



*ready*  
UNLIMITED

*transforming lives  
through enterprise*

Impact report

[www.readyunlimited.com](http://www.readyunlimited.com)

**“There’s more to an enterprising education than getting children to bake buns and wash cars. We support teachers to enhance their existing activities and develop stimulating and innovative curricula that is appropriate for their students and settings. We don’t provide a curriculum in a box – instead we encourage and inspire educators to produce their own solutions. Our results show that’s more motivating and successful for teachers and students.”**

Catherine Brentnall, Managing Director, Ready Unlimited

## **key milestones:**

2005 – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council launched Rotherham Ready, an acclaimed school improvement programme to introduce enterprise and entrepreneurship into schools’ curriculum.

2008 – given growing profile of Rotherham Ready asked to deliver programmes around UK.

2010 – Rotherham named ‘Most enterprising place in Britain’ for developing an Enterprise Pathway for young people in the town.

2011 – established Are You Ready? in recognition of our national appeal and reach.

2013 – launched Ready Unlimited as an independent social enterprise to fulfil our ambition to create a culture of enterprise in education across the UK.

**Ready Unlimited** exists to transform the life and work chances of young people, by enabling educators to provide teaching and learning that is relevant to the opportunities and challenges of the twenty first century.

As a leading professional development and training service we support schools, colleges and further and higher education institutions to embed enterprise and entrepreneurship across the curriculum. We focus on developing teachers’ skills, capabilities and imagination and on facilitating effective collaborations to design learning and curricula that challenges and motivates young people to succeed by providing:

- In-service training
- Consultancy
- Teaching tools
- Impact evaluation and monitoring tools
- Engagement models for working with businesses
- Pathways towards the National Standard for Enterprise Education

Our programmes support schools to:

- Ensure children and young people are receiving an inspiring and purposeful educational experience that is connected to enabling them to achieve fulfilling lives and rewarding work.
- Build teachers’ capacity to develop their own tailored enterprise curriculum.
- Identify and link with other like-minded educational establishments and partners to build sustainable community-wide partnership approaches to learning.

## **ready unlimited in...**

Since establishing our first programme in Rotherham in 2006, we have grown a movement for enterprise in education. We have launched programmes or trained teachers in Barnsley, Calderdale, Doncaster, Hull, Lincolnshire, Liverpool, North Lincolnshire, London, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Scarborough, Sheffield and Warrington.

- 1,695 teachers trained
- 692 trainee teachers trained
- 94 businesses involved



**“Too many people leave school thinking they are stupid. They’re not stupid, they simply never got a chance to find out what they were good at.”**

Sir Ken Robinson

**“The world has, and is continuing to change rapidly, and young people need to be better prepared for the opportunities and challenges they are going to face once they leave school. As a businessman I know what it takes to be successful; children need the chance to develop lateral thinking, partnership working, risk-taking and creativity.”**

Carl Hopkins, Entrepreneur and Channel 4 ‘The Secret Millionaire’

Research compiled by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor<sup>2</sup> has found that people who have started businesses are more likely to have experienced enterprise education or training.

## *why?*

Rapid globalisation and shifts in technology, the economy and employment patterns mean that young people face increasingly complex and unpredictable working lives.

The transformation of the economy, from one based on manufacturing and industry to one based on knowledge, creativity and enterprise has significant economic implications.



Now, much low and medium skilled work is being outsourced or automated and the competition for highly skilled work is on an international scale. The global economic crisis and recession have compounded these problems and, as unemployment has spread across the UK, young people have been disproportionately hit. There are twice as many young people unemployed as any other group.

1 in 5 young people aged 16-24 are unemployed<sup>1</sup>.

The vast majority of businesses in the UK’s private sector employ less than 10 people and many are sole traders. This trend is expected to increase further in the future. In many areas the biggest employer has traditionally been the public sector but austerity measures mean that jobs have been shed and further contractions are likely.

The truth for most young people coming through education now, is that if they want to have a job in the future, they will have to demonstrate skill, ingenuity and flexibility. This applies whether they want to establish their own business, work for a private company that is increasingly having to compete globally, in the rapidly changing public services or ever evolving not-for-profit sector.

The problem is, that whilst the world and the economy has transformed beyond recognition, education has stayed the same.

**Ready Unlimited is on a mission to change that.**

<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics (May 2013)

<sup>2</sup> Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2010), ‘A Global Perspective on Entrepreneurship Education and Training.’

