

Impact Report 2023/24



UKSA
Sea.Change
Charity Number 299248



**“UKSA has
helped my
daughter find
her direction**

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“ I worry I would have fallen into the wrong crowd if I wasn't here today

The Need

Addressing the current challenges facing our young people

There is considerable evidence that post-Covid never have our young people needed so much assistance: Poverty and the attainment gap are increasing in the UK. Due to budget cuts and the cost-of-living rise, we are seeing more demand for financial support than ever before. In England, free school meals (FSM) are a statutory entitlement available to eligible pupils.

In January 2023, there were around 2.0 million pupils known to be eligible for FSM, representing 23.8% of state funded pupils.

(This has grown from 19.8% in 2022). But charities including the CPAG (*Child Poverty Action Group*) warn there are at least 800,000 children living in poverty who are not eligible for free school meals. To be eligible for free school meals, a household on universal credit in England must earn less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including benefits).

Unprecedented local and global scenarios over the last three years have had a devastating impact on children and young people. Many are now facing an epidemic of educational inequality, a worsening mental health crisis, increased safeguarding risks and an adverse effect on their long-term life chances (House of Commons, 2022).

Fewer than half of disadvantaged children reach expected levels of attainment at the end of primary school, compared with nearly 70% of their better-off peers.

Of those who do achieve the expected level, just 40% of disadvantaged pupils go on to receive good GCSEs in English and maths, compared with 60% of better-off students. Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are twice as likely not to be in education, employment, or training (NEET) as their better off peers with the same level of qualifications (*Impetus, 2022*). The attainment gap remains the biggest barrier to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. They often lack confidence and networks, and need additional support into employment.

As an antithesis to these challenges that are facing our young people, we know that outdoor education, structured training, and support into employment are vital to ensure children and young people can lead fulfilled lives. However, we also know that many children and young people are missing out on life-changing opportunities because schools, local authorities and parents simply cannot afford to pay for them. Our aim is to remove both financial and social barriers to enable young people from any background to achieve their best and gain life changing experiences, qualifications and employment.

Right now, children are being left behind in the classroom because their parents simply cannot afford to pay for a school trip. Budget cuts and the cost-of-living increase is seeing more children living in poverty. A recent study reported that 52% of children do not tell their parents about an upcoming school trip due to money concerns. No child should miss out on life-changing experiences due to cost. Charities across the country, including UKSA, are responding to this crisis, and are playing an increasingly important role in serving young people as they deal with these multitude of challenges.

A note from UKSA's Chief Executive Ben Willows

What a year it has been for UKSA, a record breaker in terms of the number of beneficiaries we have welcomed through our doors for enriching water-based adventures, education, and training for careers at sea. We increased the number of beneficiaries that we were able to offer life-enhancing experiences to, expanded our reach wider, and provided more opportunities to those that needed it the most.

This impact report outlines the incredible impact achieved and shares our future plans for 2024.

We are passionate about removing financial and social barriers to enable students from any background to be able to access UKSA programmes. We are still working hard to increase the accessibility of the maritime industry by creating structured pathways into training for those who may not otherwise have known about the opportunities the industry presents.

UKSA offers a solution, both to the inequality experienced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and also to the talent shortage, lack of diversity and accessibility in the maritime industry.

Charities across the country are playing an increasingly important role in supporting the development of children and young people as they deal with a multitude of challenges. We have key plans for the future, and our ambition to be the centre of excellence for on-water adventures and pathways into maritime employment. It is only by working in partnership with grant making trusts, companies, and individuals that we can meet this increasing demand and empower children and young people to reach their true potential. I hope to see many of you at UKSA this year, or at one of our many round table or fundraising events and for those that would like to learn more about our impact, we would encourage you to get in touch to discuss how you may be able to support our charitable work.

We are immensely grateful to our valued supporters including our Patron, Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, who have supported UKSA's transformational work. It is through their generosity that we can continue to remove socio-economic barriers and open the accessibility of the maritime industry.

Our Impact

UKSA is a truly impactful organisation. In 2023/24 we welcomed 11,114 beneficiaries through our unique centre on the Isle of Wight, representing a growth of 5% year on year. Of these 79% were 25 and under and 31% were funded to the value of £1,486,714.

We achieve our impact through children visiting with their schools or groups to experience life-enhancing programmes and through young adults undertaking education and training to learn about the maritime industry, gain qualifications and further their careers in the maritime sector with the necessary life skills and qualifications.

Our strategic mission is to continually develop our services, assets, and people to meet the needs of children and young people now and for future generations. This year for the first time, through our partnerships with both Cambridge University and The Centre for Youth Impact, we are proud that we have validated our impact through our development of two Theories of Change supporting our strategic pillars as detailed below;

At UKSA we focus on two powerful strategic pillars:

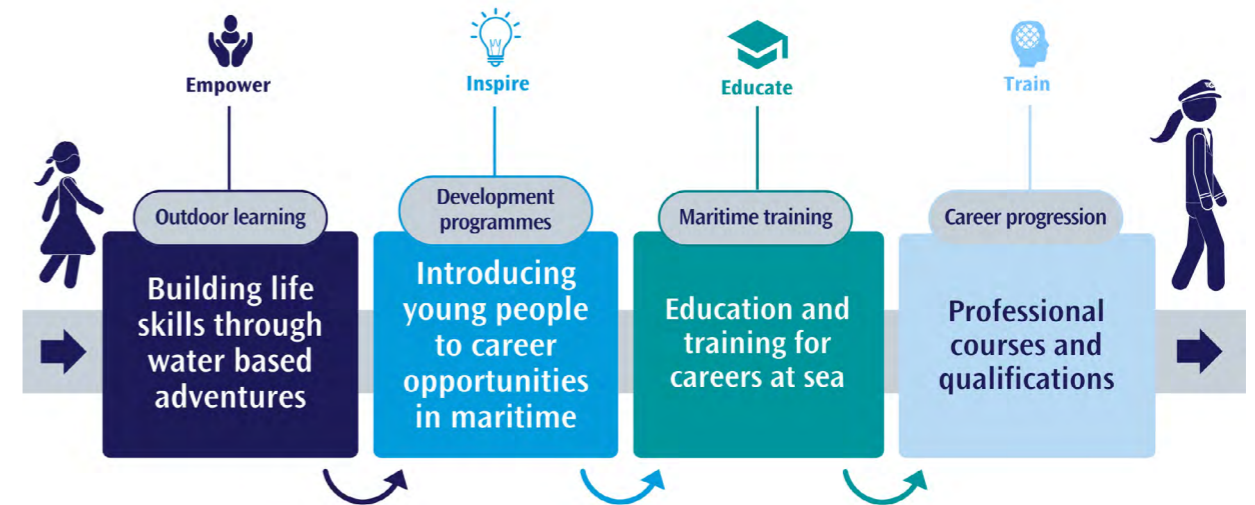
Impactful Adventures on the Water

for children who would not normally be able to attend UKSA.

We aim to extend our reach by engaging schools and youth organisations who work with children from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds, who would not otherwise have the opportunity to access our programmes. We create adventures they will never forget, whilst at the same time, engaging them on the opportunities to train and gain employment in the maritime sector.

Maritime Careers through the provision of expert training and support to enable young people to secure employment in maritime industries.

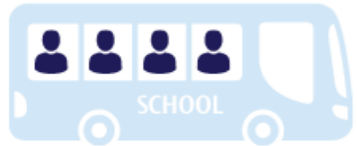
We have increased the depth of our maritime career offer by widening the entry and exit points of our programmes and by working with industry and employers, also through increasing the amount of financial support we can offer to those deserving young people wanting to attend educational and career courses leading to employment in the maritime sector. Our programmes provide a new learning environment outside of the classroom and are designed to build confidence and encourage teamwork using watersports, sailing and the great outdoors as a catalyst for positive change.



Our unique pathways

Schools and Groups

We welcomed **7096** schools and groups beneficiaries in 2023/24.



ISLE OF WIGHT



Test The Water

Our funded half-day watersports programme for every year 6 child on the Isle of Wight.

"I was scared of the water"

Polly's Challenge

A funded programme for Isle of Wight children aged 10 - 14 years during the school holidays. **92** Children were funded in 2023/24.



Sea.Change Foundation

An inspirational five-day residential programme aimed at young people aged 14 - 17. We funded **481** beneficiaries in 2023/24, **21** of whom went on to join UKSA's Further Education programmes.

FACT:

UKSA is the world's largest RYA Training Centre



"This was my first time away from home"



FACT:

Last year, our further education students undertook over **20** local beach cleans



MCA

MCA Deck Officer certificates are the highest qualifications in the yachting industry and we're proud to be one of the world's top providers of MCA Training.

FACT:

In 2023 our careers students had a **97%** pass rate



FACT:

In 2023 we delivered **239** MCA courses



"Each day was full of new experiences and challenges"

Careers

Our professional training is designed for individuals aged 18 and above who want to pursue a career in the world of watersports, yachting and superyachting.



Apprenticeships

Working with five maritime employers, we welcomed **5** apprentices aged 25 and under in 2023/24 to start their two-year programme which can lead to full-time employment.



Further Education

In partnership with the Isle of Wight College, UKSA provides fully-funded two-year Further Education courses for young people ages 16 - 18.

"I have been given lots of options for my future"

"I didn't consider a career in maritime before this"



Impactful Adventures on the Water

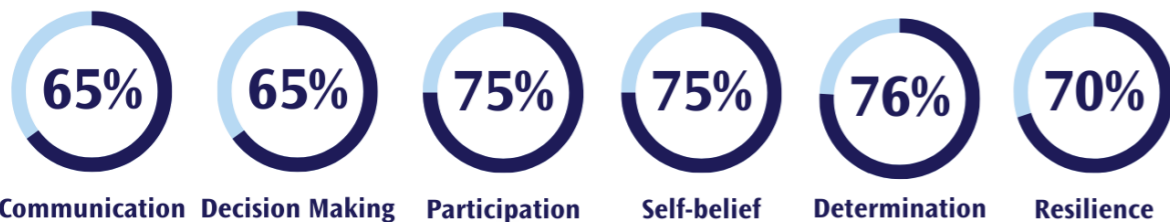
Supporting children from the UK and Isle of Wight in a time of economic challenges

School residential trips at UKSA: Leave No Child Behind

In 2023, UKSA welcomed **7,096 children** and their leaders on residential trips. Thanks to our donors, we provided **£150,000 in funding support to 32 schools**, enabling **527 children** facing financial hardship to join their peers on enriching experiences instead of being left behind. This support also covered travel costs and essential items, including swimwear for those in need.

UKSA reached out to new and returning schools and youth groups from disadvantaged backgrounds, resulting in a **55% increase in beneficiaries from the most deprived postcodes** in the UK compared to last year. UKSA programmes offer a new learning environment designed to build confidence and encourage teamwork. Our 2023 UKSA Skills 4 Life measurements show significant improvements in self-confidence, personal growth, and classroom behaviour.

