

An Evaluation of Alternative Education Initiatives

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National Foundation for Educational Research

**Research Report
No 403**

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ISBN 1 84185 922 2
March 2003

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Abbreviations used in the report

AEI	Alternative Education Initiative
AEB	Associated Examining Board
ASDAN	Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network
AQA	Assessment and Qualification Alliance
AWPU	Age Weighted Pupil Unit
CRP	Crime Reduction Programme
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EBD	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
EWS	Education Welfare Service
FE	Further Education
IEP	Individual Education Plan
OCR	Oxford, Cambridge and RSA examinations
PNC	Police National Computer
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SLA	Service Level Agreement
YOT	Youth Offending Team

Executive Summary

Background

- This report presents the findings from a study commissioned by the Home Office and the then DfEE, evaluating alternative educational provision for young people permanently excluded from school, or who were out of school for other reasons, such as non-attendance. The study formed part of the Home Office's Crime Reduction Programme.
- Six alternative education initiatives (AEIs) were selected for involvement in the study. The AEIs were chosen because they displayed some success at re-engaging young people in the educational process. The overall aim of the evaluation of the AEIs was to examine the effectiveness of the intervention programmes. Effectiveness was to be measured in terms of the AEIs' success in returning pupils to mainstream education, educational attainment, post-16 outcomes and reducing anti-social behaviour including offending.
- The AEIs were visited on a number of occasions in order to gain both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data included the gathering of information on young people's attainment, exclusion, bullying, attendance and offending. Offending data was also collected via the administration of a self-report questionnaire with young people attending the projects. Qualitative data was gathered primarily via interviews with young people from each project, their parents/carers, project coordinators, members of AEI staff, and other agencies and organisations working with the young people.

Description and processes

- Although the six AEIs represented different approaches to varying levels of disengagement amongst the young people they catered for, there were a number of similarities in their aims and objectives. All the AEIs aimed to deliver quality, relevant and positive learning experiences and opportunities which would contribute (directly, or indirectly) to the immediate and long-term future of the young people.
- All the AEIs focused on establishing relationships which were adult-like and based on respect, features which were often said to be lacking in mainstream educational environments.
- A further key feature of the AEIs was that they offered educational programmes which allowed young people to experience success. In addition, AEI programmes were sufficiently flexible to accommodate the changing needs and circumstances of the young people attending the projects.
- Referral to AEIs was usually via a multi-agency or multi-disciplinary panel. Project staff raised as an issue the lack of, and quality of, information received by

AEIs when they were referred to projects. A further area for concern was the referral of young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) to projects where staff were not trained to deal with these youngsters.

- AEIs offered responsive and flexible programmes, tailored to the individual needs of young people and strengthened by a safety net of pastoral support. The main differences between AEI programmes related to the degree of dispersal to outside providers, the level of contact time, and whether AEIs provided generic or individualised programmes. It was interesting to note that only one AEI was offering full-time provision. AEI staff were unsure whether government requirements for full-time provision from September 2002 would be supported by additional resources. Furthermore, some doubted the suitability of a full-time programme for particular young people, and others feared that demands for full-time provision might affect the overall quality of the programmes.
- A lack of funding was felt to exert a restrictive influence on AEIs, in terms of the range of activities that could be offered and the involvement of other agencies. Meanwhile, short-term funding undermined job security and was viewed as having a detrimental impact on staff retention.
- The flexibility and variety of AEI provision was made possible, partly by the inclusion of other agencies as programme providers. They were incorporated into AEI programmes to offer specific areas of expertise (for example, advice on drugs or sexual health), or to provide a different type of learning environment and/or experience (for example, college).
- Interviewees concluded that successful inter-agency working hinged on regular communication between the agencies involved and was dependent on an understanding of each other's roles, responsibilities, and protocols. Interviewees noted a lack of input or liaison with some agencies.
- The main areas for development identified by project staff focused on programme and curriculum development and extending the scope and remit of the provision. However, AEIs were frequently constrained in their ability to implement such developments due to constraints in funding.

The target group

- The majority (two-thirds), of the sample were male, however a significant number (a third), were female. A tenth (10 per cent) of young people in the sample were classified as 'looked after'. A large number of young people (69 per cent) attending the projects were classified by staff as having some kind of special educational need.
- The historical data received by AEIs relating to young people's attendance, bullying behaviour and exclusions was extremely variable. Where data was available, it showed that nearly three-quarters of AEI students had previous attendance problems at school, with nearly a quarter described as long-term persistent non-attenders, and just under half were believed to have been bullies.

- The most common reason for a young person's referral to the AEI was that they had been permanently excluded from school, usually for some form of aggression, either towards peers or staff.

Impact

- In terms of educational outcomes AEIs offered a wide range of accredited opportunities. In addition to achieving education-based certificates, a number of young people received vocational attainments and accreditation linked to personal and social skills development. Approximately half of all the young people registered at the AEIs during the evaluation were awarded some form of accreditation. This success was felt to be noteworthy given AEI youngsters past educational performance.
- Young people's discourse also highlighted a change in their attitude as a result of attending the AEI: they were more willing to learn, they were enjoying learning and furthermore, they were considering the inclusion of education in their future progression.
- Over three-quarters of youngsters interviewed reported an improvement in their behaviour as a result of attending the AEI. Half felt that family relationships had improved, and over three-quarters reported improved relationships with project staff compared to those in school.
- The median attendance rate for all provisions was over 50 per cent.
- Overall, across the six AEIs, 50 per cent of young people had been recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC) between 1997-2001. However, whilst more offences were recorded during the intervention stage, fewer young people were responsible for these.
- Self-report on crime showed that, by the Summer Term, about three-quarters of the final sample indicated a reduction in, or cessation of, offending activity, with one in eight acknowledging an increase. Half of those self-reporting criminal activity had no PNC record.
- Different factors were being identified by the young people to account for a reduction in offending behaviour: a change of stimulus and environment (attendance at the project providing less boredom, less 'hang-factor' time, different peer groups); a change of prospects (wanting to avoid prison, wanting a job in the future); and a change of attitude (maturation, an internally driven rejection of criminal behaviour or consideration of family's feelings).

Retention, aspirations and destinations

- All the AEIs were monitoring the destination of students after they had left the projects. However, there appeared to be a need for careful monitoring of the actual destinations of all AEI leavers, especially those leaving during the academic year, to ensure that they were not ‘lost’ from educational provision.
- Young people’s expectations and aspirations appeared to have become more realistic as a result of attending the AEIs. They also showed a more positive attitude to the future in relation to employment, college and training.
- There was a reduction in the number of young people who were unsure about their future progression routes as a result of attending the provision. This suggests that AEIs’ preparation for progression had a beneficial impact, as it increased young people’s awareness of available opportunities.
- Intensive preparation for college work increased youngsters’ awareness of the opportunities available and may increase the likelihood of them successfully accessing college on departure from the AEI.
- Young people gained an awareness of training opportunities as a result of attending the AEIs. Questionnaire and interview respondents showed an increase in their desire to go into training, reflecting more realistic expectations and greater awareness of training opportunities, this might be seen as a direct consequence of attending the AEI. Further efforts to raise awareness of the availability of training opportunities might be beneficial for all young people, including those in school.

Effective practice in alternative provision

- Interviewees considered the quality of relationships between staff and young people as a fundamental aspect to young people’s successful re-engagement (both socially and educationally).
- AEI staff recognised the interplay between the social and emotional well-being of young people and their educational performance. Programmes were therefore supported by a strong pastoral element. As part of this holistic package AEI staff also established links with families and in some cases, extended their support to the parents of AEI referrals.
- AEI programmes were regarded as effective because of their variety, flexibility and the fact that they could be customised to suit individual needs. The physical setting and general ambience of AEIs was also cited as a factor associated with change or effectiveness.
- The high staff pupil ratios and small group sizes were also identified as a positive feature of the AEIs.

Issues of cost for alternative provision

- The average cost per young person enrolled at the AEs was £3,800; this was 165 per cent of the average Age-Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) for the LEAs.
- There was a positive relationship between the average per-person expenditure and the retention rate, when comparing the six AEs.
- In total, 71 per cent of young people went on to desirable destinations at an average cost of £5,200 (137 per cent) of the average per-person expenditure.
- Early leavers committed on average 29 per cent more crime than those staying for the full academic year (but early leavers are not significantly more likely to offend).
- Young people with undesirable destinations were 28 per cent more likely to offend, and on average committed 32 per cent more crime than those with desirable destinations.

Concluding comments

- This research has provided an enormous quantity of data on provision for young people who will not or cannot attend our mainstream schools. Overall, the picture is of a number of dedicated professionals offering a distinctive holistic package of sustained pastoral support and alternative curriculum opportunities to which the majority of their students respond positively. Nevertheless, the findings do indicate that the pupil clientele also contains a number of young people who do not succeed at AEs. The range (and severity) of damaged youngsters being allocated to such provision, combined with the limited resources available, may largely account for this lack of success.
- The data collection exercise underpinning this evaluation has shown the lack of information and incompleteness of records that can accompany young people when they leave mainstream education. For this reason, some of the quantitative and economic conclusions reached do require a certain degree of caution.
- The findings from this study do suggest the need for more and sustained funding in order to deliver the intensive support such young people clearly require. This is all the more significant in the light of impending statutory requirements regarding full time provision. However, the achievements of so many of the young people, and the staff who work with them, that have been depicted in this study surely also require a higher profile and greater acclaim.

