

# SkillsFit Focus

Newsletter - Issue 4:  
9<sup>th</sup> February 2026



## SkillsFit: What We Do

Industry-setting Alternative Provision for 14-19 year olds

Targeted on-site support for attendance, SEMH, behaviour and progress

NEET Engagement projects for young people and neighbourhoods in need

Enrichment and wellbeing sessions for those accessing alternative education

## FOCUS FEATURE

### Supporting Preparation for Adulthood Outcomes

How SkillsFit supports young people with EHCPs to make **tangible, meaningful progress** towards adulthood through **relational, real-world provision**.

## FOCUS INSIGHT

### Being Open: What Young People Tell Us About Support

Why young people are more likely to engage when support is built **with them**, not around them.

## FOCUS HEADLINE

### SkillsFit & Social Value

**Supporting Outcomes That Matter Locally** - SkillsFit's approach to social value focuses on meaningful outcomes for young people, while helping partners evidence contribution across key social value priorities.

# FOCUS FEATURE - Supporting Preparation for Adulthood Outcomes

## Setting the Context: Preparation for Adulthood in Practice

Preparation for Adulthood is often talked about as a destination; something to be addressed at key transition points for a young person or towards the end of a programme of study. In practice, it is a much longer journey, **shaped by everyday experiences, relationships and routines over time.**

For schools and colleges, there is increasing pressure to evidence meaningful Preparation for Adulthood outcomes for young people with EHCPs. While frameworks and targets are important, the real challenge lies in translating these into **day-to-day practice that genuinely supports readiness for adulthood.**

For many young people, progress towards adulthood does not begin with clear next steps or defined pathways. It begins with feeling **safe in an environment, confident in routines, and supported to engage consistently.** Confidence, communication, self-regulation and independence are often the foundations upon which longer-term outcomes are built. This means Preparation for Adulthood works best when it is embedded across provision; not treated as a standalone process, but as something **developed through consistent, relational support and purposeful experiences** that reflect the realities of adult life.

## Preparation for Adulthood Outcomes and the SkillsFit Approach

Preparation for Adulthood outcomes are commonly framed around four key areas: **employment, independent living, community inclusion, and health and wellbeing.** Progress towards these outcomes is rarely achieved through a single intervention; it develops through consistent experiences that build confidence, independence and readiness over time.

SkillsFit's provision is designed to contribute meaningfully across all four areas. Industry-setting Alternative Provision supports **employment readiness** by exposing young people to adult-style environments, routines and expectations, helping them develop confidence, responsibility and positive work-related behaviours. On-site support within schools and colleges reinforces **independent living skills**, such as managing routines, self-regulation, communication and transitions within familiar settings.

Through community-based activity and purposeful group work, SkillsFit supports **community inclusion**, helping young people build social confidence, teamwork and a sense of belonging beyond the classroom. Underpinning all delivery is a strong focus on **health and wellbeing**, supporting positive routines, emotional regulation and self-management; foundations that enable progress across every other outcome area.

Together, these approaches allow Preparation for Adulthood to be developed in a **practical, relational and realistic way**, supporting young people with EHCPs to make meaningful progress at a pace that reflects their individual needs and strengths.

If you are supporting young people who need targeted, practical support to move forward with their Preparation for Adulthood outcomes, **SkillsFit would be happy to explore how we might work alongside you.**

### SkillsFit: Preparation for Adulthood Outcomes

<b>EMPLOYMENT</b> Industry-Setting Alternative Provision <i>Builds confidence, routines and work-ready behaviours through real-world environments and expectations.</i>	<b>INDEPENDENT LIVING</b> On-Site Support and 1-1 Mentoring <i>Supports self-regulation, communication and everyday routines within familiar school or college settings.</i>
<b>COMMUNITY INCLUSION</b> Group and Community Activity <i>Develops social confidence, teamwork and a sense of belonging beyond the classroom.</i>	<b>HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING</b> At the Centre of All SkillsFit Services <i>Strengthens emotional regulation, self-awareness and positive routines that underpin progress.</i>

# FOCUS INSIGHT - Being Open: What Young People Tell Us About Support

*Why young people are more likely to engage when support is built with them, not around them.*

## The Conversation

Recently, I had a conversation with a young person who had spent time involved with the youth justice system. What struck me wasn't just how open he was, but how clearly he could articulate what had helped him engage, and what hadn't. It was as if he was describing a guide of how to reach him; and I knew I needed to listen!

