

# Deepening our impact: building skills across the UK

2018 LifeSkills Impact Report



LifeSkills

Created with  BARCLAYS

## Foreword: Growing and deepening the impact of LifeSkills

As economic, societal and technological advances drive forward the pace of change in the workplace, today's young people need to be more able to adapt than any other generation. It's critical that our programme moves forward with these changes, to ensure educators and young people have the tools for successful skills development.

We've achieved a huge amount over the past six years, in collaboration with educators, businesses, partners and parents. From a starting ambition of aiming to help one million young people by 2015, we've expanded to reach more than 7.7 million students; equipping them with 21st century skills and inspiring them to become more confident and motivated to achieve their potential.

During 2018 we used our experience of running an employability programme to test and build a high-quality employability intervention model for the young people who need it the most. We collaborated with educators to create a targeted programme to help white working class boys, as they are the least likely of any social group in England to go to university, have the lowest

GCSE exam results and are least likely to find jobs after leaving school.

The results demonstrated how the right blend of intervention can successfully inspire and engage students who need help to realise their full potential. We will extend this work in 2019, reaching out to other groups, such as children leaving care.

In 2018 we carried out new research to gain a better understanding of how employable the UK is. It showed that 6 in 10 adults lack core transferable skills, such as problem solving and resilience. This indicated that we needed to accelerate our efforts to ensure young people leave education with these skills. To help address this gap, we launched a range of resources to encourage educators to embed skills across the curriculum. These included a 21st century mindset toolkit to track skills development using a national framework, a suite of enterprise resources to bring the real world application of these key skills to life, and content to help educators embed careers throughout the curriculum to deliver against the Careers Strategy set out by the Government.

As we go forward, we are committed to deepening the impact of LifeSkills further, helping more people of all abilities to improve their employment chances, benefiting the economy and society.



**Kirstie Mackey**  
Director of Citizenship and Consumer Affairs,  
Barclays UK

## Introduction: Meeting the UK's skills challenge

The world of work continues to evolve rapidly; globally, the fourth industrial revolution is transforming economies, how people work and the skills that they need to succeed at work. In this context, future success for the UK economy will be dependent on defining the UK's areas of competitive advantage – the key sectors and industries where the UK can win on the global stage; and the capabilities required to win in those areas.

Central to this is building the skills that the people of the UK need to thrive in the future world of work. Small businesses are already the main drivers of job creation; we believe they will be even more important in that future world, so we must find better ways to help them become high growth businesses – within thriving local economies around the country.

We must evolve the LifeSkills programme as we help the UK economy face into these

challenges. While continuing to grow what we've accomplished with young people aged 11-24, we are also expanding LifeSkills to people over 25 across the UK – together, helping a further 10 million people build their skills for the workplace of the future by the end of 2022. It's crucial that we address these challenges across the whole country and across all ages. Education can no longer stop at the school gates. Lifelong learning is critical at a time of such rapid change in the workplace.

“Everyone at Barclays is distinctly proud of what the communities with whom we work have helped us achieve through LifeSkills. We firmly believe that LifeSkills represents the very best of what can be created when we work together; contributing to a successful UK economy where people have fulfilling employment and more opportunities to take their lives forward.”



**Matt Hammerstein**  
Chief Executive, Barclays UK

## LifeSkills programme overview

LifeSkills created with Barclays helps millions of young people prepare for the 21st century workplace – inspiring them towards a better future and supporting our economy and society.

The programme recognises that as well as good academic results, young people need core transferable skills, from personal resilience to problem solving, to improve their employability and equip them for the future world of work.

LifeSkills brings together educators, businesses, parents and social enterprises to help young people develop these skills, and boost their confidence, aspirations and motivation. It offers more than 65 hours of free curriculum-linked resources, covering CV writing, interview techniques, developing an enterprising mindset, as well as key 21st century skills, from problem solving and creativity to being proactive.

The content is flexible and engaging. It can be delivered by teachers, or accessed directly by young people in ways that suit them and in their own time, through videos, quick-fire activities and interactive tools.