Skills for life



“ I am struggling to express how important this trip has been on these young people. For some of them to have had the bravery to try new things, which they were only able to do thanks to the encouragement of the UKSA instructors.

Abi Johnson, Cirencester Deer Park School

“ The funding has been incredible and has enabled our young people that might not have had the opportunity to come away on a trip like this to realise their dream and to take part in an amazing experience at UKSA.

Assisant Principal, Mary Rose Academy

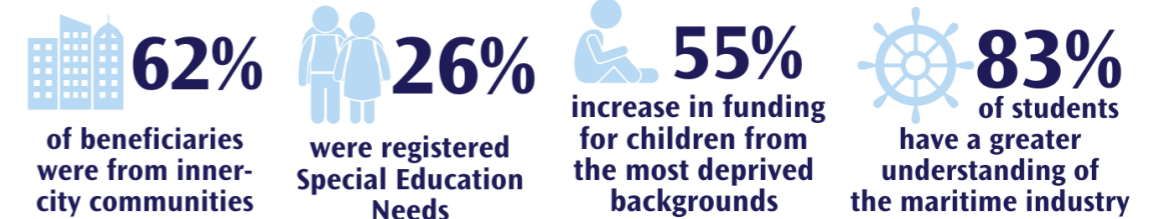


The Sea.Change Programme

Last year, UKSA funded **481 beneficiaries** for its Sea.Change Foundation programme, a **64% increase** from the previous year. This fully funded 5-day residential trip to our Isle of Wight campus offers 14–17-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds a range of water-based activities and classroom sessions on maritime careers and opportunities.

Since 2021, **progression from Sea.Change into Further Education has increased by over 80%**, showing our success in fostering development in the maritime industry for disadvantaged youth.

UKSA continues to remove financial barriers and bridge the gap between education and employment, helping low-income youth access maritime careers and addressing the shortage of skilled seafarers.

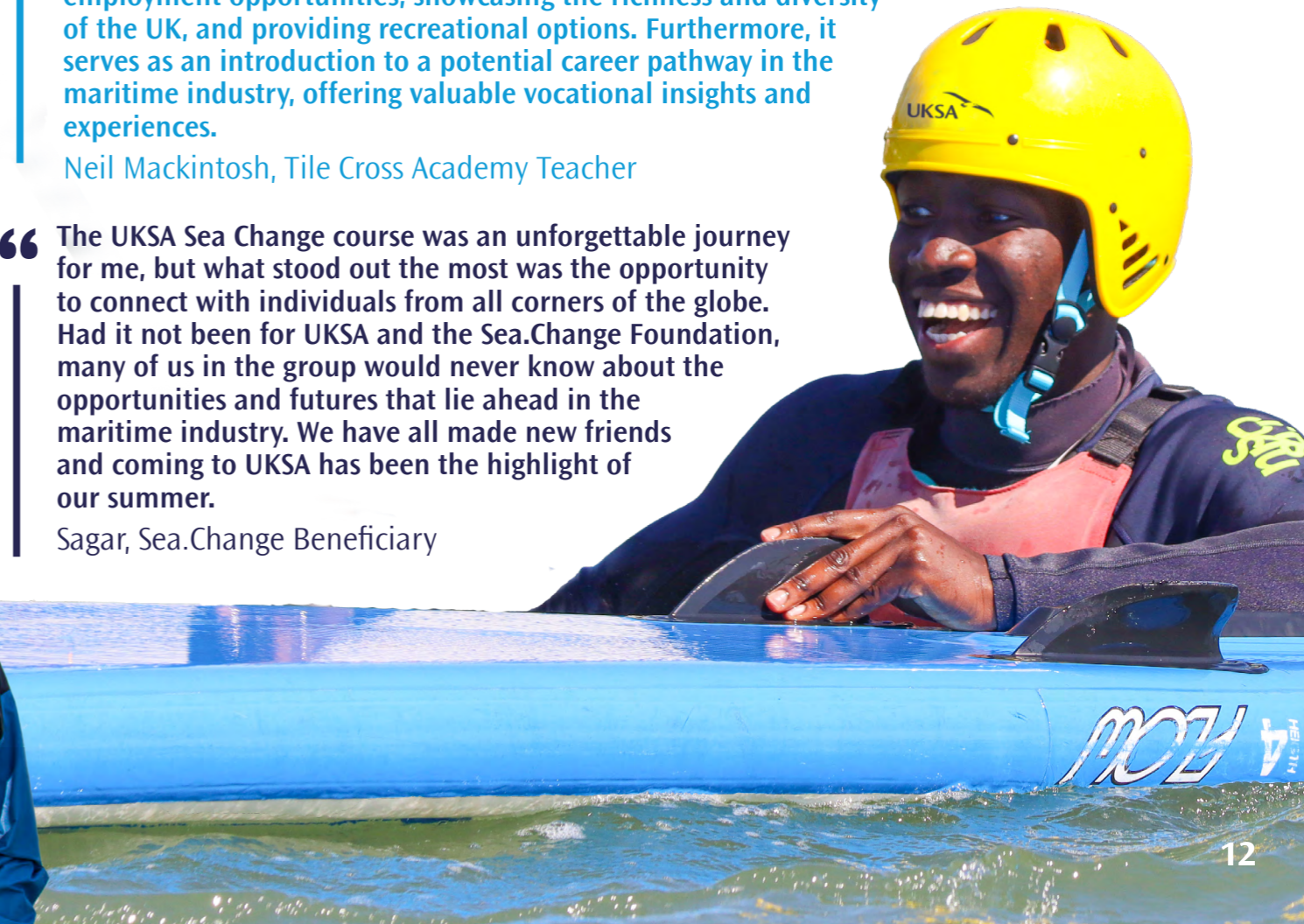


“ The Sea.Change Foundation programme encompasses the challenge of being away from home and overcoming associated anxieties, fostering personal and social skill development crucial for enhancing social mobility through watersports. Additionally, it broadens young people's horizons by exposing them to diverse employment opportunities, showcasing the richness and diversity of the UK, and providing recreational options. Furthermore, it serves as an introduction to a potential career pathway in the maritime industry, offering valuable vocational insights and experiences.