Chapter 1

An overview of the research

About this chapter

This chapter provides details of the overall brief of the evaluation research methodologies instigated to address this remit. It covers:

- **The overall aims** of the evaluation and the effectiveness measures it was to employ.
- **The methodology** including types of data collected and fieldwork programmes undertaken.
- **The sample sizes** achieved for both quantitative and qualitative data.

Key findings

- The evaluation focused on the processes and outcomes of six alternative educational provisions. Baseline and ongoing data was collected on 162 young people who attended the provisions – this covered their attendance, bullying and offending behaviour, incidences of exclusion and details of attainment.
- In total 100 interviews were conducted for the evaluation. This comprised of 63 young people, 18 AEI staff, seven parents and 12 other agency representatives.
- A self-report offending and attitudes questionnaire was completed by 97 young people at the start of the evaluation and by 57 towards the end.

1.1 Evaluation aims

The overall aim of the NFER study was to evaluate alternative educational provision for young people permanently excluded from school or who were out of school for other reasons. Research has shown the link between exclusion from school and involvement in offending and other anti-social behaviours. Whilst the government is striving to reduce the number of young people out of school in general, and those excluded from school in particular, the quality and effectiveness of alternative educational provision is of importance, if further social exclusion and a possible drift into crime is to be averted.

Arrangements for alternative educational provision for excluded pupils and young people out of school for other reasons varies between LEAs and concern has been raised about the extent and quality of some educational provision. Only about a third of excluded pupils return to mainstream education. The rest receive 'education otherwise'. This can take a number of different forms, pupils may receive education in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), they may receive home tuition, or they may attend alternative education initiatives (AEIs). This research focuses on the effectiveness of these latter forms of alternative educational provision. AEI programmes might include full or part-time attendance at a FE college, work-related learning and PSHE programmes, work and training placements, or combinations of these learning approaches. Unlike PRUs AEIs are not all under LEA control, for example, FE colleges fall under the Learning Skills Council. However, AEIs are subject to a contract or service level agreement with LEAs. AEIs comprise a range of organisations, including: voluntary sector providers, such as Rathbone C.I., private sector providers, which are likely to be employers and charitable foundations, FE colleges and academic and other institutions. AEIs provide a range of settings and a range of provision as determined by their agreement with the LEA, which is in turn, determined by existing provision. A pupil may attend more than one AEI to meet their needs.

There has been little evaluative research on the effectiveness of alternative educational provision at re-engaging disaffected youngsters and, in particular, little analysis of the impact of these interventions on young people in terms of educational outcomes, and behavioural and attitudinal change. This evaluation seeks to begin to plug the gap in research by examining the effectiveness of alternative educational provision in six AEIs. It should be noted that the report focuses on case studies and thus the results cannot be said to be representative of all AEIs.

As specified in the tender document, the overall aim of the evaluation of the alternative education initiatives was to '*examine the effectiveness of intervention programmes for permanently excluded pupils. Effectiveness is measured in terms of their success in returning pupils to mainstream education, educational attainment, post-16 outcomes and reducing anti-social behaviour, including offending.*'

The evaluation of the AEI programmes thus aimed to undertake an analysis of the effectiveness of different types of approach, in terms of:

- **Educational outcomes**
- **Improved attitudes and behaviour**

- **Reduction in offending and other types of anti-social behaviour**
- **Achievement of programme objectives.**

The evaluation of AEI projects covered both process and outcome dimensions and also sought to:

- Measure the effectiveness of individual programmes against their stated aims and objectives, as well as evidence of any crime reduction figures, including identifying factors which facilitated or inhibited progress towards the stated aims and objectives.
- Study the processes and components of individual programmes.
- Establish the costs associated with each programme in order to conduct a cost-benefit analysis, including identifying and quantifying inputs, outputs, impacts and outcomes.
- Provide evidence of transferable good practice and how it can best be disseminated to maximise the value of the programme.
- Adumbrate the key elements of emerging good practice and identify factors associated with sustainability for different types of programme, including those programme features which might be regarded as facilitating or militating against future development and expansion.

1.2 Methodology

The AEI evaluation formed part of the Home Office's Crime Reduction Programme (CRP), with support from the then Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). The Home Office appointed evaluation teams at both a local and national level. The National Evaluation Team (NET), MHA, developed the framework for the evaluation and in so doing determined what common data needed to be collected across the six AEIs. The collection of the data was carried out by the Local Evaluation Team (LET), NFER. The NET worked through its relationship with the LET who had the closest contact with the AEI projects and who carried forward the fieldwork research and the evaluation. The LET was guided by the NET to ensure the overall integrity of the evaluation.

1.2.1 Selection of the projects

AEIs were initially identified and contacted by the Home Office and the then DfEE regarding their possible involvement in the evaluation. The Home Office and DfEE selected projects because they displayed some success in re-engaging young people who had either been permanently excluded from school, or were out of school for other reasons, such as non-attendance.

After preliminary discussions and initial meetings with NFER researchers, six AEIs were selected by the Home Office, DfEE, and NFER to be included in the evaluation. The six interventions reflected a range of geographical locations and types of

intervention. This is a case-study analysis of six individual AEs and therefore cannot be considered representative of all AEs. The six AEs were selected from a number that showed promise and were prepared to take part in the study. Initially, a larger number were referred to the Home Office as examples of successful AEs but were not included in the study because they did not meet the criteria of providing the opportunity for yearly programmes. The AEs selected were broadly representative of other interventions providing alternative education, three of the six were run by the LEA and three were run by voluntary agencies. They had similar kinds of opportunities for learning and constructive leisure that had been evident in interventions studied in previous NFER research looking at successful provision for excluded pupils (Kinder *et al* 2000).

1.2.2 Types of data

The evaluation focused on the collection of a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data:

Quantitative data

- Data was collected on young people in five target areas: attainment, exclusion, bullying, attendance and offending. Phase One of the data collection process focused on gathering historical baseline data in the five target areas. These target areas were then monitored throughout the evaluation on a termly basis.
- Due to the sensitivities surrounding the collection of offending data for individual youngsters it was agreed that this information would be collected nationally via the Police National Computer (PNC).
- Offending data was also collected via the administration of a self-report questionnaire with young people attending the projects. In order to highlight any changes in youngsters' behaviour and attitude two questionnaires were administered; one at the beginning of the evaluation, or when they joined the project, and one at the end.
- Project costs and input data were also collected in order to conduct a cost-benefit analysis.
- Project data, including individual pupil programmes, project activities and time spent by staff on activities, were also collected.

Qualitative data

- Qualitative data were gathered, primarily via interviews with project coordinators, staff members, other agencies/organisations working with the young people, parents/carers, and up to 14 young people from each project.

1.2.3 Research methods

Interviews

Interviews with project staff generated information on the catchment area, referral procedures, criteria for selection, staffing, monitoring and evaluation. Staff views on the impact of the interventions on young people attending the projects, funding issues, effective practice, challenges and areas for development, were also discussed. Additional time was spent with the project coordinator to collect quantitative data about the projects including staff details, activities available on the programmes and details of the young people attending the projects.

To represent the views and experiences of those attending alternative provision, researchers requested interviews with up to eight young people at each project. The interviews focused on young people's school experiences, their impressions of the provision and whether they felt that attending the provision had impacted on them in any way. In Phase Three of the fieldwork programme interviews with the young people explored the perceived impacts in greater detail, in order to catalogue the entire spectrum of effects experienced by young people.

To gain wider insights into the operation and impact of the projects, parents/carers and staff from other organisations and agencies working with the young people were also interviewed. Parent/carer interviews focused on their child's experience of school, the circumstances which led to them being out of school and attending the project, their perceptions of the project, any perceived impact of attending the project on their child and/or the family. Interviews with staff from other agencies and organisations, for example, from college or work experience provision, explored their input to the overall intervention and any perceived impact their provision had on the young people involved.

Self-report offending and attitudes questionnaire

To complement and extend crime data available through the Police National Computer (PNC), the evaluation incorporated a self-report offending questionnaire. In addition, the questionnaire contained sections on attitudes to learning and views on the project. Questions were drawn from a number of pre-existing surveys covering attitudes to learning and offending behaviour. The sensitive nature of offending information was acknowledged from the outset and steps were taken to ensure that the questionnaire would be both age-appropriate, as well as effective in eliciting the information required. The questionnaire was piloted with a group of young people attending a similar type of programme to the six AEs. They were asked to answer the questions and then comment on the content, wording, length and overall clarity of the survey.

Cost-benefit schedules

Before embarking on a cost-collection exercise, the evaluation team needed to establish the kinds of financial information already available at each provision. The evaluation endeavoured to utilise existing data rather than burden staff with additional data collection requests. The evaluation team drafted a cost-benefit interview schedule to determine which costs were already known and which categories of

information were routinely recorded. Cost-benefit data were collected throughout the evaluation process.