LifeSkills helps educators to plan lessons and embed careers throughout the curriculum, as well as supporting interventions with groups that need targeted help to enhance their employability. It enables them to build a flexible programme of activities around target topics. These can be delivered as a series of lessons, which is vital to driving higher levels of confidence and motivation in young people.

As we look to the future, we are committed to evolving our resources and finding new ways to support educators. Our ambition is to help people at all stages of life to close their skills gaps and successfully navigate the 21st century world of work.



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The materials are very easy to access and download. And there are lots of thought-provoking ideas for lesson plans.

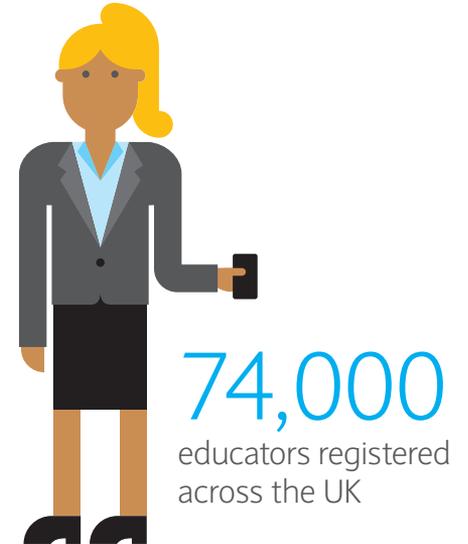
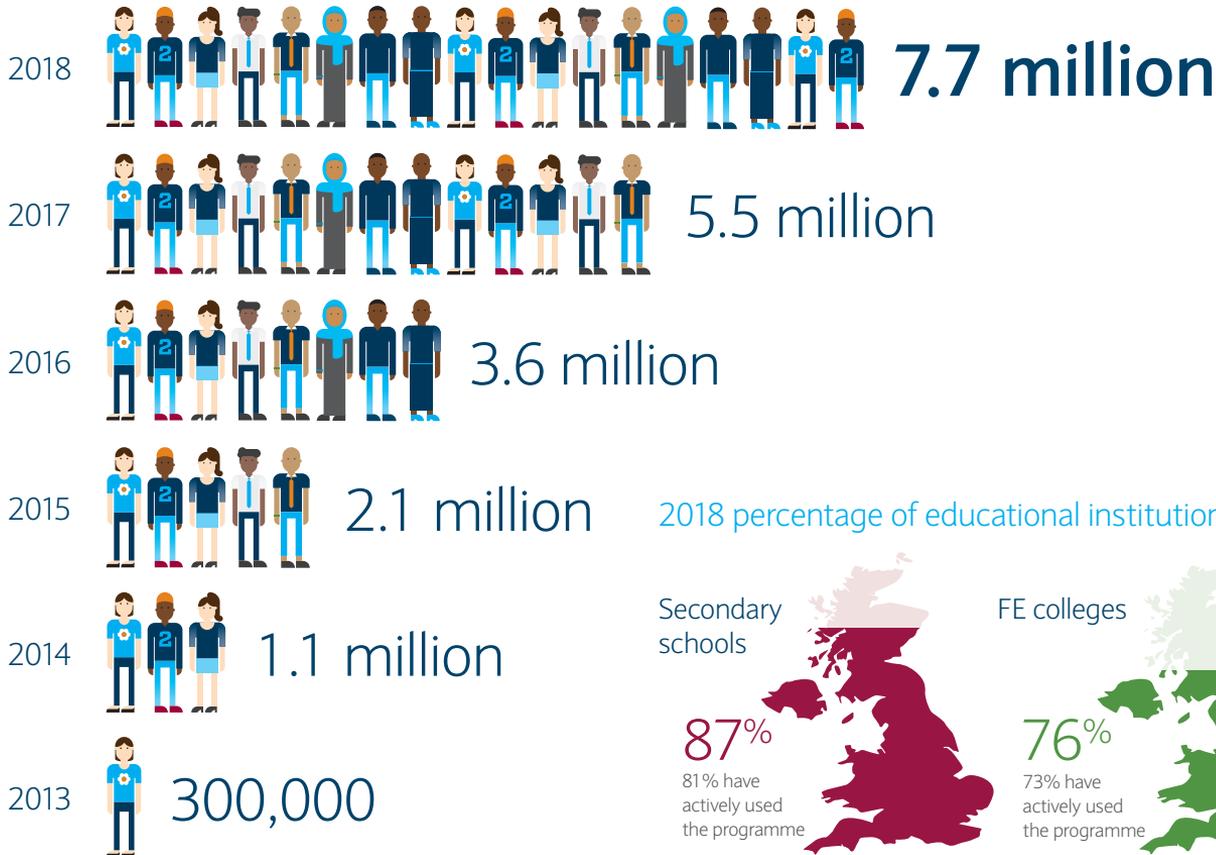
Teacher, Scotland