Neil Mackintosh, Tile Cross Academy Teacher

“ The UKSA Sea Change course was an unforgettable journey for me, but what stood out the most was the opportunity to connect with individuals from all corners of the globe. Had it not been for UKSA and the Sea.Change Foundation, many of us in the group would never know about the opportunities and futures that lie ahead in the maritime industry. We have all made new friends and coming to UKSA has been the highlight of our summer.

Sagar, Sea.Change Beneficiary





Test the Water

The 'Test the Water' programme funds all Year 6 Island children for a taster session in sailing and watersports at UKSA, taking them out of the classroom to boost their confidence and encourage new experiences. From this introduction, UKSA then offers follow-on programmes to give further opportunities to those wishing to seek more adventures and the possibility of a maritime career.

Over **10,000 young people** on the island have benefited so far with **1,038** accessing the programme in 2023/24

Despite living near the sea, many Island children have never been in it, with **34% living in poverty and 22% on free school meals**. We believe that charity starts at home, so UKSA ensures every child can participate, regardless of financial situation. Last year, **students from 38 schools** joined the programme.

“ The staff really get everyone along and get the children sailing without it being a big thing, they don't even realise that they are doing it. It's a real sense of fulfilment and overcoming what they are scared of, it's really empowering

Ollie Whiting, Newport C of E Primary School Teacher

“ The whole sailing experience was amazing, and it was great to learn new things. At the start I was very nervous because I've never been on a boat before, but it was really fun and can't wait to do it again

2023 Test the Water Participant

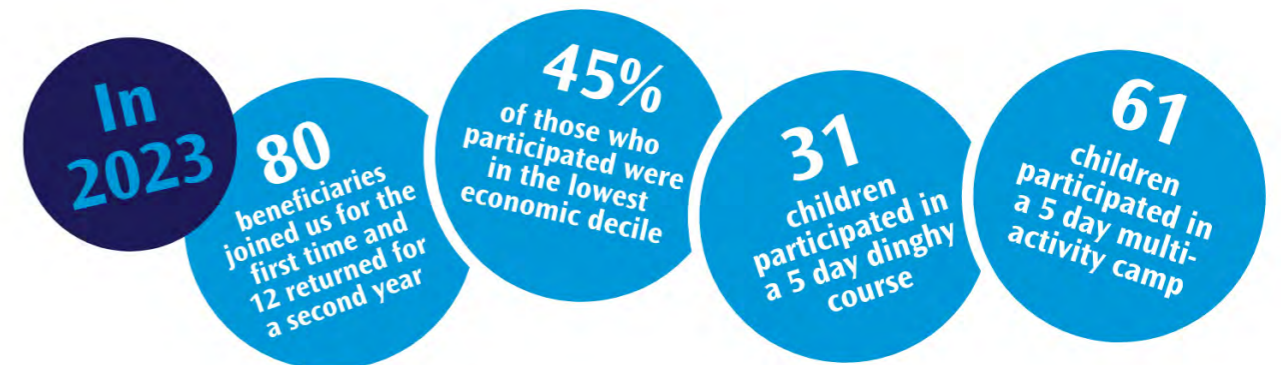
“ The children love it, it's great fun and so important for them to feel safe around the water. It's fantastic!

Heather, Island Primary School Teacher

Polly's Challenge

Polly's Fund was set up in memory of Polly Birch, who had a passion for sailing. Her family and friends are proud to continue the challenge in her memory by removing barriers so that outdoor adventure is accessible to everyone.

Polly's Challenge provides fully funded five-day sailing or multi-activity watersports courses for Isle of Wight children aged 8-14, normally costing around £290 per person. These courses, held during school holidays, offer fun, adventure, and skill development. The fund helps children, especially those from the Test the Water programme, return to the water. In 2023, UKSA welcomed **92 beneficiaries** to Polly's Challenge.



“ My mum told me about Polly's Challenge, and I thought it would be a fun experience to do the fundraising as well. I raised money by doing lots of chores around the house like cleaning my room, walking, and washing the dog, being kind and tidying the front room.

I've had lots of fun today kayaking with my friends. I've really enjoyed the experience so far, the UKSA instructors have been lovely and really kind. We just went to sail up the river, and played lots of games on the way, then after that we had our lunch on a little island!