**“Staff and children have been really inspired with the enterprise work because it gives context and purpose to the learning. There has been a positive impact on the whole school and particularly in the confidence, motivation and enjoyment of teaching.”**

Denise Popplewell, Tealby School, Lincolnshire

**“We feel now we are quite far through the enterprise journey and it is so integrated in what we do that it is second nature rather than ‘doing enterprise’.”**

Simon Witham, Thorpe Park Primary, Hull

**“All our teachers have been trained so they understand what it means to be enterprising and why that is important. Our school culture is about supporting students to develop into purposeful, positive young people who have confidence and aspirations – and enterprise is a perfect vehicle for achieving that.”**

Lesley Homer, Wingfield Business and Enterprise College, Rotherham

# school improvement

Embedding an enterprising education is an excellent vehicle for school improvement. The schools that Ready Unlimited have worked with tell us it has delivered:

- More engaged and motivated teachers
- Higher quality teaching
- Improvements in pupils' attendance and behaviour
- Increases in pupils' achievement and attainment
- More meaningful relationships between the school, parents and the wider community
- High value return for allocated Pupil Premium funding
- Effective collaborations within and between schools



Teachers involved in our programmes have gone on to develop original Masters level research projects to evidence the benefits of enterprise, demonstrating how their enterprising approaches have raised standards in literacy and maths and improved performance across other curriculum areas.

This trend is supported by the findings of research undertaken by Hoshin<sup>3</sup> into the persistent educational underachievement in Yorkshire and the Humber. Researchers found that young people's perceptions of the labour market were a critical factor in educational underachievement. Not knowing what's 'out there', and not being able to connect learning

to economic success, is detrimental to young people's academic achievement. Ready Unlimited's approach seeks to address exactly these issues by supporting teachers to enhance learning through enterprise.

School leaders also tell us how enterprise has been a powerful vehicle for engaging parents and the wider community. Previously sparsely attended family learning events have been oversubscribed with attendees when learning has had an enterprise twist.



<sup>3</sup> Yorkshire Futures and Hoshin (2007), 'Understanding and Addressing Key Stage 4 (GCSE) Educational Underachievement in Yorkshire and Humber.'



**“The team at Ready Unlimited really understand enterprise and entrepreneurship, and they offer an excellent range of services to support schools to empower their teachers to design enterprise teaching that will inspire their pupils. The results speak for themselves.”**

Carl Hopkins, Entrepreneur and Channel 4 ‘The Secret Millionaire’

**“Enterprise has made us look at our curriculum and make sure that learning is rooted in the real world and that everything we do is underpinned by skills for life. We want the best quality teaching and learning, and enterprise brings a coherence to our approach that motivates teachers and students**

**alike.”** Zena Taylor, Hilltop Special School, Rotherham.



Global Entrepreneurship Monitor estimated in 2010<sup>6</sup> that only 18.4% of adults in the UK have had enterprise training. In Rotherham, through our programme of work with over 700 teachers, 43% of young people have been involved in learning about enterprise and entrepreneurship, and that number is growing.

# heritage

Since 2005, and the launch of our first programme, Rotherham Ready, we have developed a reputation and proven track record for transforming practice and provision in schools and colleges.

Given our strong performance we have experienced year on year growth in uptake of our programmes and we have extended our reach with participating schools across the country.



We have won international acclaim for our work and education providers and opinion leaders from around the world regularly contact us to share our experience and approach.

An independent evaluation<sup>4</sup> of the first four years of Rotherham Ready found how we were impacting on school culture and the curriculum. Using the Cabinet Office framework for ‘culture change’, evaluators found how we were successfully changing the behaviour of teachers and head teachers and hailed the programme as more of a ‘movement’ than a project.

In 2009, Ofsted evaluated Rotherham Ready<sup>5</sup>:

- They praised how we inspired teachers and school leaders to prioritise enterprise
- They recognised that our high quality training and resources enabled teachers to view enterprise as integral to school improvement
- They recognised the impact our work was having on young people and highlighted that good and outstanding enterprise learning in schools and colleges was leading to young people who were confident and enthused

With the launch of Ready Unlimited we are able to significantly extend the positive impact of the work that began in Rotherham eight years ago.

To enable us to learn, adapt and extend our positive impact, we work collaboratively with a range of research institutions that scrutinise our programmes, training and tools. These include Warwick University’s Centre for Education and Industry, Swansea Metropolitan University, The University of Sheffield and the University of Lappeenranta in Finland.

We support our participating schools to evaluate the impact of their own programmes of work by using our Impact Evaluation Framework. This enables schools to identify clear priorities and appropriately address areas for development.

In 2012, our work was recognised by Nesta, the UK’s innovation charity, who awarded Ready Unlimited a grant to further develop our approach and establish us as an independent not-for-profit social enterprise.

<sup>4</sup> MTL (2009), ‘Rotherham Ready evaluation.’