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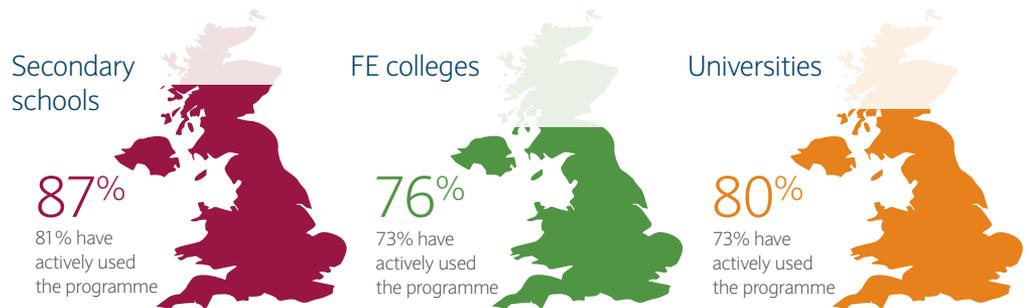
# Reaching further in 2018

Over seven and a half million young people have participated in LifeSkills since its launch in April 2013.

## Number of young people participating in LifeSkills<sup>1</sup>



## 2018 percentage of educational institutions that have registered with LifeSkills<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> These figures are assured by KPMG

<sup>2</sup> Since the launch of the programme in 2013

## Making a real difference in young people's lives

LifeSkills aims to do more than pass on skills and knowledge. We want to inspire a change in young people's lives, helping them to understand their potential and achieve their ambitions. We judge our success by how motivated and confident students feel, and how likely they are to take action towards their chosen career path. To measure this impact, in 2017-18 we carried out research with more than 600 students and almost 700 educators, through surveys, school and college visits, interviews, focus groups and detailed case studies.

### Students are more motivated and confident to take action<sup>3</sup>



**78%** have higher ambitions

More than three-quarters of students said they had higher career ambitions and aspirations after engaging with LifeSkills.



**88%** are more motivated

Almost 9 in 10 students using LifeSkills said they felt more motivated to achieve in studies and training.