Sophie, 11

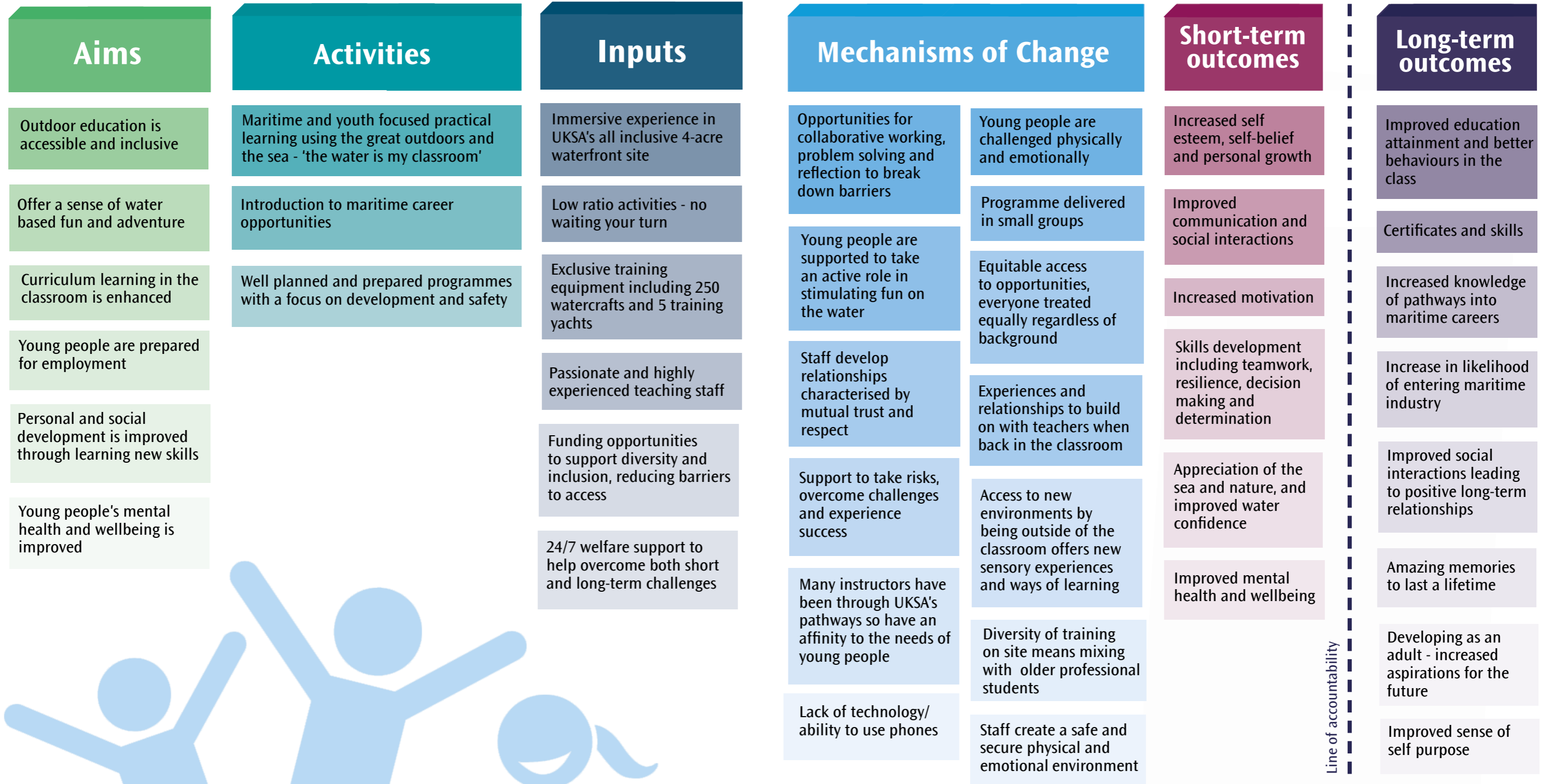
“ They were both very nervous because they hadn't done much out on the water. Since they took part in Polly's Challenge their confidence has come on in leaps and bounds. The fact that they not only learnt a new sport, but they also learnt how to be safe around the water and just loved every moment of it. It's changed everything about Elliot's perspective on his career. It's amazing.

Parent of Polly's Challenge Participants



Impactful Adventures on the Water: Theory of Change

Through attitudinal feedback from teachers and leaders, alongside our Skills 4 Life Evaluation tool, UKSA had significant evidence as to the considerable impact its residential programmes had on the development on young people. Driven by our strategy to quantify the impact of our work, we commissioned Professor Ros McLellan, at Cambridge University and Paediatric Development Specialist to validate our findings through an independent research study. UKSA also wanted to validate how a residential school trip programme could influence young people's longer-term school's outcomes such as academic achievement and individual and social development.



Case Study: Ark Walworth School

ARK Walworth Academy in South London has seen some of its students experience their first ever residential trip as a result of funding from UKSA. Many of the young people on the visit hadn't been on a journey since the start of the pandemic and it was their first ever chance to stay away from home overnight.

UKSA, was able to fund 22 students from the Academy which has a minimum of 50 percent free school meals in every year group and an additional 20-30 percent very close to that. Carl Fazackerley, director of sixth form and accountable leader for careers who led the trip said:

“Every deprivation indicator you will see the Government recording is present at our school and this is the first time any of the children have had a residential, largely due to affordability.”

“We operate on a model of 'no child left behind' and where for some schools this might be a handful of children who are unable to afford a trip like this, for ARK Walworth it is around half of students.”

“Most of our families are living in accommodation that is rented, quite often overcrowded. This results in a lot of vulnerability for young people affecting their connection to place. Sometimes we're the only stable thing in these young peoples' lives.”

The students spent the week at UKSA's Sea Change accommodation facility with a water-based outdoor learning programme giving the opportunity to try activities which included dinghy sailing, kayaking, paddleboarding and raft building. Outdoor learning activities during the day were complemented by evening activities such as indoor football, swimming, archery, crabbing and games in the park.

