration with schools would help with targeting the young people who might benefit the most (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Given the societal shift in parental perceptions of public spaces, it is likely that the need and demand for organised (and institutionalised) clubs and societies, perceived to offer a 'safe space' for children, will have also risen. Given that these organised forms of provision will often carry financial cost, this raises important questions of equity and social justice as well as participation in public life, if only those children whose parents can afford it are afforded the opportunity to access them (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Almost half of the teenagers we interviewed in 2018 did not go to an extra-curricular club, and this is an area in which parents and the wider community could invest. Of the ones who did go to clubs, most of them were sports-related, but a desire for creative activities and for career related clubs was also expressed. (The Relevance Of Higher Education In Recent Aspiration Research In South Reading, Whitley Researchers, February 2019)
- A survey of 7,000 teachers by Teacher Tapp indicates that, in a 'normal' year 75% of teachers run some kind of extra-curricular activity in schools. At the start of the 2020/21 academic year, this figure had fallen to only 25% (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)
- UK sports clubs have lost 60% of their members, with 96% of football clubs having experienced reduced income. A third of youth music groups have lower enrolment than in previous years. This lack of access is particularly acute for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)

Poverty and deprivation

- 31.6% of children are at risk of living in poverty (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- 37.4% of children are receiving free school meals (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- One secondary school has 53.9% pupil premium (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Opportunities to participate are driven by household income, school attended, gender, ethnicity and geographic location. Household income is by far the most important factor driving gaps in participation, with children from the poorest households much less likely to take part in all types of extra-curricular activities, but especially music classes and sport (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Across every type of extracurricular activity, as household income declined, so too did participation in each activity. Children from poorer households were especially excluded from music classes and sports, where the participation gap is much more pronounced. A crucial factor

driving this socio-economic gap in opportunities to participate is the cost of extra-curricular activities, especially activities that incur the highest 'upfront costs'. For many families, even those with average incomes, these costs are too much to bear, especially if they are multiplied from having more than one child (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)

- 98 percent of middle-class children participate in enrichment activities, with 79 percent taking part in three or more per week. By contrast, 74 percent of working-class children are involved in two or fewer activities per week, with 22 percent participating in none at all (Enriching Children, Institutionalizing Childhood? Geographies of Play, Extracurricular Activities, and Parenting in England, Sarah L. Holloway & Helena Pimlott-Wilson, 2014)
- Middle-class children have greater access to enrichment activities than their working-class counterparts both in school (70 percent vs. 56 percent) and, even more starkly, off school premises (95 percent vs. 52 percent) (Enriching Children, Institutionalizing Childhood? Geographies of Play, Extracurricular Activities, and Parenting in England, Sarah L. Holloway & Helena Pimlott-Wilson, 2014)
- Whitley is the most deprived ward in Reading with key factors such as poverty, employment and education being key issues. One LSOA in the area is also in the bottom 1% in the country in terms of percentage of students not staying on in education post 16, and almost half the number of pupils in the area gained 5 GCSEs (A-C*) than in Reading generally in 2015. Furthermore, the ward has a proportionally younger population than the rest of Reading with 25% of the population aged between 0-15, highlighting the need for raised aspirations and enhanced schooling (Investigating barriers and opportunities in Whitley from the perspective of key community stakeholders as part of the Whitley for Real project 2017, Bethany Brown and Hayley Ryall)
- 22.3% of families in Church and 25.6% of families in Whitley are in low income families (in receipt of Child Tax Credit), compared to 16.1% nationally (Reading Poverty Needs Analysis, 2017)
- 3 out of 10 areas in the most deprived decile (multiple deprivation), up from 2 areas in 2015 (English Indices of Deprivation 2019)
- 5 out of 10 areas in the most deprived decile for education, skills and training, including 3 areas in the 2% most deprived in England (English Indices of Deprivation 2019)
- This parish ranks 1308 out of 12382, making it amongst the most deprived in the country (Reading: St Agnes with St Paul and St. Barnabas – Church Urban Fund report)
- Child poverty is 24.4%, ranking the parish within the most deprived decile for children aged 0 to 15 living in poverty (Reading: St Agnes with St Paul and St. Barnabas – Church Urban Fund report)
- Average pupil premium level is 27% (DfE Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics 2020/21)
- Total of 1189 in Whitley who qualify for free school meals (DfE Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics 2020/21)
- There are vast disparities in access to NFL [non formal learning] between young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and their more affluent peers. Disadvantaged students are also more vulnerable to obesity and other negative physical health outcomes, mental health issues, youth violence, low educational attainment and poor transitions into post-18 education, training and employment. (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)