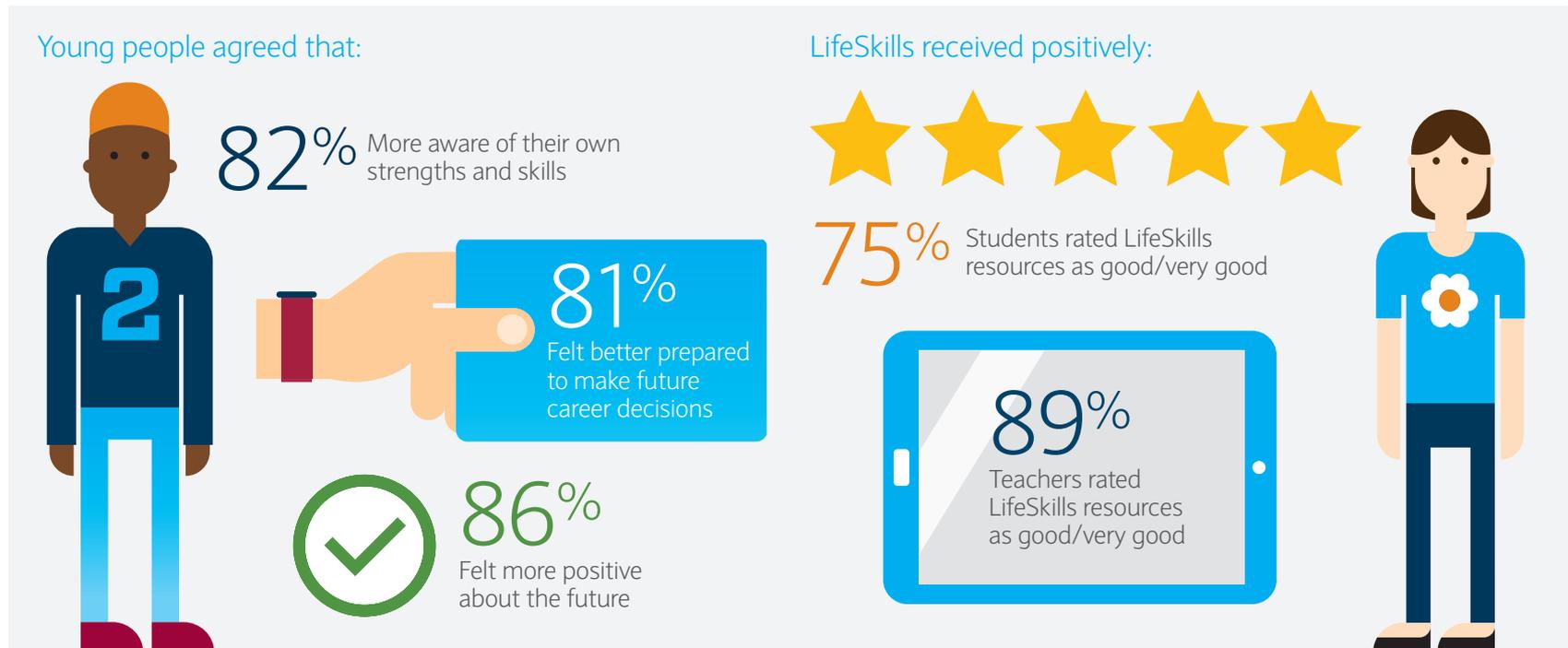
**64%** worked or volunteered

Students are more likely to take positive action towards their chosen career path. More than 70% created a CV, while 64% did work experience or volunteering.

## The more students use LifeSkills, the more they improve

Using LifeSkills develops young people's readiness for and confidence about the future – and that impact increases the more they interact with the programme. Our independent research shows that teachers whose students had a greater number of experiences reported that their students 'improved a lot' across a range of impact indicators, including their attitude, motivation, confidence, knowledge and skills.

### LifeSkills resources are rated very highly<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup>Chrysalis Research Evaluation of LifeSkills 2018 – in 2017, there was a change to the external evaluation design, in order to provide Barclays with a more robust and fine-grained picture of the impact of the LifeSkills programme on young people. This is why some of the figures presented in the current report are not directly comparable with the headline findings reported for the earlier stages of the programme.

## LifeSkills in action: four stories from educators across the UK

“What LifeSkills does is give our students skills and knowledge which they can use in their everyday life and then transfer into the workplace, to build relationships with colleagues, make new friends and just be a part of their community.”

One of the biggest challenges to delivering SEND careers education is finding readily accessible resources for our learners, which can save us time planning and delivering lessons.



The great thing about the LifeSkills SEND-adapted lessons is that there are more images and the words are easier for the students to understand; making them very user friendly.

I've used the self-confidence lesson to help students overcome feelings of worry and anxiety, and "Journey to your career" which is about transitioning from school to college and then employment, and making key decisions at each stage.

As a result the students have started going out into the workplace, showing their confidence and actually talking about what they would like to do in the future.

