

Ready Unlimited: transforming the life chances of young people through enterprise learning

Ready Unlimited is a not-for-profit social enterprise that exists to transform the life and work chances of young people. It does this by enabling educators and other partners to develop enterprise learning that is relevant to the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

Innovation Unit is an independent non-profit that develops radically different, better, lower-cost public services. As part of the Creative Councils programme, funded by Nesta and the LGA, Innovation Unit provided Ready Unlimited with an innovation coach.

As part of this work, researchers at Innovation Unit looked at the data about Ready Unlimited's impact so far. They looked at the schools with which Ready Unlimited had worked with the most recent OFSTED reports. For those schools, they analysed the text of their OFSTED report and conducted an interview with the headteacher.

The key findings were as follows:

1. Their work penetrates the culture, ethos and values of the school in a very positive way
2. Students drive and take ownership of this work – this nurtures a culture of collaboration and supports their self-confidence.
3. Schools can engage parents, local communities and local businesses in their students' work (e.g. through fairs, festivals and initiatives) – this is noted in Ofsted reports too.
4. Educators are challenged about their own understanding of enterprise and business – and this does change through this work. They see it as a good way for students to learn life skills and become good citizens.
5. Schools value the opportunity to connect with other schools and develop relationships. This helps them break free from the limitations of their own school-based insular experiences and reflect and develop on their practice with peers in the local area.
6. Ready Unlimited's experience means they have a strong understanding of how to support schools that are already stretched with minimal effort.