

Rethinking Work Experience in Alternative Provision

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About Our Setting



284 Pupils



Primary & Secondary Provision



Part of Esteem MAT



Complex Needs



SEMH



Attendance Challenges



Learners Facing Multiple Barriers

The Traditional Model

TRADITIONAL ASSUMPTIONS

Attend every day

Travel independently

Engage immediately

Communicate concerns

Complete placement

AP REALITY

Anxiety

Attendance concerns

Transport barriers

Confidence issues

Previous negative experiences



What We've Learned

 Communication

 Confidence

 Responsibility

For many of our pupils, work experience is less about choosing a career and more about developing the skills needed to participate successfully in education, employment and society.

The Reality

Not every placement succeeds

Work experience for our learners isn't always a straightforward journey. There are often challenges along the way.

Our goal:
Positive experiences,
progress and
growth



Some pupils stop attending

They may attend once or twice and then stop.



Some struggle with anxiety

The workplace can feel overwhelming or unfamiliar.



Some don't tell us

They won't say if they're struggling or if the placement isn't right for them.



Some change their minds

Interests change and something that seemed right, no longer feels so.



This impacts relationships

When pupils stop attending without telling us, it breaks down trust with employers and affects future opportunities.



We continue to learn, adapt and support – because **every step forward matters**, no matter how small.

Adapting Work Experience

Employer Brokerage 

Matching pupils with supportive employers.

Flexible Approaches 

Adapting opportunities to individual needs

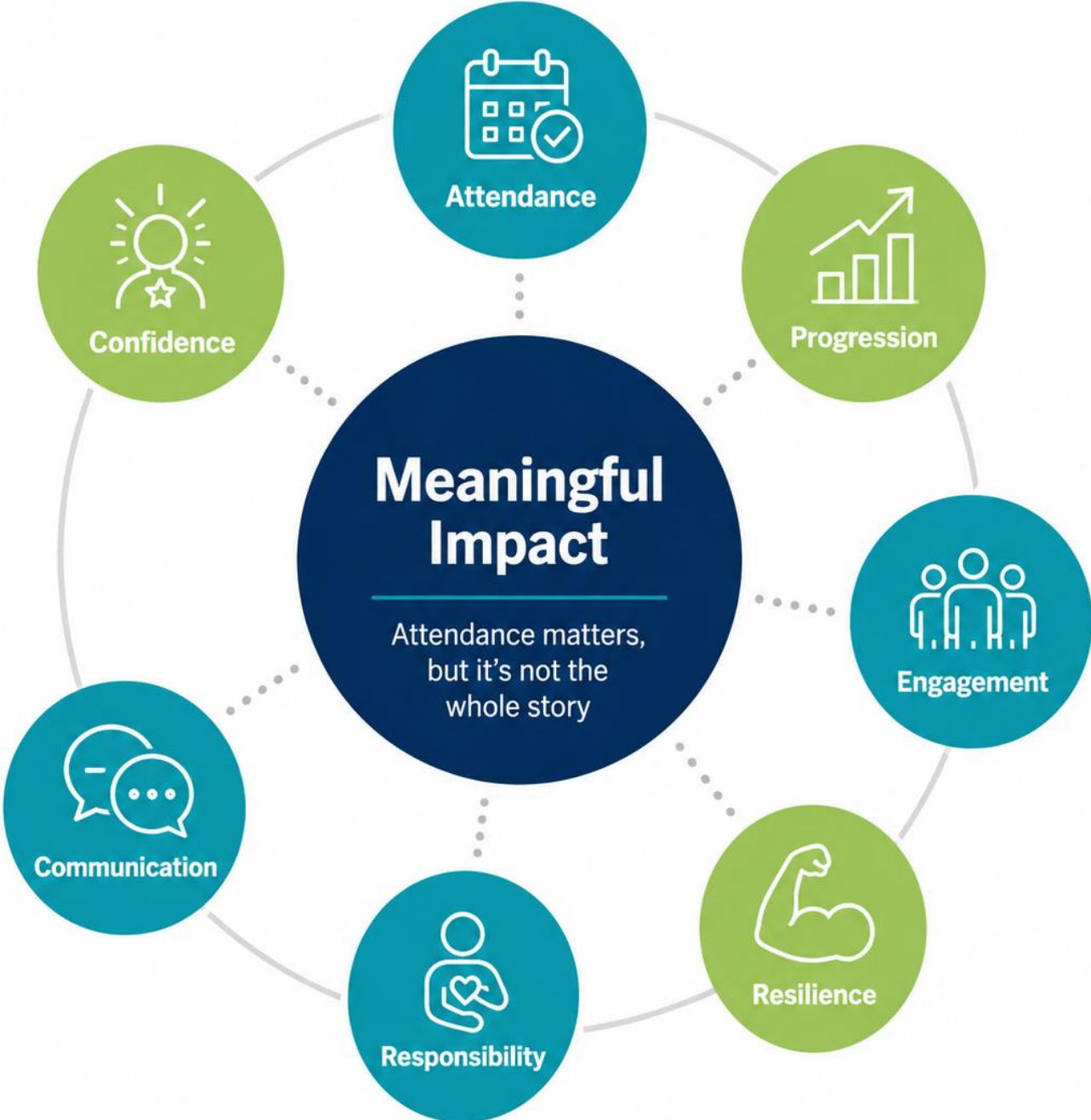
Safeguarding 

Managing risk through planning and communication

Relationship-Led Support 

Building trust with pupils and employers

Measuring Success Beyond Attendance




Case Study: From Disengagement to Progression

Starting Point

 1:1 tuition


 High risk of becoming NEET


 Significant anxiety and trauma


 Interest in mechanics

Intervention

 Placement at a local garage


 Employer already knew the family

 Attendance fluctuated initially


 Employer maintained support

Outcome

 Improved engagement

 Secured place on Automotive course

 Opportunity to improve Maths & English

 Potential apprenticeship pathway

The most significant outcome was not attendance. It was moving a young person at high risk of becoming NEET towards a realistic and sustainable progression pathway.

What AP Has Taught Us

Relationships Matter More Than Paperwork

Strong employer partnerships create flexibility.

Honest communication prevents placements breaking down.

Trust allows employers to support pupils through challenges.

Flexibility Increases Access

One size does not fit all.

Placements should reflect individual needs and interests.

Success is rarely linear.

Success Looks Different For Different Pupils

Attendance matters, but it isn't everything.

Confidence and engagement are meaningful outcomes.

Small steps can lead to significant progression.



Questions?

Thank You

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