**Trina Dawkins**  
Supported Internship Manager,  
New City College, London



We use LifeSkills across the curriculum in Key stage 3 to promote money skills and as a key part of our St Joseph's Fest to help promote employment and open students' eyes to future career paths. With older students we use LifeSkills in a range of ways – interview skills, CV building, learning more about social media for employability and building confidence. The programme has also been valuable for preparing our students for work experience and supporting them to access really beneficial placements.

“All the skills developed are what they say on the tin – lifeskills. We as a school have benefited greatly from LifeSkills – both students and teachers.”

**Anne Glover**  
Key Stage 5 Facilitator  
St Joseph's College, Belfast

Our school is committed to ensuring our pupils leave school equipped with skills for life, learning and work. To ensure this, we deliver a very comprehensive Developing the Young Workforce programme from S1-S6.

We used LifeSkills as part of our Skills Support Programme. This personal development and employability programme aimed to support students by focusing on the development of skills for life, learning and work; as well as providing opportunities for wider achievement.



“Following the success of our initial LifeSkills sessions, we worked to ensure that all students from S1-S6 access the programme, in particular our school leavers, to help develop their communication and interview skills.”

**Claire Meehan**  
Deputy Headteacher  
Saint Thomas Aquinas RC  
School, Glasgow

Employability skills are seen as essential requirements for the students at Pentrehafod and considered a whole school target. Key Stage 4 students follow the Welsh Bacallaureate and as part of this we have been using LifeSkills, delivered by Business in the Community, to enhance the teaching and learning of these essential skills.

Our programme of activity ensures the students are well prepared to make their post-16 decisions and have an insight in to the world of work. The feedback from the students has always been excellent with clear evidence that they are using the skills across the curriculum and when completing application forms for their post-16 options.

“The ability to mix and match the Lifeskills resources, providing targeted and effective intervention, is exactly what’s needed and the presence of Barclays staff, in some sessions, really reinforces the skills being developed.”

**Chris John**  
Welsh Bacallaureate Coordinator  
Pentrehafod School, Swansea



## LifeSkills in action: Creating meaningful change through employability intervention

Through our experience of running an employability programme in schools for six years, we wanted to develop a model of employability skills intervention for young people who need it the most.

### The issue: low social mobility of white working class boys

During the 2017-2018 academic year, LifeSkills piloted this intervention model with white, working-class boys; a group recognised as needing additional in-depth support to reach their full potential.

Evidence shows that this group achieves the lowest grades at GCSE of any main ethnic group<sup>5</sup> and are also one of the most under-represented group in higher education, which in turn makes it more likely that they will end up in lower-paid, insecure jobs<sup>6</sup>.

### Addressing the issue: the pilot project

LifeSkills, in partnership with the Transformation Trust, set out to build a model of employability skills intervention for this group.

### The pilot wanted to drive the following four areas:

1. Improve aspirations
2. Support the group in acquiring employability/practical skills
3. Show how a blended approach to supporting young people delivers the greatest impact
4. Quantify the link between improving aspirations and increased motivation to work harder at school to achieve results



“ My pupils are meeting people who had gone on after finishing school to start small businesses or take other bold career steps. The message for them is, actually there’s a world out there but you have to grab those opportunities.

Teacher, Ipswich



**The Transformation Trust**  
Helping schools transform young lives

<sup>5</sup> [suttontrust.com/research-paper/class-differences-ethnicity-and-disadvantage](https://suttontrust.com/research-paper/class-differences-ethnicity-and-disadvantage)

<sup>6</sup> [equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/largest-ever-review-reveals-%E2%80%98winners-and-losers%E2%80%99-progress-towards-equality-great](https://equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/largest-ever-review-reveals-%E2%80%98winners-and-losers%E2%80%99-progress-towards-equality-great)

## The impact: improved employability skills and personal development

This independently evaluated pilot has been used to establish a framework for future interventions which other employers, educators and the UK Government can use to work together to address the employability skills gap for those students who need it the most.

The target group were followed throughout the programme and compared with a control group of the same demographic.