Pupil information templates

Pupil information templates were devised to obtain baseline data on young people's attendance, bullying, exclusions (fixed-term and permanent), attainment and offending behaviour, these target areas were then monitored for the duration of the evaluation.

1.2.4 Fieldwork visits

A series of fieldwork visits were conducted in order to collect the identified data. These comprised:

Initial exploratory visits

An initial exploratory visit was conducted to each project in July 2000 to discuss the proposed research framework with project staff and for them to describe their work in brief. The following areas were covered on each visit:

- an introduction to the research framework
- project information
- data to be collected
- evaluation concerns.

Phase One fieldwork

Phase One visits took place in October and November 2000. These visits were conducted over two (non-consecutive) days, in order to collect the following data:

- project background information
- pupil history data
- individual pupil timetables
- backgrounds, attitudes and perceptions of young people attending the provisions
- self-report offending data
- general issues relating to alternative educational provision
- costs and input data for cost-benefit analysis
- the involvement of outside agencies and other organisations.

Additional visits were made to three projects in January 2001 to boost the questionnaire sample.

Phase Two fieldwork

Phase Two fieldwork took place in January and February 2001. This consisted of two-day visits to the projects to collect outstanding data from Phase One, as well as the collection of additional Phase Two data. Outstanding data included the

completion of additional self-report offending questionnaires for recent arrivals at the AEs, interviews with young people and staff who were not interviewed in Phase One, and filling in gaps in the pupil history data templates, pupil timetables, and cost and input data. In addition, the following data was also collected:

- data on new pupils who had joined projects since the phase one visits
- destination of young people who had left the projects
- pupil monitoring data (attendance, exclusions etc.) for the Autumn Term 2000
- individual pupil timetables for Autumn Term 2000
- the perceptions of parents/carers
- the perceptions of other agencies and organisations working with the young people
- a breakdown of staff activities for the Autumn Term 2000.

Phase Three fieldwork

Phase Three fieldwork took place in May and June 2001 to collect the final round of data. Two-day visits were completed at the six AEs, the focus of which was to:

- interview young people still at the projects who were interviewed in Phase One or Two.
- interview project staff regarding the overall impact of the project on the young people involved in the evaluation
- administer the post-AE self-report offending questionnaire to those who completed the original questionnaire.

In addition, researchers collected the following data:

- pupil monitoring data (attendance, exclusions etc.) for the Spring Term 2001
- individual pupil timetables for Spring Term 2001
- breakdown of staff activities for Spring Term 2001.

Towards the end of the Summer Term researchers returned to the AEs to collect the remaining data required for the evaluation, namely:

- final cost and input data
- destination data for young people
- pupil monitoring data (attendance, exclusions etc.) for the Summer Term 2001
- individual pupil timetables for Summer Term 2001
- breakdown of staff activities for Summer Term 2001.

Lastly, a proportion of the young people who completed the first self-report questionnaire had either left the AEs or were unavailable on the day of our visit. Therefore, in an attempt to increase the sample size, researchers attempted to trace young people through professional contacts provided by the AEs. These included social workers, training providers and YOT workers. Where possible additional fieldwork was arranged to interview the young people and administer the questionnaire.

1.2.5 Issues of questionnaire administration

At this point it is perhaps relevant to signal some of the issues and challenges associated with questionnaire administration. It was hoped that the questionnaire would be delivered to young people on a one-to-one basis by the researcher, in a separate space within the initiative/project. Activity spaces, teaching rooms and administration areas were generally preferred locations, as opposed to staff offices, so as to remove possible authority connotations. It was necessary to create the time and space to make the young people feel comfortable, establish a rapport and **really** explain what the research was all about.

It became evident from the outset that it was necessary to devote considerable time to reassure the young people about the value and confidentiality of their responses, and this was especially important in terms of crime. In all cases, they were told that they were under no compulsion whatsoever to participate, but that their help was extremely appreciated. In several cases, it was deemed necessary to briefly run-through the questionnaire content in order to give these young people a feel for the types of questions and issues involved.

Such an approach afforded the young people the opportunity of completing the questionnaire in a setting away from outside influences and pressures – especially peer influences – and other distractions. In addition to confidentiality, a situation of estrangement from friends and project/initiative staff was hoped to provide the young people the space in which they could ‘be themselves’ and answer honestly without the fear of damaging particular peer images they may have portrayed. The one-to-one approach was intended to provide the researcher with the opportunity of over-seeing the administration process, for example, assisting with any literacy or comprehension problems which occurred.

The self-report questionnaire was administered in a range of contexts – while every effort was made to ensure consistency of delivery, it was inevitable that the circumstances of each individual initiative did lead to certain differences.

The **settings** in which the questionnaires were administered were not always ideal as a result of the limited accommodation within the initiatives. Consequently, the questionnaire process was vulnerable to distractions, such as other young people banging on doors and windows, shouting and coming into the room.

Time pressures were also potentially negative influences on questionnaire administration. The often time-limited nature of individual programmes meant that young people had to leave at certain times as taxis or other transport were booked. Similarly, timetabled off-site activities imposed their own particular constraints.

The **mood of the initiative** was also a potentially instrumental factor in influencing the young people’s concentration and ability to complete the questionnaire. For example, there were several instances of ‘kicking off’ in initiatives which proved to be very unsettling and disturbing for the young people. (It must be noted, however, that the staff in all the initiatives went out of their way to provide the best environments they could, despite the presence of researchers often impacting on the programme/activities of the initiative).

Group questionnaire administration was occasionally a consequence of such factors, and was also requested by staff (on occasion) to reduce the disruption caused to the initiative. When this occurred, strenuous efforts were made to ensure that the young people were made aware that they should feel free to ask for help from the researchers if necessary. The possible influences of peer pressure and conformity – such as completing the questionnaire quickly or supplying the information they ‘thought’ they should supply were guarded against by stating that it was their own individual, personal views that were important and that it was not a test or competition.

Where staff members were present during questionnaire administration, the young people were assured that they would not see their responses, unless the young people themselves specifically asked them for help with literacy/comprehension. Such staff presence was not a desired situation, but on occasion, was unavoidable, although none of the young people raised any objection whatsoever. All staff involved stated that the young people were fully aware that they knew of their offending background, and often discussed this openly with them. In such cases, confidentiality was not a concern for the young people.

Such group-based administration occurred only in the contexts in which it was appropriate; namely in initiatives where the young people’s academic ability meant that they were able to work through the booklet independently, but with support available if necessary, and in initiatives which were structured along group-based learning. The presence of researchers and staff meant that the young people completed the questionnaires themselves and that responses were not the result of a ‘group effort’.

Fluctuations in, and the unpredictability of, young people’s attendance at initiatives meant that despite repeated visits, it was not always possible to administer the questionnaire in person. When this was the case, a project staff member was asked, and fully briefed, to do this. Such project-administered questionnaires were undertaken in the manner which best suited the situation, generally on a one-to-one basis between the staff member and the young person.

1.2.6 Sample sizes

In all, 162 young people were included in the evaluation sample and were distributed across the six AEIs as shown in Table 1. For the whole sample, baseline education data and AEI monitoring data (e.g. attendance, exclusions, etc.) was collected, along with programme timetables. A cohort of 63 young people were then interviewed to provide a more qualitative angle to the evaluation.

In total, researchers interviewed 100 people for the evaluation, which comprised of:

- **63** young people (23 were interviewed in Phase One only, 19 in Phase Three only and 21 were interviewed in both phases). The cohort included 42 males and 21 females
- **18** AEI staff (six interviewed in Phase One only, one interviewed in Phase Three only and 11 interviewed in both phases).

Table 1 shows a breakdown of interviews by AEI.

Table 1 Sample sizes

Sample sizes	AEI 1	AEI 2	AEI 3	AEI 4	AEI 5	AEI 6	Totals
Total sample size (young people)	22	23	15	33	39	30	162
Number of young people interviewed	8	12	7	14	13	9	63
Project staff	2	4	3	4	3	2	18

In addition to the above, seven parents were interviewed in order to obtain their perspectives. Twelve representatives from other agencies and organisations working with the young people were also interviewed. These interviewees were:

- Work experience providers (2)
- YOT workers (2)
- College providers (2)
- Education Welfare Officer (1)
- Careers advisor (1)
- Youth worker (1)
- Teacher (1)
- Educational Psychologist (1)
- LEA representative (1).

For the questionnaire component, a total of **97** young people completed the pre-project questionnaire and **57** completed the post-questionnaire. For all questionnaire items, a chi-square test was used to test for statistically significant differences at a five per cent level. Where statistical significance was found this has been highlighted in the text.

1.3 About this report

The following chapters relay the evaluation findings in full. The structure used is:

Chapter one: Introduction

Chapter two: Description and process

In this section, the operational aspects of AEIs are briefly described, with reference to their stated aims and objectives, referral and selection procedures, programme content, staffing and other agency contributions, and their own evaluation and monitoring systems.