“The keelboats stood out as a favourite for the students. They were really surprised how much it leans over when it catches the wind, that was great.” A large part of the experience at a UKSA residential is being able to find out about the potential career options in the watersports and maritime sectors.”

“As the head of sixth form, I also look after university destinations every year and there is a large focus on London for our students and an unwillingness to look outside of that area. This can be due to a number of factors such as family pressures to remain at home, financial concerns about independent living, or believing that other places across the whole country are not diverse. We have some students who have lived in London their whole lives and never been out of Southwark. When we have trips to the museums in Kensington, there are students who have never been on the London Underground before.”

“Some of the support instructors were the same age as my year 12s, and that really got their attention. The level of maturity they were displaying was quite something and I think there's a recognition in some of them that they need to up their game.”

“One young man was really taken by the opportunities that a maritime career could offer. He is a keen gamer and was really taken by the simulator at UKSA and had not realised how much technology was involved in the industry. His family heritage is Caribbean and though he has grown up in London, he now feels he could gain a stronger connection to his roots as well as employment with a career in maritime.”

“We had a fantastic week with UKSA and are grateful for the opportunity which enabled our students to experience a residential and make memories which they otherwise would not have been able to without the funding on offer. We were also particularly grateful for the efforts that UKSA put in to accommodate a third of our students who were observing Ramadan during our stay.”



Maritime Careers: Pathways into maritime employment

In response to the challenges facing young people we are particularly proud of our careers and professional UKSA maritime training courses delivering high exam pass rates, supporting young people into maritime employment. UKSA is an outcomes-led organisation, ensuring that we measure our impact throughout our programmes.

We work with academics at the University of Cambridge and the Centre for Youth Impact to develop a theory of change, which considers young people's development and learning and examines the relationship between personal factors, such as the environment and behaviour. Our programmes provide a new environment outside of the classroom and are designed to build confidence and encourage teamwork using the sea as a catalyst for positive change.

When you instil young people with an inspiring attitude, vital life skills and the behaviours that they need to develop, these small changes will empower further change. If young people can thrive in their education and training, they will continue to make positive changes in their lives. The quote opposite from one of our students encapsulates our ethos.



In 2023/24 we delivered **world class career and professional training** in the maritime industry to **2,300 students**



UKSA has a **global footprint** with beneficiaries visiting us from **49 countries** driving diversity across the sector



We saw **100% of our Further Education** students go into **employment or further training** and **30% join our careers programmes**, evidencing the powerful pathways that we offer for all young people at UKSA



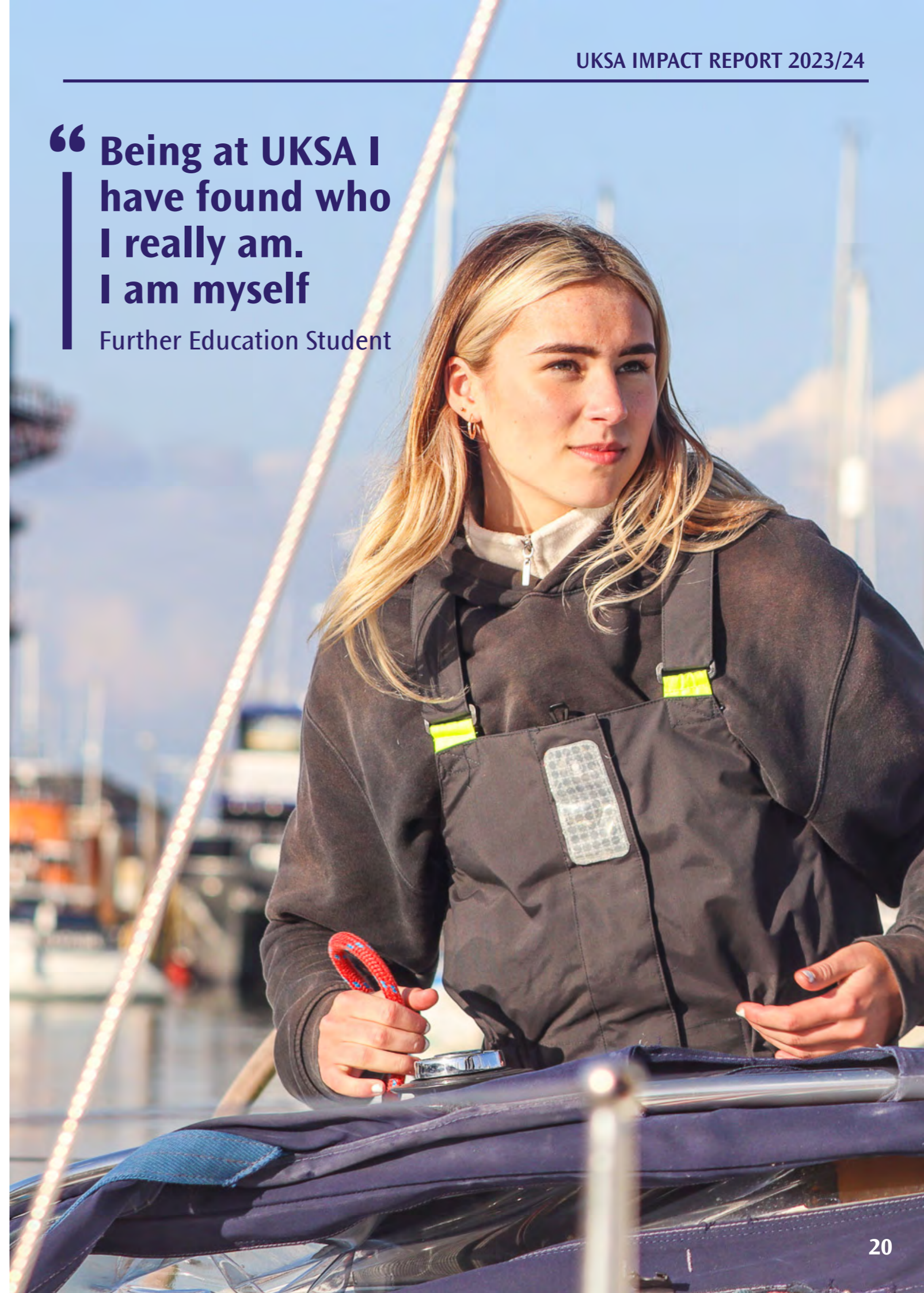
Working with local businesses we continued to offer **apprenticeship schemes** for Port Operatives and Workboat Crew Members; we are a **silver accredited organisation** for We Invest in People for our own apprenticeship programme