**A key finding was that aspiration and ambition should be central to any employability intervention as these can either hinder or drive forward skills development, motivation and mindset.**

### Improve aspirations

#### Ambition and aspirations

Percentage of boys who stated that their ambitions and aspiration improved a lot



#### Motivation

Percentage of boys who said their motivation improved a lot



### Acquiring employability and practical skills

#### Problem solving

Percentage of boys who felt their knowledge of how to solve problems in the workplace/ at school improved a lot



#### Understanding the workplace

Percentage of boys who said they felt a lot more prepared to make future career decisions



## Closing the skills gap

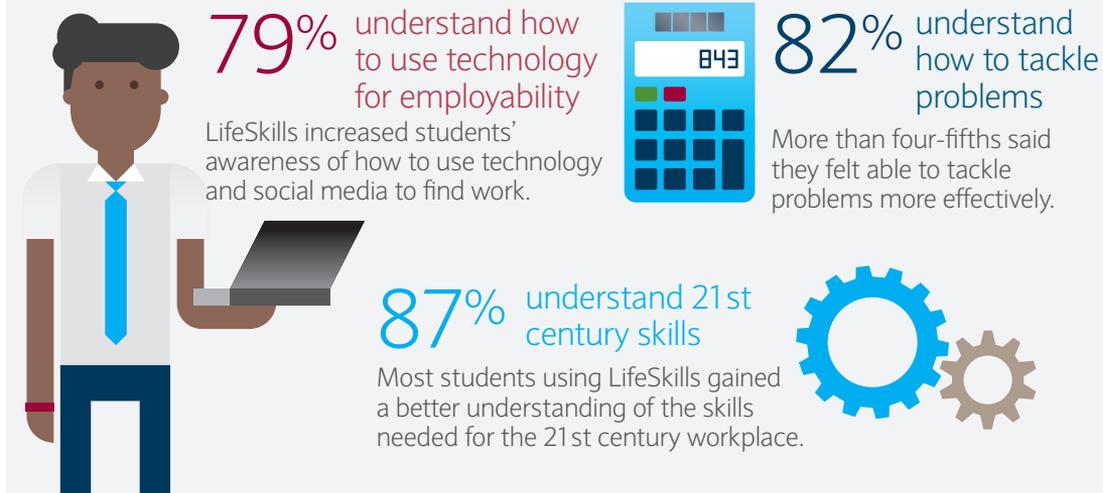
At the heart of LifeSkills is a set of core transferable skills. These are the skills that cannot easily be automated and which humans do best; skills which will be essential to help us adapt and thrive in the fast-changing future workplace.

To initially identify priority skills, we examined research from the World Economic Forum and UKCES. A more recent skills framework, provided by the Skills Builder Partnership and developed by Enabling Enterprise, offers a common narrative on skill development for the UK, and we align LifeSkills content to this.

During 2017-18, we carried out research<sup>7</sup> to explore how well the UK workforce is equipped with the skills needed for the future workplace. We found a disconnect between what employers and educators think. For example, a high proportion of employers identify leadership as a key skill for the future – but only 32% of educators see this as very important.

This confirms the need for LifeSkills to support educators in their awareness of these essential skills enabling them to boost their students' development. We are moving this forward with partners, to provide a consistent framework helping educators develop effective learning journeys that embed 21st century skills.

### How LifeSkills equips young people with 21st century skills



### Developing a 21st century mindset

During 2018, we launched a new toolkit to help educators build lessons around the core transferable skills for the 21st century. Each skill is defined and broken down into teachable chunks, helping teachers create learning packages for different age groups from 11-19.

<sup>7</sup>How employable is the UK: Meeting the future skills challenge, LifeSkills/NatCen Social Research/Chrysalis Research



## Aligning with the Careers Strategy

We have created new educator content to help schools develop careers programmes that will inspire young people and bridge the gap between school and employment. Our resources are mapped to the Government's Careers Strategy, helping teachers align with this and meet the Gatsby Benchmarks for stable and structured careers provision. We also provide support to schools with publishing a careers programme, a requirement since September 2018.