- Chapter three: The target group**
Chapter three turns its attention to the characteristics of young people who attended the AEs, providing basic descriptors (e.g. gender, ethnicity and looked after status) as well as information on their educational careers prior to joining the AEs (e.g. attendance, exclusions history, bullying and attainment).
- Chapter four: Impact**
This chapter concerns the impact of AEs on four key variables, namely attendance rates, behaviour, educational outcomes and offending behaviour. It draws data from a number of different sources including qualitative interviews, AE records, a self-report offending and attitudes questionnaire, and data from the Police National Computer.
- Chapter five: Retention rates and destination of AE leavers**
Another important indicator of AE impact was the ability of the provisions to retain young people who previously were non-attenders at school or had been excluded from mainstream educational provision. This chapter therefore documents retention rates and youngsters' reasons for leaving AEs. It then presents the future aspirations of those young people who were interviewed, followed by the final destinations of all AE leavers.
- Chapter six: Effective practice in alternative educational provision**
The report concludes by focusing on what works in alternative educational provision. In essence, interviewees were asked to highlight those features which they believed were effective and therefore led to re-engagement and positive outcomes for the target group.
- Chapter seven: Issues of cost for alternative educational provision**
This sections considers the financial issues related to AE programmes and presents interviewees' thoughts on funding and their perceptions of cost-effectiveness. The chapter ends with a detailed economic analysis and comparison of the six AEs.

Chapter 2

Description and processes

About this chapter

This chapter provides a brief overview of some of the operational aspects of AEIs, namely what they actually deliver to young people and other associated procedures in this delivery. It includes a summary of:

- **The overall aims and objectives** of the six AEIs.
- **The different referral procedures** and criteria for selection that applied at the six AEIs.
- **The content of the AEI programmes** and also **factors** which affected the curriculum.
- **AEI staffing.**
- **The involvement of other agencies.**
- **Evaluation and monitoring procedures.**

Key findings

- Although the six AEIs represented different approaches to varying levels of disengagement, there were a number of similarities in their aims and objectives. All the AEIs aimed to deliver quality, relevant and positive learning experiences and opportunities which would contribute to the immediate and long-term future of the young people.
- A key feature of the AEIs was that they offered educational programmes which allowed young people to experience success. In addition, AEI programmes were sufficiently flexible to accommodate the changing needs and circumstances of the young people attending the projects.
- AEI programmes also included a strong pastoral element in recognition of the complex problems that AEI referrals often encountered.
- The aim for relationships to be adult-like and based on respect – features often said to be lacking in mainstream environments – characterised all the initiatives.
- Inconsistency and concerns about the quality of information received by AEIs when youngsters were referred to the projects was an issue raised by staff.
- A lack of funding exerted a restrictive influence on AEIs in terms of the range of activities that could be offered. Furthermore, short-term funding undermined job security and staff retention.
- At a national level, the most significant influence concerned the requirement to offer full-time provision at AEIs, and the implications this would have in terms of resources, youngsters' ability to manage full-time provision, and the likely content and quality of full-time programmes.
- The flexibility and variety of AEI provision was made possible, partly by the inclusion of other agencies as programme providers.
- Interviewees concluded that successful inter-agency working hinged on regular communication between agencies and was dependent on an understanding of each other's roles, responsibilities and protocols. Interviewees noted a lack of input or liaison with some agencies and a need for greater cooperation between agencies to ensure more effective ways of working.

2.1 Aims and objectives

The six AEs represented different approaches to varying manifestations and levels of disengagement and disaffection amongst the young people they catered for, and were all unique responses to the specific needs of their local client groups. However, notwithstanding the differences evident as a consequence of these specifics, it can be seen that there were many similarities.

AEs aimed to deliver quality, relevant and positive learning experiences and opportunities which would contribute (directly, or indirectly) to the immediate and long-term future of the young people by equipping them with the necessary educational, social and emotional (life) skills they were lacking. This was approached by providing curriculum content which was accessible and interesting to the young people, individually differentiated to ensure that academic success was immediately possible, encouraged and celebrated. Work experience, college and training opportunities were offered as insights and inspiration for possible learning-based progression, illustrating the value, relevance and role of education.

All the AEs operated in safe, calm, relaxed environments, where the young people were said to have the opportunity to be themselves, with support, guidance and encouragement from staff (and other young people). The aim for relationships to be adult-like and based on respect – features often said to be lacking in mainstream environments – characterised all the initiatives. A further key feature of the AEs is that they aimed to offer content and activities that would succeed with the young people and that they remained flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs and circumstances of the young people.

2.2 Referral Procedures

The bulk of referrals to AEs were via multi-agency or multi-disciplinary panels dealing with ‘hard to place’ young people. The primary reason that these young people were difficult to place was because they were permanently excluded from school, although panels were also trying to place school refusers, phobics and non-attenders, victims of bullying, those coming out of young offenders’ institutions, young mothers, young people who had crossed authority boundaries, and Traveller pupils. The main agencies represented on the panels were: education, social/community services, crime-related agencies, and training agencies. Referrals to the panels were either direct from schools or via agencies working with young people who were out of school, for example, the Education Welfare Service (EWS), Social Services, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), and Youth Offending Teams (YOTs). The Education Welfare Service played a major role in referral to the panels as they were usually the agency notified when pupils were excluded from school

All AEs had standard referral forms covering personal details, educational background, exclusion status, SEN status, other agencies involved, and reason for referral. However, the consistency and quality of information received was said to be extremely variable.

In three of the AEs referral could also take place directly via other agencies and/or individuals:

- Schools: EBD and mainstream
- EWS
- Parents
- Young people
- YOTs
- Social Services.

Only one AEI mentioned that they had self-referrals by young people, and referrals by parents/carers. In these instances, if the young person was still on a school roll the school would have to complete a referral form prior to the young person being referred to the project.

The panels generally reviewed the information received on the young people and decided the most appropriate educational placement. Ultimately, the decision to admit a young person was the responsibility of the AEI manager, but in some instances, there was an intermediate level where, for example, the Education Department or the Education Welfare Service vetted or recommended referrals to the projects.

All AEIs arranged initial visits to the interventions for the young people and their parents/carers. Although for one (AEI 3), because of the distances involved, the AEI manager would initially carry out a home visit to meet prospective students and their parents/carers, after which they would visit the project. Staff felt that it was extremely important that they met not only the young person, but also their parent/carer or another adult significant in their lives. In some instances young people might visit the project accompanied by an EWO or Social Worker. All AEI staff felt that it was particularly important that parents/carers were present at the meeting/visit to ensure that they were aware of their responsibilities regarding their child's attendance at the intervention and of the expectations that the AEI had of the child regarding behaviour, for example. In AEI 1 the parent and child were asked to sign a contract regarding expectations concerning behaviour, time keeping, and attitude.

Interviewees raised a number of issues and concerns regarding the referral process, which are noted below:

- The lack of seniority of staff on the multi-agency panel.
- The consistency of referrals, from high risk youngsters with serious emotional and behavioural difficulties to 'one-off offenders' (young people who had been permanently excluded from school for relatively minor misdemeanours).
- The lack of, consistency and quality of information received when young people were referred to AEIs was an issue raised by all projects.
- Inappropriate referrals. The referral of young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties to AEIs where staff were not trained to deal with young people with such complex needs.

2.3 Criteria for selection

Interviewees highlighted specific selection criteria relating to the status of the young people referred to the projects:

- **Permanent exclusion**

Although all the interventions had students who had been permanently excluded, only two (AEI 3 and AEI 5) specified that pupils had to be permanently excluded from school. Nevertheless, even within these interventions, there were opportunities for flexibility in the criteria for selection. For example, AEI 5 which aimed to meet the needs of permanently excluded youngsters in key stage 4, had also accepted long-term non-attenders.

- **Emotional and behavioural difficulties**

Four of the six initiatives felt that it was inappropriate for them to accept young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) onto the programmes. The main reasons given for not accepting EBD referrals related to a lack of staff expertise and/or training, and an inability for the provision to meet these youngsters often complex needs. For example, a member of staff from AEI 2 where staff had youth work backgrounds, highlighted that the project had recently received what were viewed as ‘inappropriate’ referrals from EBD schools:

We are not a place to send those young people. We deal with disaffected young people, not young people with severe behavioural problems, ... we are not trained to do that, that's not a Youth Work issue, that's a psychologist's issue. So we do have some flexibility and if we feel it's not right we will turn them away (project staff AEI 2).

Similarly, another member of staff from AEI 3 said that they were prepared to accept young people with behavioural difficulties but that the project was unable to meet the needs of young people with more complex psychological problems. Primarily, this was because AEI staff were not trained to work with EBD youngsters, but also because the potentially dangerous nature of some of the practically-based activities on the programme meant that there would be serious health and safety concerns regarding the involvement of such young people.

In contrast, AEI 6 and AEI 1 **were** working with young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, including students who had been excluded from EBD and special schools. AEI 1, although not specifically classified as an intervention which worked with EBD youngsters, did admit a significant number of students with these difficulties:

It is an EBD unit. I mean we are not classified as such, but that's what we do, that's what we do best, so that's what we deal with (project staff AEI 1).

- **Commitment to attend**

Prospective students' commitment and willingness to attend the interventions was also viewed by staff as an important component of the criteria for selection. Staff

from three of the AEIs highlighted the importance of young people wanting to attend the project.