School Provision

- 55% were not convinced the school is providing them with the skills they need for the future. 39% school parents and 60% of secondary school teachers agree. Teachers and parents particularly want more instruction in life skills. (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Schools in more disadvantaged areas tend to have larger class sizes and fewer well-qualified and experienced teachers than schools with more affluent students (Jensen, Sandoval-Hernandez, Knoll, & Gonzalez, 2012; Kozol, 2005; Roscigno, Tomaskovic-Devey, & Crowley, 2006), which often translates into having a more limited offer of extra-curricular activities (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- 86 percent of middle-class and 88 percent of working-class parents think school is a good place to provide enrichment activities. Parents view schools as a “safe environment” for their primary-aged children: Middle- and working-class parents emphasize that children are accustomed to and comfortable in this space; and working-class parents in particular also emphasize that they trust schools to keep children safe from dangerous strangers (Enriching Children, Institutionalizing Childhood? Geographies of Play, Extracurricular Activities, and Parenting in England, Sarah L. Holloway & Helena Pimlott-Wilson, 2014)
- There are clear benefits to closer partnership-working between schools and external NFL [non formal learning] providers to increase young people’s access to non-formal learning opportunities. This kind of partnership-working requires leadership, coordination and sharing of best practice at a strategic level (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)

Life skills (soft/interpersonal skills)

- 50% of parents said lack of confidence held their children back (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Our research found a correlation between higher levels of some soft skills (readiness to learn, problem-solving, and planning skills) and upward social mobility defined as an individual having higher educational attainment than their parents. (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- When asked what holds their child back generally, the most common response picked from a list was ‘lack of confidence’. 50% of parents selected this barrier. It emerged that confidence can grow with small successes as problems are confronted and overcome. It also grows in the presence of supportive relationships with other people (Enriching Children, Institutionalizing Childhood? Geographies of Play, Extracurricular Activities, and Parenting in England, Sarah L. Holloway & Helena Pimlott-Wilson, 2014)

Appendix 2 – Evidence of impact

Happiness/aspiration

- 100% of children at The Palmer Academy [primary school in Whitley] said that they had aspirations (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- “When you are very young you are full of big ideas, but as you grow up you lose them.” Young Whitley Researchers (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- 20% of students mentioned that their happiness was affected by being able to have fun in school; fun activities, special events and trips outside of school (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)

- Young people (and their parents) were happier about school life when the young person was involved in a club outside of normal school lessons (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Students who were happy at school were more likely to talk of a bright future. Those going to clubs found the future brighter (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- The issue of young people having low aspirations and a low view of what to expect from life or even themselves was a recurring theme throughout the interview process(47%), it was sometimes seen as a product of poverty. People were keen to look for ways to broaden the horizons of young people, give them greater opportunities and find ways of increasing hope (Research Report into the needs of the Youth and Community of Whitley Fusion Youth & Community (Whitley), February 2015)
- As we consider the young people of Whitley it is vital that we do not buy in to their low aspirations and the low aspirations of those around them. Whatever initiatives, programs or facilities we offer we need to be consistent and we need to empower them. Young people do not need entertaining or babysitting, they need to be set free to change their world (Research Report into the needs of the Youth and Community of Whitley Fusion Youth & Community (Whitley), February 2015)
- Teens, especially girls, have better mental health when they spend more time taking part in extracurricular activities, like sports and art, and less time in front of screens. (*Teens who participate in extracurriculars, get less screen time, have better mental health*, University of British Columbia, Nov 2020)
- Spending less than two hours per day of recreational screen time was associated with higher levels of life satisfaction and optimism, and lower levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms (*Teens who participate in extracurriculars, get less screen time, have better mental health*, University of British Columbia, Nov 2020)
- Extracurricular participation was associated with better mental health outcomes (*Teens who participate in extracurriculars, get less screen time, have better mental health*, University of British Columbia, Nov 2020)
- NFL [non formal learning] has consistently been shown to improve young people's mental health (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)
- Extracurricular activities lead to higher levels of optimism and reduced loneliness. (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)