The LifeSkills Award recognises institutions which use the programme to promote employability teaching and go above and beyond to prepare their young people for the world of work.

## Making the most of our resources

We've also redeveloped our site navigation, enabling teachers to find resources more easily – so they can build a flexible programme on a targeted topic. Ease of access is vital to encourage repeated interactions, which our research shows builds levels of confidence and motivation in young people.

### Core transferable skills for the 21st century\*

- **Problem solving** skills are about using a structured process to analyse tricky problems, consider logical solutions, and then evaluate the result
- **Creativity** is the ability to come up with inventive ideas that will help you complete a task or solve a problem in a new or interesting way
- **Communication** (listening, presenting) and interpersonal skills are the verbal and physical skills that we use every day to explain what we're thinking and feeling to other people
- **Leadership** is the ability to get the best out of a team of people as you collectively work to tackle a task, or reach an objective
- **Being proactive** (aiming high) means that you think ahead, take the initiative and make things happen, instead of always reacting to what happens around you
- **Resilience** (staying positive) is the ability to cope with challenges or setbacks and turn them into positive, valuable learning experiences
- **Adaptability** is about being able to respond positively to change and apply your skills to new situations

\* Related Skills Builder essential skills are indicated in brackets

## Future focus – employability skills for all

Since LifeSkills was launched in 2013, we've reached millions of young people across the UK. As we look ahead, we will continue to deepen the impact of our work, ensuring that the learning we provide stays with students and helps them achieve their ambitions.

### Driving impact across the UK

To deepen our impact, we will expand our work with underserved groups in two key ways:

1. Build financial capability resources specifically to support young people moving from care to independence, as part of the Care Leaver Covenant, in partnership with Spectra First
2. Run a pilot in Bury, based on our employability intervention model, for children in care as well as Year 9 students who are performing well below their target level

Our evaluation clearly demonstrates that repeat learning drives the greatest impact. According to teacher data, almost 30 per cent more students improved 'a lot' in their confidence when they had four or more LifeSkills interactions. We will therefore continue to support educators and students, with pathways through the content that encourage multiple interactions and deep, measurable engagement.

In order to gain a broader picture of the impact of our work, we will begin a longitudinal study in 2019 looking at participants over several years, with a particular focus on destinations after education.

### Providing whole school support

We will look to provide further support at a whole-school level, bringing the world of work more visibly into the classroom. We recognise the value of upskilling teachers – and the fact that it needs to be done at scale. 2019 will see LifeSkills and TES working in partnership to offer an online CPD course, designed to help teachers integrate employability skills into lesson planning. Our structured approach will enable schools to provide evidence that they are offering a stable careers programme, supporting the Government's Careers Strategy goals.



### Employability skills for all

Looking further ahead, by 2022 we aim to provide employability skills learning to everyone who needs it across the workforce, reaching a further 10 million adults and young people. Helping to close skills gaps as people prepare for work, move jobs, create businesses or rejoin the workforce, thereby contributing to a successful UK economy where people have fulfilling employment.

## Building a mindset for success



“To be successful at work, young people need to consider many different approaches. Whether they are about to start their career or already in a job, it’s no longer enough to learn one set of skills for their whole lives.

As the world of work changes rapidly, what matters is how we manage and adapt to that change. Although technical skills and qualifications will continue to be critical for many roles, the ability to develop new skills and aptitudes will be just as important.

What I see as an employer is that regardless of what a person chooses to do, it’s their mindset which will help them to adapt to new things – you can achieve a lot with a combination of self-belief and a positive attitude.

That personal resilience goes along with the softer skills that are vital for modern business, such as communication, leadership, problem solving and proactivity. These are things that cannot easily be automated and will play a greater part in the work that we all do.

LifeSkills helps develop these attributes and prepare young people for the workplace. It gives them the confidence to succeed and thrive. I’m enormously proud of our achievements so far and excited about our continuing expansion, reaching more students across the UK and inspiring and motivating people of all ages and abilities.”

**Baroness Karren Brady, CBE**  
Chair and Ambassador, LifeSkills created with Barclays

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