- **Inappropriate referrals**

To ensure that the AEI did not receive inappropriate referrals, AEI 6 was piloting a form that set out its criteria for referral. The aim of this was to ensure that all the agencies working with the young people who might be referred to the AEI would be able to determine whether:

- a) they fitted the criteria for referral; and
- b) a placement at the AEI would be appropriate.

It was envisaged that the criteria for referral could also be used as a baseline assessment for developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and as a 'readiness for reintegration' checklist concerning the young person's suitability to return and operate effectively within mainstream education.

2.4 AEI programmes

The AEIs featured in this evaluation shared a universal goal – to re-motivate, re-engage and ultimately reintegrate young people into education, training and/or employment. To meet this aim, each AEI endeavoured to construct a varied programme of activities, which could potentially re-ignite young peoples' enthusiasm for learning. This was particularly challenging, given that the AEIs typically catered for young people who had very negative experiences at school – they had either been permanently excluded or were unable to cope with the demands of mainstream education and had become long-term non-attenders.

The activities incorporated into AEI programmes have been classified into ten broad categories:

- **Educational programmes**
- **Work experience**
- **Vocational training**
- **Careers education**
- **College placements**
- **Personal and social education**
- **Counselling**
- **Leisure-based activities**
- **Environmental activities**
- **Work in the community.**

An overview of the activities provided in each AEI is provided in Appendix 1. A short description of the types of activity is provided below:

- **Educational programmes**

In all but one provision, programmes of educational activities were delivered on site by AEI staff. The exception concerned an AEI which acted as a broker of alternative provision, sourcing activities from a whole range of different providers. In this instance, educational input was offered through a LEA pupil support team and more recently, home tuition. Half of the AEIs utilised the ASDAN Youth Award Scheme (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) as an accreditation package, whilst other accreditation included the National Proficiency Test Council qualifications, AQA (Assessment and Qualification Alliance) certificates of achievement, OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA examinations) national skills profile, City and Guilds and GCSEs.

In the context of an AEI therefore, accreditation offered both educational outcomes and a pathway into vocational and employment opportunities. The programme was intended to instil young people with a sense of purpose, reality and a direct correlation with 'the world of work', a factor which may ultimately help harness their commitment to learning.

In terms of subject coverage, the AEIs were geared more towards improving basic skills, than delivering the entire National Curriculum. Every AEI offered sessions on numeracy and literacy/maths and English. In only two did the timetable extend to subjects such as geography, history and science. More common was the inclusion of subjects like art, music, dance and drama. Other common components of AEI provision, included Information Technology and, in four cases, cookery/basic nutrition. On entry to the AEI, five out of the six provisions conducted initial basic skills assessments to gauge the level at which each young person was working educationally. Details of educational histories were often sparse and information was not necessarily forwarded from previous schools to the AEIs. Assessments included in-house assessments of maths and English, a reading age assessment test, the Basic Skills Agency national standard test, the Salford reading test and the AEB entry assessments. In all AEIs some form of individual education plan was then drafted which identified target areas and goals for the forthcoming year.

- **Work experience**

All AEIs provided avenues for work experience. In two cases, this activity was reserved for young people in Year 11 only. In other cases, placements were arranged as and when appropriate. Destinations included garages, nurseries and retail placements. Prior to going out on placement, a number of AEIs discussed health and safety issues with their youngsters, and in order to monitor progress, young people were also asked to keep a daily log of their activities.

- **Vocational training**

Work experience enabled young people to 'dip into', and test out, future employment options and possibilities. Some, however, had already decided which career path they wished to follow, and in most AEIs there were a small number of young people who had embarked on vocational training courses, through an external provider. Three

major types of course appeared to be accessed by AEIs, these were car mechanics, childcare and building-related courses.

- **Careers education**

With a focus on future progression and preparation for employment, careers advice was a consistent feature of all the AEIs. In addition to various in-house sessions, all AEIs drew on the expertise of the local Careers Service. Often AEIs had a nominated careers advisor who would work with AEI referrals and conduct one-to-one interviews, as well as offer guidance throughout the year. In AEI 3, a careers session was the very first activity undertaken by the new intake, as the information collected helped direct future learning and work experience placements.

- **College placements**

Four of the six AEIs offered youngsters the opportunity to attend college. In an example of a more 'centralised' provision (AEI 4), this was done under the remit of AEI staff who accompanied and supported young people within the college setting. In another two provisions, there were college staff, on site, who were responsible for supporting AEI referrals. This additional support reflected the fact that AEI youngsters were below normal college age and because of their previous experiences, might require additional support. At one college, a 'safety net' of support was provided by a social inclusion team and young people were gradually integrated into college activities at a pace they felt comfortable with. All programmes were individually tailored and, if necessary, included basic skills provision. Progress was reviewed on a monthly basis, bringing together the support worker and the young person concerned.

In two cases, college placements were reserved for Year 11s only. Another AEI catered exclusively for Year 11 and one referred both Year 10 and Year 11, according to their suitability. Whilst at college, young people could pursue both educational and vocational study, for example textiles, science, maths, IT, communications, hairdressing, childcare and business studies.

The inclusion of college opportunities in AEI programmes appeared to serve two purposes. Firstly, it provided an alternative environment for educational study, covering a broader spectrum of subjects. Secondly, it enabled young people to sample a college atmosphere and to realise that college was a realistic option for them.

- **Personal and social education**

The profile of young people attending alternative provision necessitated a high level of pastoral care and PSE-type intervention. The manner in which this was delivered varied however. On viewing AEI timetables, it might appear that two out of the six designated relatively small amounts of time to PSE, whilst the remaining four dedicated a number of sessions to PSE issues. However, whether or not specifically timetabled, PSE tended to be woven into the everyday fabric of AEI provision, often administered informally according to individual needs. For instance, at two AEIs

young people were allocated to key workers who undertook a pastoral support role, focused on the holistic needs of the individual, whether they be social, emotional, financial or health related. At another AEI, staff worked very intensively with young people and developed mentoring style relationships. Generally however, pastoral support and PSE were not compartmentalised within an AEI, all provisions appeared to integrate these matters into everyday provision, as and when the need arose.

- **Counselling**

One AEI estimated that every young person received approximately half-an-hour of counselling a week, whilst another AEI could refer young people to a MIND counsellor. Counselling however was another activity which did not necessarily have a timetabled presence in each AEI, but was none the less an integrated feature of general provision.

- **Leisure-based activities**

The inclusion of arts-related sessions has been already noted. However, AEI programmes were also interspersed with various other leisure-based activities. Whilst ostensibly leisure-focused, these activities included educational components, such as promoting team work, problem solving and social skills. By the very nature of the activities, these sessions were undertaken externally, with visits to local sports centres and gyms. Two AEIs commissioned the services of a charitable organisation which offered an outdoor pursuits programme alongside personal development sessions.

- **Environmental activities**

In the main, AEIs drew on a common pool of activities when formulating their programmes. There was, however, one AEI which had structured its programme around a more unusual focus – the environment. Through its associations with a local forestry organisation, young people worked out in the forest on a range of environmental/conservation projects, for example, tree felling, woodland crafts, planting, fishing and science projects. In doing so, they could gain accreditation in forestry skills, but could also use the outcomes to provide evidence of learning for OCR or the Youth Award Scheme. This demonstrated another example of education which was almost ‘embedded’ within other more appealing activities. Topics such as numeracy were tackled in a ‘real world’ setting and learning emerged almost as a side product.

- **Work in the community**

There was an additional example of a community-based activity, which was accessed by the brokering AEI. The scheme, coordinated by the Princes Trust, targeted young offenders and involved them in community-type work.

In many ways, there were more similarities amongst AEI programmes than differences. This is not surprising given the common theme of re-engagement and preparation for the future. AEIs appeared to employ similar mechanisms for achieving their aims, mechanisms which were perhaps distinctive to alternative

provision, when compared to mainstream provision. In particular, AEIs offered responsive and flexible programmes, tailored to the individual needs of young people and strengthened by a safety net of pastoral support. Accreditation packages were broad and included opportunities for achieving vocational qualifications. All AEIs capitalised on the appeal factor of leisure-based pursuits to engage young people and introduce educational topics less overtly. Lastly, with an eye on the future, AEIs included the facility to attend both work experience and college placements. The precise blend and ratio of these activities did indeed vary, depending on local factors such as funding, types of referrals and staffing backgrounds. Overall however, AEIs were structured around a common core of ‘essential ingredients’.

2.5 Factors which influenced AEI programmes

AEI programmes were largely directed by the make-up of the target group. Therefore, emphasis was placed on ensuring variety and customised programmes within which the hours could be altered to suit the individual. AEI programmes also included a strong pastoral element in recognition of the more complex problems that AEI referrals often encountered. Staff interests and experience were also said to have a bearing on the type of programme offered.

A lack of funding exerted a restrictive influence on AEIs, in terms of the range of activities that could be offered and the involvement of other agencies. Meanwhile, short-term funding undermined job security and increased the likelihood of staff leaving.