Positive educational outcomes

- Being in clubs is associated with more positive outcomes, although almost half of the teens interviewed were not linked to extra-curricular activities (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Extra-curricular clubs seem to be beneficial – they are another way of giving adolescents positive contact time with adults (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Better off children went to extra-curricular clubs (and the clubs may also contribute to them being better off) (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Extra-curricular activities that provide hands-on learning experience also reveal pathways forwards (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Young people are inspired/led by others – the positive role model of visitors, guest speakers and role models was emphasised. (Aspiration in Whitley report, August 2018)
- Extra-curricular activities are important in developing soft (especially social) skills as well as being associated with a range of other positive outcomes (e.g. achievement, attendance at school). (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)

- Young people who engage in an additional sport more than others from similar background are found to be 10% more likely to aspire to pursue further education (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Youth who attend music classes regularly are almost 40% more likely to aspire to pursue further education. (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Extracurricular activities give young people the confidence to interact socially with others, extend their social networks beyond existing friendship groups, and provide them with new skills and abilities. Some also perceive them as important for their long-term career aspirations as well as useful in building stronger university and job applications (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Children who attended school clubs tended to be happier at school, more likely to aspire to higher education and more positive about their future generally... there was still evidence of significant links between attendance of a school club, happiness at school and wanting higher education. (The Relevance Of Higher Education In Recent Aspiration Research In South Reading, Whitley Researchers, February 2019)
- Teachers and parents feel that...having fewer opportunities for engagement in extracurricular activities and experiences outside of school has been an issue: 84% among teachers and 68% among parents. Two in 3 children and young people (66%) also recognise this as a consequence of the pandemic. (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)

Development of key life skills

- Soft skills have been found to be positively associated with workers' occupational status (Lucs, 2014) and higher salaries (Bacolod & Blum, 2010; Heckman, Stixrud, & Urzua, 2006). In addition, researchers have also found that these skills not only directly impact job outcomes, but significantly impact educational attainment (Blanden, Gregg, & Macmillan, 2007). (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Based on the extensive analysis of job adverts in the UK by Brown and Souto Otero (2018) that formal credential requirements are far less present in job adverts than previously assumed. In this context, the equality in participation in other non-formal or extra-curricular learning activities which foster soft skill attainment becomes a potential vehicle for greater intergenerational social mobility (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Analysis of data from PIAAC supports past research on the association between soft skills (some of which can be gained from extra-curricular activities) and intergenerational social mobility. Our research found a correlation between higher levels of soft skills (readiness to learn, problem-solving, and planning skills) and upward social mobility defined as having higher educational achievement than parents (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)
- Extra-curricular activities form part of the mechanisms by which advantaged groups are able to maintain their advantaged positions, which is likely to become even more important in the future as the graduate population increases, and competition in the labour market intensifies. If extra-curricular activities are important sites for developing important attributes and skill-sets, then it might be that they are seen as one of the possible policy solutions to address social mobility (An unequal playing field: extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility, M Donnelly, 2019)

- In 2019, 92% of talent professionals and hiring managers agreed that candidates with strong ‘soft’ skills are increasingly important. (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)
- Life and social skills training prevents youth violence, as does sports, art and mentoring (Enriching Education Recovery report, The Centre for Education and Youth, October 2021)

Appendix 3 – Why Whitley?