<sup>5</sup> Ofsted (2008), ‘Ofsted Survey Inspection: Evaluation of Rotherham Ready Enterprise Initiative.’

<sup>6</sup> Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2010), ‘A Global Perspective on Entrepreneurship Education and Training.’

**“We want to transform the ambition and aspiration of young people through real business experience. To rebuild our economy and create new jobs, we need to inspire the next generation to seriously think about starting their own company.”**

Dr Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business

**“As a business person I believe we should educate about self employment and support the development of crucial workplace skills. These projects are brilliant at doing that. Young people show such energy and creativity and you see them grow in confidence.”**

Jacqui Saxon, The Ultimate Balloon Company

In Rotherham, since 2006 almost 100 businesses have become involved in delivering an enterprising education. Supporters include global companies like Tata Steel and Gripple Ltd, to sole traders and young emerging entrepreneurs.

## *backed by business*

A key element of the Ready Unlimited approach is to encourage educators to secure the involvement of role models from the world of work. This brings important real life context and relevance to the learning experiences.



It also helps ensure that participating localities become enterprising communities by extending the approach beyond school boundaries to local businesses, voluntary groups and parents.

The benefits are two-way, as companies' value being able to connect with the employees and customers of the future, as well as fulfilling their corporate social responsibilities by inspiring and up-skilling the next generation of entrepreneurs and enterprising employees.

Research by the Employers and Education Task Force has found that young people who have experienced employer engagement have better labour outcomes. Those young people who had at least four experiences were statistically more likely to have jobs, more likely to have better jobs and more likely to have higher wages. With enterprise learning and employer engagement, they concluded 'more is more'.

Ready Unlimited have a range of enterprise curriculum projects and ideas that teachers can use to build partnerships with businesses.



Make £5 Blossom - this tried and tested programme partners schools with businesses that provide a loan of £150 and professional expertise to support young people to run a mini-enterprise. Pupils control how to spend the loan to create products or services to sell and how to distribute profits gained.

Young Entrepreneurs Clubs - an engaging extra-curricular programme which links business mentors with entrepreneurial young people to provide skills, expertise and industry connections, which support the enterprising ideas of young people.





**“I used to want to leave school, sit on the settee and play on the computer. Now, in five years time I want to run my own business in horticulture”** Billy, 18

Billy was at high risk of being NEET (not in education, employment or training) until he got involved with a programme we introduced to a participating school. Working with young people across a number of schools, Billy made and grew things to sell on a monthly stall. The experience transformed his thinking, leading him to apply to college to develop his horticultural and business skills.

**“Enterprise has made our school quite literally buzz with excitement. The children are developing new attitudes and skills, and they have a curriculum that is constantly moving and challenges them. I have no doubt that this is improving their learning and helping them get ready for the next stage of their education and their adult lives.”**

Kath Thomas, St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Rotherham

**“At school they call me Lord Sugar. I want to be an entrepreneur, start my own business, make money and provide a service to people.”** Alan, 11

Ready Unlimited have worked with Alan's school to introduce an enterprising curriculum and Alan has participated in projects including Make £5 Blossom. The experiences have unlocked Alan's strong entrepreneurial aspirations; he now runs a range of ventures and is Chair of the school's Enterprise Council.

# raising ambitions

Ready Unlimited exists to enable educators to nurture and develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of young people to pursue their hopes and dreams.

From the youngest children, who are successfully taking over the running of school events to teenagers incorporating social businesses at school, the impact of belonging to an enterprise education culture is manifesting itself in a new appetite for 'starting something'.

**The impact of providing enterprising and entrepreneurial learning is clearly demonstrated by the quality and success of the micro enterprises and businesses that young people are running.**

**Brinsworth Howarth Junior and Infant School** have won an award for 'Best Business Idea' after they made £879 in the national 'Tenner Tycoon' competition developing Shakespeare themed events and activities that linked to Macbeth, the play they were studying.

**Thorpe Park Primary** Year 6 pupils have partnered with Dorothy Perkins for their 'Make £5 Blossom' project and by making and selling jewellery have raised over £2,000.

An ethnographic study<sup>7</sup> to explore the role of Ready Unlimited's enterprise education found that through our work "young people involved in enterprise learning felt confident in tackling business situations and solving problems." The report also highlighted that young people felt that the enterprise experiences had been a key part of building their self-esteem.

<sup>7</sup> ESRO (2012), 'Are we ready?'

**Wingfield Business and Enterprise College** pupils have secured a loan to establish 'Coffee at the Pod', a real business for which they have designed and made the stall and from which they sell fairtrade hot drinks.



We welcome feedback and discussion. If you would like to know more or feel you could help contribute to our vision please get in touch:



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