At a national level, the most significant influence concerned offering full-time provision for young people attending AEIs. Interviewees were unsure as to whether this extension to alternative provision would be supported by additional resources. Furthermore, some doubted the suitability of a full-time programme for particular young people, and others feared that demands for quantity would affect the overall quality of the programmes.

2.6 Staffing

In total, across the six AEIs, 25 core members of staff were employed, with additional support provided by five volunteers (four at AEI 1 and one at AEI 4) and six administrators. On-site administrators were based at four provisions, with another located at an area office. Staff were drawn from a range of professional backgrounds and comprised:

- Qualified teachers (7)
- Social workers (3)
- Youth workers (7)
- Support assistants who had worked in educational settings (4).

In addition, there were staff members with backgrounds in:

- Industry and environmental sciences
- Probation and NVQ assessment

- Financial services
- Performing arts.

It should be noted however that certain professional backgrounds were exclusive to particular AEIs, the different professional backgrounds were not represented equally across the projects. For instance, all three social workers were employed within AEI 5, and five of the seven youth workers were based at AEI 2, with the remaining two being at AEI 4. Qualified teachers were part of the staff at three projects, leaving three AEIs without qualified teacher input. Prior to joining their respective AEIs, two teachers had worked extensively in special needs and one had worked in EBD provision. The blend of staffing was thought to strongly influence the ethos and approach of each provision.

The prevailing staffing issue expressed by interviewees was that employees were underpaid and undervalued. This led to difficulties in terms of staff retention and recruitment, as one member of staff observed:

We put the job ad in the paper and we put the salary, and we get replies from people like forklift truck drivers and shop assistants because they look at the salary and they think 'well it can't be a very difficult job, if that's all they are paying' (project staff, AEI 1).

According to one manager the difficulties associated with staff recruitment and retention far outweighed any that the young people presented.

At the same time, staff felt that the demands of working in AEIs were not always supported by adequate supervision. As well as offering an educational programme, staff were having to respond to young peoples' personal and social difficulties, including psychological problems, emotional and behavioural difficulties, drugs' misuse, pregnancy and homelessness. Some staff felt there was not always a facility to 'off-load' or share concerns with colleagues.

2.7 Involvement of other agencies

The flexibility and variety of AEI provision was made possible, partly by the inclusion of other agencies as programme providers. They were incorporated into AEI programmes to offer specific areas of expertise (for example, advice on drugs or sexual health), or to provide a different type of learning environment and/or experience (for example, college).

As part of AEIs' holistic support packages, staff also exchanged information and liaised with other agencies and organisations that shared a remit for the AEI target group. These agencies included the Education Welfare Service, Youth Offending Teams and Social Services. However, interviewees noted a lack of input or liaison with particular agencies, including Social Services, the Educational Psychology Service and the Youth Service. There was also felt to be a need for greater cooperation between agencies to ensure a more effective way of working and to avoid duplication of resources and services.

Interviewees concluded that successful inter-agency working hinged on regular communication between the parties involved and was dependent on an understanding of each others roles, responsibilities, and other agency protocols.

2.8 Self-evaluation and monitoring systems

All the AEIs were involved in evaluating and monitoring, both the performance of the intervention itself, and also the progress that individual students were making whilst attending the provision. External evaluations of AEIs had been carried out by LEAs, the Training Standards Council, New Start, the Audit Commission and OfSTED. Young people's progress was also monitored and evaluated using a range of tools including:

- daily records of progress
- weekly monitoring sheets
- monthly reviews
- termly reviews
- reviews of individual education plans (IEPs).

A number of the AEIs were encouraging young people to be actively involved in evaluating their own progress. Staff saw this as an intrinsic part of the process of students taking increased responsibility for themselves and their behaviour. So, young people were involved in setting their own targets, for example, regarding attendance, attainment, and behaviour, evaluating their achievement, and completing self-evaluation forms in AEI 3 and 6. Self-evaluation was used as a tool to measure young people's changing attitudes towards attainment, relationships, self-esteem and confidence, and behaviour.

Chapter 3

The target group

About this chapter

This chapter provides details of the young people who attended the six AEIs, highlighting key differences between the programmes' clientele. It covers:

- **Pupil descriptors**, including special educational needs status and reasons for referral to the initiatives.
- **The educational careers** or histories, of the young people referred to the AEIs including their own accounts of educational experiences before attending the programmes.

Key findings

- The majority of AEI youngsters had experienced behavioural difficulties, which had resulted in fixed-term and permanent exclusions. Aggression towards other pupils and staff was the most common type of behavioural problem identified by young people.
- Patterns of non-attendance became entrenched at secondary school, escalating in Years 8 and 9. Therefore, young people entered a cycle of non-attendance, which was difficult to break. This resulted in a number of young people being out of school for a significant period i.e. more than a year.
- Alternatives to AEIs were extremely limited, involving perhaps a couple of hour's home tuition a week. In some LEAs there appeared to be a lack of alternative provision for younger pupils excluded from school or refusing to engage. Young people had to wait before they were old enough to be accepted onto the AEI programme.

3.1 Pupil descriptors

The following section provides a breakdown of the characteristics of the young people who attended the AEIs. Table 3.1 provides summary details focusing on the following categories:

- **Age range**
- **Numbers on roll**
- **Gender**
- **Ethnicity/English as an additional language (EAL)**
- **Looked after status**
- **Special educational needs (SEN)**
- **Reasons for referral.**

3.1.1 Age range

The age of the youngsters attending the AEIs ranged from Year 7 to Year 11, although some projects catered for specific age groups or had separate elements of provision for different age groups. The specific interventions which formed the focus of the evaluation in AEI 1 and AEI 2 catered for key stage 4, 14 to 16 year olds, but both organisations also worked with older young people and adults. AEI 3 generally catered for Year 11s, but had accepted two Year 10s because it was felt that the project could meet their needs. Both AEI 4 and AEI 5 worked with young people throughout the secondary age range, but the evaluation focused on specific interventions or parts of the provision which worked with 14 to 16 year olds. AEI 6 was a much smaller intervention, so the evaluation included young people from Years 7 to 11.

3.1.2 Numbers on roll

The numbers on roll detailed in Table 3.1 reflect the total number of young people for whom data was collected throughout the evaluation, and includes young people who may have subsequently left the intervention. Furthermore, in AEI 6 the numbers on roll also included eight young people who actually attended college full-time and were on the college roll rather than the AEI roll but the AEI maintained a supervisory link with the youngsters. In this AEI there were also a small number of young people who were still on the roll of an EBD school, as well as two mainstream pupils who had been referred to the project for a limited period of time.

3.1.3 Gender

Table 3.1 shows that the majority (two-thirds), of the sample were male, but that a significant number (a third), were female. Interestingly, AEI 4 had more girls attending the project than boys, although staff acknowledged that this was not usually the case.

3.1.4 Ethnicity/English as an additional language (EAL)

The number of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds was quite low (6 per cent), in part reflecting the catchment areas of the projects. Consequently, there was only one young person for whom English was an additional language. The AEI with the largest number of young people from an ethnic background (21 per cent) was a London borough. However, for this particular borough the proportion of young people from ethnic backgrounds attending the project may still be considered relatively low, this possibly reflected the existence of other alternative education programmes working with young people from ethnic minority backgrounds in the area.

3.1.5 Looked after status

In the period of data collection a tenth of young people in the sample were classified as 'looked after'. There was only one AEI which did not have any looked after youngsters (AEI 6), staff from this project highlighted that it was extremely unusual for them to have no looked after children attending.

3.1.6 Special educational needs (SEN)

The information available regarding the Special Educational Needs (SEN) status of the young people included in the sample was extremely variable. Staff were asked whether young people attending the interventions had any special educational needs, and if so, at what stage of the Code of Practice were they at¹. The Code of Practice referred to in the interviews highlighted the level of support required for young people with special educational needs, ranging from Stage 1 to Stage 5. Stage 1 involved the provision of in-school support, whilst Stages 2 and 3 were characterised, respectively, by the creation of individual education plans and the involvement of outside specialists. At Stage 4 the LEA considered the need for a statutory assessment and, if appropriate, made a multi-disciplinary assessment, whilst at Stage 5 the LEA considered the need for a statement of special educational needs and, if appropriate, made a statement and arranged, monitored and reviewed provision.

In some instances, staff were able to say that young people attending the projects had special educational needs but that a formal assessment of these needs had either not been carried out or they were unaware of an assessment having taken place. In other instances, young people had been formally assessed to be at a particular Stage of the Code of Practice and this level of assessment is detailed in Table 3.1. Those young people at Stage 5 of the Code of Practice should all have had a statement detailing their specific educational needs and also the appropriate provision to meet those needs.

Table 3.1 illustrates the large number of young people (69 per cent) attending the projects who were classified by staff as having some kind of special educational need. Although youngsters may not always have been formally placed on the Code of Practice, interventions had made assessments about youngsters' needs themselves. For example, in AEI 4, unless there was a formal record of assessment, all young

¹ The Code of Practice has been revised since this data were collected and no longer refers to stages.

people attending the project were classified at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice. The small numbers of young people classified as having special educational needs in AEI 2 and 3 might reflect the fact that students had not been formally assessed for SEN.