UKSA has seen **80% of Superyacht Cadetship** students receive an average of **50% funding**

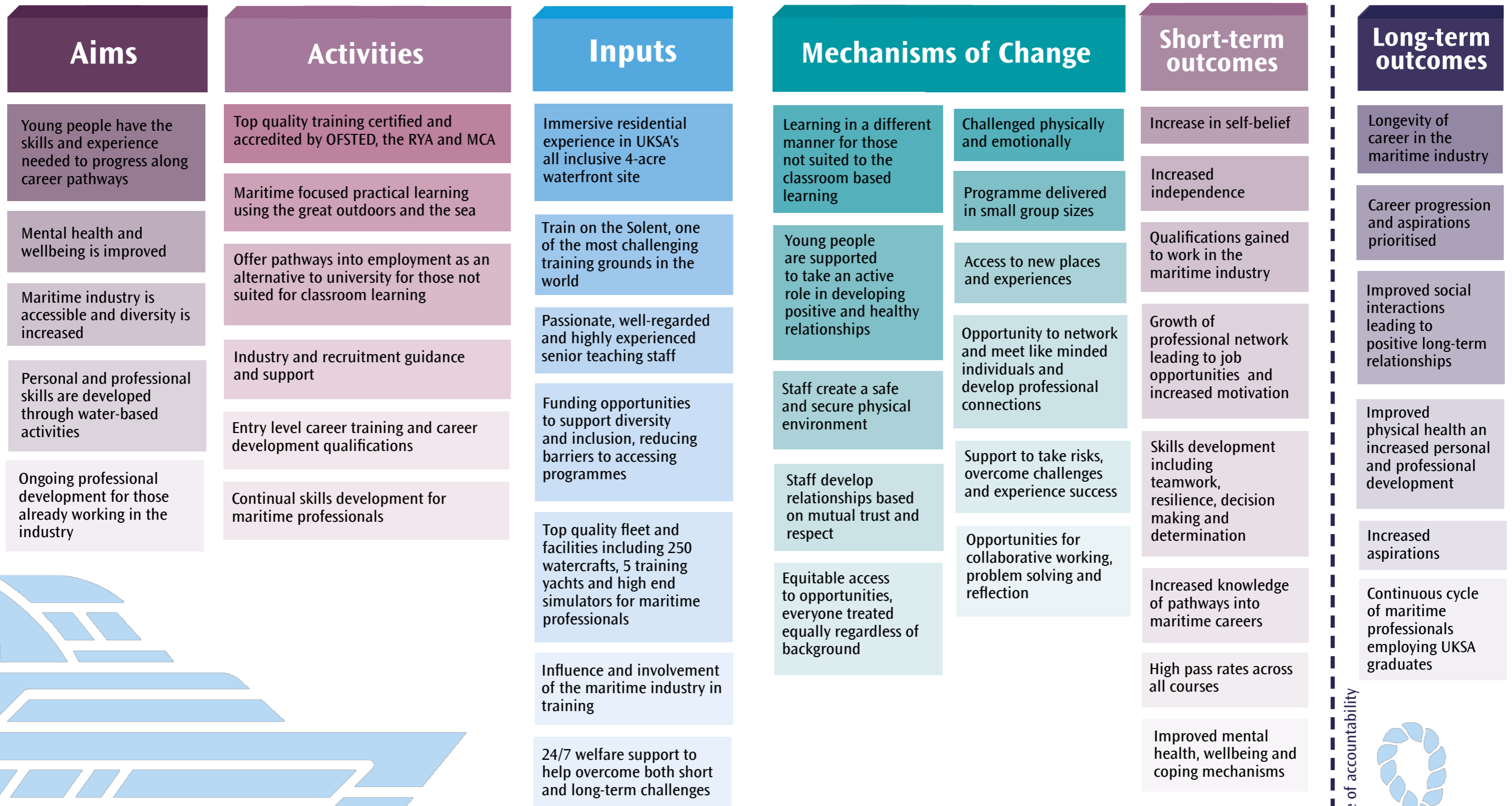
“ Being at UKSA I have found who I really am. I am myself

Further Education Student



Maritime Careers: Theory of Change

In order to provide external validation of the impact across our Maritime Career Programmes, UKSA partnered with YCMA George Williams College (Centre for Youth Impact). The College works to provide transformational support to practitioners, funders and policy makers across the sector, to improve the quality and impact of provision and outcomes for young people. We collaborated with George Williams College to redevelop our theory of change for 2023/24, which then underwent subsequent amendments internally. Three separate pieces of quantitative and qualitative data were analysed to develop a Theory of Change highlighting both the short term and long term impact of these programmes:



Line of accountability

Case Study: Ashley Stilgoe

Eighteen-year-old Ashley was born and raised on the Isle of Wight, first learning to sail with his grandfather as a child. Ashley joined us here at UKSA when he was sixteen, enrolling on our NCFE Maritime Foundation course after learning about it at a school careers evening.