He spoke honestly about support that felt done to him; plans made without explanation, decisions taken on his behalf, and conversations that happened around him rather than with him. In contrast, he described being far more willing to engage when adults were **upfront, consistent and clear**; when expectations were explained and his voice was taken seriously. It wasn't about lowering standards or removing boundaries. It was about being treated as part of the process.

## What This Tells Us About Engagement

Young people are often highly perceptive. They quickly pick up on when support is unclear, inconsistent or inauthentic. What can sometimes be labelled as resistance or disengagement is, in reality, a response to feeling unheard or misunderstood.

Many disengage not because they don't care, but because the process feels imposed rather than purposeful. When support lacks transparency, trust erodes. **When communication is clear and honest, engagement becomes far more likely.**



## Why Openness Comes First

Before any programme, intervention or placement can be effective, the first point of support must be communication. Young people need to understand:

- why support is being offered
- what it involves
- what is expected of them
- and where their voice sits within it

It is also important for this to be a two-way street, and ensure consideration of the young person's expectations and boundaries.

**Support that is explained clearly and delivered consistently creates the conditions for trust.** Without that, even the best-designed provision can struggle to land.

## Relational Practice at SkillsFit

At SkillsFit, relational work is intentional. We focus on **building trust through consistency, clarity and realistic expectations.** Young people are spoken with, not spoken about. Boundaries are clear, support is transparent, and progress is built through relationships that feel safe and respectful.

**When young people feel heard and understood, they are far more likely to engage;** and meaningful progress becomes possible.

# FOCUS HEADLINE - SKILLSFIT & SOCIAL VALUE



## Supporting Outcomes That Matter Locally

### Why Social Value Matters in Alternative Provision

Social Value is increasingly central to how services are commissioned and evaluated, particularly in education and alternative provision. Beyond meeting contractual requirements, it's about making sure that the time, funding and effort invested in provision genuinely **leads to positive, lasting change for young people and the communities around them.**

For organisations working with young people who are disengaged, vulnerable or at risk of becoming NEET, social value is not an abstract concept. It shows up in **improved wellbeing, increased participation, stronger routines and clearer progression.** These outcomes that reduce pressure elsewhere and contribute to healthier, more resilient communities.

At SkillsFit, social value is understood as something that must be **designed into delivery**, not added on afterwards. It is shaped by who we work with, how we deliver support, and the outcomes we prioritise for young people and the partners we work alongside.

## Designing Social Value Into SkillsFit Delivery

At SkillsFit, social value isn't something we think about at the end of a project; it's part of how provision is designed from the start. Young people we work with are often those who are finding education difficult to access or sustain, and supporting them well has wider benefits that go beyond the individual.

When young people **feel more confident, develop steadier routines** and begin to re-engage, the impact is felt across settings and communities. It can reduce pressure elsewhere, create clearer pathways forward, and help young people move towards education, training or work in a way that feels realistic and sustainable.

Our work also has a strong wellbeing focus. By providing consistent, relational support and environments where **young people can feel safe and understood**, we support healthier habits and greater stability; outcomes that matter not just in education, but in life more broadly.

### Working Alongside Partners

For schools, commissioners and partners, working with SkillsFit can also support wider social value priorities. Because our work is focused on **engagement, progression and inclusion**, it naturally contributes to shared aims around **opportunity, wellbeing and community impact.**

If you are supporting young people who would benefit from targeted, purposeful provision, and are also thinking about the wider impact of that support; SkillsFit would welcome a conversation about how we can work alongside you!

## Getting in Touch with SkillsFit

**If you would like to talk about anything in Issue 4, or find out more about SkillsFit:**

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