There were some concerns about the lack of information coming through to interventions about youngsters' educational needs. Furthermore, a member of staff at one AEI highlighted that although a young person might have been assessed at Stage 3 whilst they were at school, by the time they reached the AEI this might be an inaccurate assessment, as their needs could have increased due to the time they had spent out of education.

3.1.7 Reasons for referral

Table 3.2 provides a summary of the stated reasons for referral to the projects. The totals for each intervention are likely to sum to more than the number of young people involved because they were usually referred for more than one reason. As can be seen in Table 3.2 the most common reason for referral to projects was permanent exclusion from school. In some projects permanent exclusion was given as a reason for referral, whereas in others the stated reason for referral may have related to behaviour which had in turn led to permanent exclusion. So, reasons for permanent exclusion are likely to have included assaults on peers or staff etc. In a small number of cases young people had been referred to AEIs after they had left school in order to avoid a permanent exclusion.

The next most frequently cited reason for a young person's referral to a project was non-attendance at school. Non-attendance could be for a variety of reasons including truancy, school refusal/phobia, because youngsters were carers, or due to illness. Other problems, often connected with reasons for non-attendance and subsequent referral to projects, included psychological problems, such as depression, and a lack of confidence and self-esteem, as well as young people who were described as '*emotionally fragile*'. Other vulnerable youngsters had been referred to AEIs because they had been bullied, had experienced family traumas or family problems and were not living at home, and/or had been the victims of abuse, including self-harm and abuse by adults.

A relatively high proportion of reasons given for referral to projects related to violence, disruption and unacceptable behaviour, although violence towards school staff was only highlighted once. In AEI 6 three male students had been referred because of their physical aggression and, in particular, because of attacks on young women.

In AEI 1 and 6 the sample also included a significant number of young people with challenging behaviour who had been referred from EBD/special schools or had been referred to the project because there were no EBD/special school places for them. Young people were referred from EBD/special schools for the following reasons:

- their placement at EBD/special school was seen as inappropriate or had broken down
- due to their extreme aggression
- due to serious EBD

- building restructuring
- closure of EBD/special schools
- excluded from EBD school
- withdrawn from placement by parent.

Young people had been referred to projects after they had been withdrawn from both EBD/special and mainstream schools by parents and were then difficult to place, and also when they had not been accepted by a secondary school because of their problems in primary.

Table 3.1 Pupil Descriptors

	AEI 1	AEI 2	AEI 3	AEI 4	AEI 5	AEI 6
Age range	14 to 16 year olds	14 to 16 year olds	15-16 year olds & occasional 14-15 year olds	14 to 16 year olds	14 to 16 year olds	11 to 16 year olds
Number in evaluation	22	23	15	33	39	30
Gender	12 boys 10 girls	13 boys 10 girls	13 boys 2 girls	14 boys 19 girls	30 boys 9 girls	26 boys 4 girls
Ethnicity	20 White UK 1 Jamaican Maltese 1 Other	23 White UK	15 White UK	26 White UK 5 Black Caribbean 1 Turkish Cypriot 1 Vietnamese	39 White UK	29 White UK 1 Black Caribbean
EAL	0	0	0	1	0	0
Looked-after status	2	4	2	2	7	0
SEN status (1-5 or N/A)	'Yes' - 13 Stage 3 - 3 Stage 5 - 3 N/A - 3	'Yes' - 2 Stage 2 - 1 Stage 3 - 1 N/A - 19	Stage 5 - 3 N/A - 12	Stage 1 - 3 Stage 2 - 2 Stage 3 - 15 Stage 5 - 3 N/A - 10	Stage 2 - 3 Stage 3 - 11 Stage 4 - 2 Stage 5 - 12 N/A - 8 Unknown - 3	Stage 3 - 14 Stage 4 - 2 Stage 5 - 13 N/A - 1
Reasons for referral	Permanent exc PRU referral Non-attendance	Permanent exc Non-attendance	Permanent exc	Permanent exc	Permanent exc Non-attendance	Permanent exc EBD referral Non-attendance

Key:

SEN Status

Yes: deemed by staff to have some special educational need but not on Code of Practice.

Stage 1: teachers identify/register child's SEN and, consulting school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), take initial action.

Stage 2: SENCO takes lead responsibility for coordinating support, working with teachers.

Stage 3: teachers and SENCO supported by specialists from outside school.

Stage 4: LEA considers the need for a statutory assessment.

Stage 5: LEA considers the need for a statement of SEN and, if a statement is made, arrange, monitor and review provision.

N/A – not assessed

Table 3.2 Reasons for referral

Reasons for referral	AEI 1	AE1 2	AEI 3	AEI 4	AEI 5	AEI 6	Total
Permanent exc	1	4	15		43		63
Risk of permanent exc		1			2	1	4
Non-attendance at school/school refusal	12	11		16	2	2	43
Bullying, fighting & assaults on peers	6	3		3		12	24
Disruption, misconduct & unacceptable behaviour	1	4		4		3	12
Referral from EBD school/no EBD place	4					8	12
Bullied	2	2		6			10
Learning difficulties/ EBD /SEN	2	2		5			9
Defiance & disobedience				2		3	5
Family problems		2		2		1	5
Vandalism						4	4
Offending behaviour		1	1	1			3
Verbal abuse to staff						3	3
Verbal abuse to peers						2	2
Victim of abuse		1		1			2
Schools refusing to admit pupil					1	1	2
Drugs	1						1
Physical abuse & assaults on staff						1	1
Other	Referral from PRU (1)					Not attending mass (1)	2

3.2 The educational careers of AEI referrals

The evaluation sought to compile data on the educational histories of young people attending the six AEIs. Namely, information was collected on:

- **Attendance**
- **Bullying behaviour** (as both victim and perpetrator)
- **Exclusions**
- **Attainment.**

Referral forms and files held at each AEI acted as the primary source of data. Ultimately, this data was supplemented further by information provided in interviews with parents, staff and young people themselves.

Staff at AEIs expressed concern over the paucity of information which followed young people to AEIs. This may stem partly from the disjointed educational experience that characterises many AEI referrals. For example, some of the young people may have been out of mainstream education for months, if not years. In other cases, young people may have passed through several secondary schools on route to the AEI. Consequently, the data which were collected, was not complete. However, it was still possible to draw some overarching impressions on the educational histories and characteristics of AEI referrals.

In addition, young people interviewed in Phase 1 of the research were also asked to provide insights into their educational careers, prior to attending the AEI. These insights focused on their attendance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships whilst they were attending school. Young people were also asked to provide details on any educational input they had received since leaving school but prior to attending the project, and to describe their route to the AEI. This information concerning young people's educational background and experiences prior to attending the projects served to contextualise the chapters that follow.

3.2.1 Attendance

Non-attendance is perhaps one of the more measurable symptoms of disaffection and is therefore an important variable to monitor. Percentage data on previous school attendance proved to be somewhat sparse amongst the documents transferred to at each AEI, but, in 32 cases, quantitative information of individual attendance was acquired. This was supplemented by the insights of AEI staff who, through their dealings with the young people, had managed to piece together a picture of their attendance histories. Thus, combining these qualitative comments with quantitative evidence it was possible to present the following summary of attendance behaviour:

Table 3.3 Attendance histories of AEI sample

Attendance histories	Number of young people
Good attenders	25
Poor attenders	44
Long-term persistent non-attenders (less than 50 per cent attendance)	23
Other*	3
No information available	67
Total	162

* non-attendance due to exclusion

It can be seen that amongst those young people for whom information was available, nearly three-quarters had previous attendance problems, with nearly a quarter described as long-term persistent non-attenders. Presumably, had further quantitative data been acquired this pattern would have been replicated by the remaining young people.

Attendance: young people's perspectives

Young people were asked to describe their attendance at school. Table 3.4 shows that over half (23/40) of the young people interviewed in Phase 1 who described their attendance at school, felt that it had been 'poor', over a quarter (11/40) felt that their attendance had been 'good', whilst six youngsters felt that it had been 'OK'. Thus, the most common response was that their attendance had been poor. This is perhaps not surprising, given that the remit of the projects was to work with non-attenders and one of the AEs specifically focused on provision for non-attenders.

Table 3.4 Young people's views on their attendance at school

Attendance	Number of responses
'Good'	11
'OK'	6
'Poor'	23

Interestingly, a significant number of the poor attenders stated that their attendance had been good when they were younger but had deteriorated as they progressed through secondary school, with a marked deterioration around the age of 13 or 14.

Attendance deteriorating with age

When I was first in secondary school my attendance was good, I used to go every day. When I was about 14 and a half I just didn't enjoy school at all, so I used to go off from my house ... and go into town and not bother going (male AEI 3).

Deterioration in school attendance at this age is a fairly common trend, but for a number of the AEI students, this was the age their non-attendance became entrenched and they stopped attending school altogether, as illustrated in the following comments.

Poor attendance at secondary

At first I always went in and then I started not liking going in and then I just had a whole year off (female AEI 2).