"Although I had some experience on the water prior to starting the further education course, I felt it really set me up with the foundations I needed to begin working towards a career in the maritime industry. I earned qualifications such as my STCW certification, RYA Power boat Level 2, and RYA Dinghy Instructor certificate."

“ I was struggling with a lot personally before joining the course. The two years I spent at UKSA during the course were really valuable, I learnt so much and progressed to levels I could have never dreamt of personally, physically and mentally. I am a different person compared to when I first started at UKSA, I have grown so much.

After completing his two year further education course Ashley was keen to continue working towards a career at sea, with an interest in working on superyachts.

A family friend of Ashley's is a superyacht captain, and recommended the UKSA Cadetship after working with crew who are UKSA alumni. UKSA were of course delighted to welcome Ashley back to join the Cadetship course, fully funded by the TK Foundation and Royal Yacht Squadron.

"The funding I received from the TK foundation and Royal Yacht Squadron has changed my life and allowed me to follow my

dream of working in the superyacht industry. I lost my Dad a few years ago, meaning that my Mum gave up our family business to take care of me and my siblings. It was a really hard time, I couldn't have been here without the funding."

Ashley started the UKSA Cadetship in September 2023 and has developed hugely since his first sea phase. "I struggled with nerves and confidence in my first sea phase, I in fact failed my first competent crew exam. It was frustrating as I failed due to something as small as tying a knot incorrectly and I felt like I knew where I was going wrong, but I was crumbling under pressure. Since my first sea phase I have really grown in confidence and can now recognise how capable I am. Whilst tackling these challenges I have learnt a lot about myself which has helped me develop my skills."



"My biggest achievement on the course has been passing my Yachtmaster exam, the preparation was challenging but I am proud of how resilient I have been. I was very different when I first started the course and was struggling personally, but I haven't given up - there is always a light at the end of the tunnel."

Just a few days after graduating Ashley is due to fly out to Gran Canaria to complete his dive master training. "I have been applying and interviewing for deckhand roles, I'd be keen to join a motor yacht in a colder climate like Norway or Alaska, but I'm open to anything! In the meantime, I am going to gain my dive master qualification, I can't wait."

"The dream is to become a superyacht captain, I want to work towards becoming bosun within the next three years. If I could offer one piece of advice to others starting the Cadetship course, it would be to never give up – if you want something badly enough you will get yourself there."

We look forward to seeing Ashley succeed even further as he steps out into the first stage of his career.

“ I am a different person compared to when I first started at UKSA



“ I pushed myself and learned things about my character I was previously unaware of - I've come out the other side more focused and a well rounded person



Our year in numbers



11,114 beneficiaries
from 49 countries worldwide



native oysters have been housed at UKSA, creating the Isle of Wight's first oyster nursery



individuals supported with mental health over 1187 sessions



1,425

students receiving continuous professional development

31%

receiving financial support



70

weekly student mentoring sessions



schools from the most deprived postcodes



miles logged per year



30%

further education students went into careers training



further education pass rates



97%
careers pass rates

Thank you to our major supporters in 2023/24

UKSA relies on support from individuals, companies and grant-making trusts and foundations to empower children and young people to reach their potential by equipping them with vital life skills that support them to make successful transitions into adulthood and employment.

Last year we were able to increase the number of beneficiaries that we were able to offer life-enhancing experiences to expand our reach wider and provide more opportunities to those that need it the most. We are immensely grateful to our valued donors who have supported UKSA's transformational work.

A special thanks to:

Affinity Fostering
Alexa Capital
Burgess Yachts
Catherine Thomas
Claire and Richard Stokes
Claire and Glyn Locke
Coves Harbour Commission
The Daisy Rich Trust
Esplanade Ltd
Fabien and Pippa French
Friends and Family of Polly Birch
Grace and Richard Palmer
Herapath-Shenton Trust
Howden Superyachts
John James Bristol Foundation
Johnnie Johnson Trust
Jonathan Beckett
Olesinski Naval Architecture
PC Consultants
Pom Charitable Trust

Preston Turnbull
Richard and Felicity Dick
Richard Hadida
Royal London Yacht Club Youth Charitable Trust
Sir Anthony Greener, The Minton Trust
Sir Edward Lewis Foundation
The Swire Charitable Trust
SYR Shoreside Superyacht Recruitment
The Bertarelli Foundation
The Bradbury Foundation
The Edmiston Foundation
The Notgrove Trust
The Seafarers' Charity
TK Foundation
Trinity House Maritime Charity
UK Youth
The Valentine Charitable Trust
The Whirlwind Charitable Trust
WightFibre
Worshipful Company of Shipwrights

Funding Partners

As a charity we depend upon the generous support and donations provided by our partners and sponsors. Relationships we build with individuals, organisations and businesses transform the futures of thousands of children and young people every year.

For more information on how you can get involved, please email fundraising@uksa.org

uksa.org



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