Whitley has a current population of 12, 542 (2019) of which 25% are under the age of 15 years old. According to the ONS 2011, Whitley has a much higher proportion of long term unemployed and those who have never worked, compared to Reading as a whole and England.

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 for Whitley	
Overall score	12.3% of households in Whitley fall into the most deprived areas nationally – Decile 1 – the top 10%, with 28.6% in Decile 2, 3 and 4 respectively
Education, training and skills domain	Whitley has 43% of its population falling into the most deprived for education, in Decile 1, with 43% in Decile 2 and 14% in decile 3
Barriers to housing and services domain	29% of the population fall in the top decile for physical and financial barriers to housing, with 57% in decile 2 and 14% decile 4

To simplify the decile scores created by the Indices for Deprivation, the iLiveHere rating has been created. This takes the average decile score of all the LSOAs in a ward and converts that into a rating out of 10, where 1 is the best and 10 is the worst. They then use a traffic light colour system as an at-a-glance reference. These category scores are combined using a percentage weighting to give an LSOA its final indices of deprivation score, decile and rank:

1. Income Deprivation (22.5%)
2. Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
3. Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
4. Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
5. Crime (9.3%)
6. Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
7. Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

(<https://www.ilivehere.co.uk/english-indices-of-deprivation-statistics-comparison-for-whitley-in-reading-e05002334.html>)

The table below highlights the key data for Whitley, using ilivehere data:

Overall deprivation in Whitley	8/10 BAD
Income deprivation	8/10 BAD
Employment deprivation	7/10 BELOW AVERAGE
Education, skills and training	9/10 VERY BAD
Health deprivation	7/10 BELOW AVERAGE
Crime deprivation	6/10 AVERAGE
Barriers to housing and services	9/10 VERY BAD
Inside environment deprivation	3/10 GOOD
Outside environment deprivation	6/10 AVERAGE

Appendix 4 – Evaluations

Due to a combination of a change of personnel at Aspire2 (including a considerable period with no staff in post) and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our activities, we have limited recent evaluation of activities. As activities are reinstated throughout our Covid recovery period, we will be able to update these evaluations with more recent data, however limited budgets constrain the resource available to undertake this work.

Previous to Covid, we judged our success by attendance numbers & feedback. In 2019, 3,097 children attended Ufton Adventure, for residential & day trips. Feedback from visiting teachers to Ufton:

- 100% agreed their young people feel capable of more than they had previously imagined
- 97% agree their children have developed their ability to work collaboratively with others
- 95% agree their children have increased personal confidence
- 86% agree their children are more likely to persevere when they encounter difficulties.

Feedback from children and young people includes: “I am quite good at stuff that I had no idea about; I learned that I should be calm and think about my actions; To like the outside and trust in others; Trying new things felt a bit weird at first but when I got used to it, it was really fun.”

200 Year 5 students attended our University day in 2019. One pupil said "This is amazing! I want to go to Uni now!' The annual Poetry competition, also held at Reading University, brings together more than 300 Whitley school children and many of their parents, to perform their group or individual poems – we are hoping to have the capacity to relaunch this in 2022.

Over 200 children were involved in the 2019 WEC Olympics. The organising teacher reported: ‘Thanks to the funding from Aspire 2, we were able to hire Palmer Park. The children were able to run on a real athletics track & do a standing long jump into a sand pit, all of which we don't have access to at school. The children were amazed at the venue & loved experiencing what some had seen when watching the Olympics. It really demonstrated to them that they could do it too’.

During the Covid pandemic, Aspire2 ran a project for Year 6 children to record a podcast about their experiences of lockdown. The feedback from schools involved was overwhelmingly positive, One Headteacher says: “The Lockdown Stories podcast project was a poignant partnership that gave a voice to our Year 6 children before they left for secondary school having missed so many rites of passage. It was fascinating to hear the children’s stories and witness how affected they had been by the period of lockdown. What struck me was how reflective and open they were about their experiences. Some children had lost family and friends to Covid. They were able to recognise the impact this had on their lives and the importance of family and friendship. I was moved by their mature and honest reflections and listening to the compilations made it seem that much more powerful than perhaps reading them from the page.”

Aspire2 has recently secured the lease of two minibuses to enable schools to overcome transport barriers, so children are able to attend sports fixtures, cultural events, trips and activities that otherwise they would not be able to access. Although the minibuses have only been in use for a few weeks, the initial feedback is overwhelmingly positive from both children: “We love the minibus - we didn't have to ask our parents for money for a coach. They cost a lot of money” and Headteachers: “Without the minibus, we would not have been able to attend a sporting event outside of Whitley and this would have been a missed opportunity for our children to play competitively and to make links with schools outside of our immediate area. It was great the event allowed the children to work together as a team which there have been so limited opportunities to do over the past two years.”

Appendix 5 – Five Year Operational Plan

Year1

- Reinststate pre-Covid activities
 - Ufton Court Visits
 - Year 5 University Day
 - University Poetry Competition
- Launch music programme
 - Early Years music project
 - Community Choir
 - Build relationship with Music Education Hub partners
- Other activities
 - Pilot Movement in Play project
 - Drama projects with local partners
 - Lockdown podcast project
 - Develop school holiday offer
 - Local ad hoc projects
- Collaboration with the local community
 - Meet with Headteachers
 - Meet with School Councils
 - Meet with local residents
 - Local parent group

Year 2

Continue Year 1 activities plus:

- Relaunch Whitfest cultural festival
 - Workshops with cultural partners
 - Whole community festival
- New residential opportunities
 - Develop new programme with Ufton Court
 - Develop residential potential with Beale Park
 - Investigate other potential partners
- Other activities
 - Evaluate Year 1 activities
 - Develop Music Centre project
 - Roll out Movement in Play project
 - University Public Speaking competition
 - Local ad hoc projects
- Collaboration with the local community
 - Meet with Headteachers
 - Develop Aspire2 school council groups
 - Meet with local residents
 - Local parent group

Year 3

Continue Year 1 and 2 activities plus:

- Develop sports and active programme
 - Competitive sports opportunities across all ages groups

- Develop partnerships with host venues/private schools
- Develop relationship with Reading FC
- Introduce new and innovative sporting opportunities
- Offer active opportunities outside mainstream sport
- Develop family and community work
 - Evaluate existing community relationships
 - Build relationships with local families
 - Create family advisory panel
 - Hold school focus groups
 - Close partnership working with community partners
 - Develop family activity/trips programme
- Other activities
 - Evaluate Year 2 activities
 - Build on Music Centre opportunities
 - Develop Whitfest
 - Local ad hoc projects
- Collaboration with the local community (in addition to above)
 - Meet with Headteachers
 - Empower Aspire2 School Councils to launch new initiatives

Year 4

Continue Year 1 and 2 activities plus:

- All phases trips programme
 - Develop annual programme for trips
 - Include each key stage plus families
 - Day and residential trips
- Develop private school partnerships
 - Build relationships with multiple independent schools
 - Establish partners for sports, culture and other key areas
- Other activities
 - Evaluate Year 3 activities
 - Local ad hoc projects
- Collaboration with the local community
 - Meet with Headteachers
 - Support Aspire2 School Councils to roll out new initiatives
 - Meet with family advisory panel
 - Local resident research

Year 5

- Corporate and major donor development
 - Develop corporate donor pack
 - Build relationships with potential corporate partners
 - Investigate major donor development
 - Investigate legacy giving
- Consultations for future development
 - Partnerships
 - Funding
 - Review vision, mission and goals

- New strategic plan
- Other activities
 - Evaluate Year 4 activities
 - Local ad hoc projects
- Collaboration with the local community
 - Meet with Headteachers
 - Review and develop role of Aspire2 School Councils
 - Meet with family advisory panel
 - Local resident research