The reasons young people gave for their non-attendance focused on (the numbers in brackets reflect the number of young people who mentioned this reason):

- a dislike of school/the school environment (7)
- boredom (4)
- relationships (4)
- enjoyment (1).

Those young people who highlighted a **dislike of school/the school environment** expressed an intense dislike of the whole institution, perhaps reflecting their total dislocation from the institution.

Reasons for non-attendance: a dislike of school/the school environment

I started bunking because I didn't like it and I was bunking for a year, didn't go in for a year (male AEI 1).

Young people also expressed an inability to cope with the secondary school environment compared to the primary environment, and stress-related factors were said to have influenced some youngsters' non-attendance. These stress-related factors also included factors outside school, such as difficulties at home, for example.

Reasons for non-attendance: a dislike of school/the environment

High school I just didn't take to it ... going into different classrooms, having to traipse all round the building ... when you were in primary you stay in the same class ... I could go in a morning and I could stay there for 20 minutes and it would do my head in and I would have to go (female AEI 2).

Reasons for non-attendance: difficulties at home

At the beginning I was in every day but then I had problems at home and that and I just lost it and I started bunking (male AEI 4).

Boredom and **an inability to get up in the mornings** were also viewed by young people as a factor influencing their non-attendance.

Reasons for non-attendance: boredom and inability to get up

I just couldn't get on with the work ... it wasn't difficult, I just got bored easy (female AEI 2).

I just couldn't be bothered [to go to school, it was] too early in the morning (male AEI 1).

Other factors identified by young people determining their non-attendance focused on relationships both negative: bullying, and positive: the lure of truanting with friends.

Reasons for non-attendance: relationships

Bullying, I just didn't like getting bullied (female AEI 1).

[I did not attend because] *I was with my mates* (male AEI 3).

Other reasons identified by interviewees focused on the actual enjoyment of not attending school.

Reasons for non-attendance: enjoyment

The reason for truanting? There was no reason, it was just for a bit of fun (male AEI 5).

Those young people who described what they did instead of going to school stated that they:

- stayed at home (2)
- were with friends (2)
- were involved in offending behaviour (2)
- went into town (1).

Those young people who stayed at home were often isolated, as in the case of one girl who did not attend school for a year who said that she was '*just at home*' (female AEI 2) for that year. Similarly, another young person described how he would '*sit at home, play on the computer*' (male AEI 3).

Those who were with friends also appeared to have been at risk of being placed in vulnerable situations:

Non-attendance: with friends

I just kept going out in the morning and then just going up to my mate's house and getting changed and I didn't used to go back until four o'clock in the morning (female AEI 5).

Young people who were not attending school also highlighted their vulnerability to involvement in offending behaviour:

Non-attendance: offending behaviour

I started hanging out with the wrong crew, doing crimes, getting caught, now I have five convictions (male AEI 4).

It is interesting to note that eleven young people felt that their attendance at school was good and that a further six felt that it was satisfactory. Their dislocation from school was more likely to include other factors, such as attitude and behaviour, explored in the following sections.

3.2.2 Bullying behaviour

Until recently schools have not been obliged to record bullying incidences. Consequently, only one AEI was able to forward data on the number of bullying incidences that young people were involved in, whilst still at school. Once again, it was only possible to produce an overview based on the comments of AEI staff.

Table 3.5 Previous bullying behaviour of AEI sample

Previous bullying behaviour	Number of young people
None reported	31
Perpetrators of bullying	50
Victims of bullying	18
Both	11
No information available	52
Total	162

Where information was provided, just under half the young people were believed to have been bullies (to varying degrees – some frequent, some occasional). A further 16 per cent were thought to have suffered as victims of bullying, with ten per cent experiencing bullying as both a victim and a perpetrator. One provision in particular seemed to have a larger share of victims (AEI 4).

Bullying and peer relationships: young people's perspectives

Young people were asked to provide insights into their relationships at school, including any experiences of bullying, either as a victim or a perpetrator. The following is a summary of their responses, although it should be remembered that youngsters might have been reluctant to divulge their bullying behaviour:

- none reported (17)
- victim (10)
- perpetrator (2)
- both (1).

The majority (17) of interviewees reported that they had not been involved in bullying behaviour at school, either as a victim or a perpetrator. However, comments did at times suggest some potential for bullying behaviour:

I had a reputation for being a hard man which I wasn't but I just got my reputation for people who I messed about with so I never got bullied never had anything wrong said to me cos I was well respected (male AEI 5).

Two young people, both boys, who said that they had been victims of bullying, explained that this had resulted in them being excluded from school:

Bullying behaviour: exclusion

I got bullied, he hit me so I hit him back and I got expelled because they thought I was the bully (male AEI 3).

I got suspended once for two days [because] some boy said I was bullying him and I weren't (male AEI 4).

Young people said that they had been bullied because of their physical appearance, their clothes, and due to learning difficulties.

A small number (3) of young people, all boys, admitted to bullying behaviour, including one who stated that he had been both a victim and a perpetrator involved in verbal bullying.

Young people were also asked about their relationships with other pupils generally. Interviewees gave a mixture of both positive and negative responses, although the majority (20) provided relatively positive responses. It was interesting that all the interviewees from AEI 3 and AEI 6 gave positive responses when describing their relationships with other pupils at school. The negative responses mainly related to fighting with other pupils. In addition, two young people referred to their isolated status within school because they did not get on with, or could not relate to, other pupils. This was particularly marked for one young person who could not relate to his peer group and only felt comfortable within an adult environment. Similarly, but to a lesser extent, one of the girls felt that she had related well to other pupils, but only those who were older than herself, which may have had the potential to lead to disengagement from her peers.

Table 3.6 Relationships with other pupils

Positive responses (20)	Negative responses (8)
<p><i>'They were alright'</i> (male AEI 3).</p> <p><i>'Yes, I got on with virtually everybody'</i> (male AEI 3).</p> <p><i>'I got on with them fine'</i> (male AEI 3).</p>	<p><i>'They would wind me up so I would smack them'</i> (female AEI 1).</p> <p><i>'If any of them did anything to me I would fight them'</i> (male AEI 2).</p> <p><i>'I didn't like any of the people there or anything'</i> (female AEI 1).</p>

3.2.3 Exclusions

Alongside non-attendance, exclusion from school is another tangible indicator of disaffection. Very often, a permanent exclusion precedes entry to an AEI and in some cases it was used as a criteria for selection. Overall, 43 young people had been permanently excluded, generally from mainstream, but sometimes from EBD schools and pupil referral units. Of this 43, eleven had experienced more than one exclusion. It should be noted that in one AEI, data was collected from each person's file and whilst eight formal exclusions were in evidence, an interview with a member of staff revealed that all AEI referrals were in fact permanently excluded. This would increase the total number of permanent exclusions to 54.

It is also worth registering that permanent excludees were not represented equally at the six AEIs. One provision had a greater share of young people with multiple-exclusions, whilst another had just one permanently excluded referral. The absence of permanent exclusions, in one case, related to a decision in the authority to target intervention at the pre-exclusion stage and, rather than exclude a young person, alternative provision outside of mainstream was suggested. Alternative provision therefore served as a substitute for exclusion.

Where possible, reasons for permanent exclusions were collected, as listed in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 Reason for permanent exclusion of AEI sample

Reason for permanent exclusion	Number of cases where reason given
Bullying, fighting and assaults on peers	29
Disruption, misconduct and unacceptable behaviour	24
Verbal abuse to staff	11
Physical abuse and assaults on staff	8
General aggression (recipients not specified i.e. teachers or pupils)	11
Vandalism	9
Defiance and disobedience	7
Non-attendance	8
Verbal abuse to peers	4
Drugs	5
Theft	3

NB: In some cases, more than one reason was given for a permanent exclusion.

The most common reason for exclusion was some form of aggression, either towards other pupils or teachers. In addition, there were 11 instances where the target of the aggression was unspecified. General disruptive behaviour, was another factor which commonly featured in the reason for exclusion.

Data on fixed-term exclusions proved to be less available, with considerable variation in the information sent to AEIs. Amongst the sample of 162 young people, there were 58 for whom records of fixed-term exclusion existed. However, it is possible that the actual figure is much higher, given that four out of the six provisions had very little information on previous fixed-term exclusions. This was reinforced by the interviews with young people carried out in Phase 1 of the research. More than three-quarters (32) of the young people interviewed stated that they had been excluded from school for a fixed-term and nearly half (15) of these stated that they had been excluded more than once. The most common reasons given for fixed-term exclusion mirrored those for permanent exclusion, that is aggression (physical and verbal) towards peers and staff. Over half (20) of the young people interviewed stated that they had received a fixed-term exclusion for aggression towards peers, whilst nearly a quarter (10) had been excluded for aggression towards staff. Other reasons given for exclusion included smoking (7), disruption (4) and defiance (4) and 'hair cut' (1).

Behaviour and exclusions: young people's perspectives

Young people interviewed were asked about their behaviour at school and also whether they had been excluded from school. Those who had been permanently excluded from school were also asked to articulate their feelings about their exclusion.

A summary of interviewees' description of their behaviour at school is provided in Table 3.8. Their stated behaviour varied from, having no behavioural problems, to 'messing about' and 'talking in class', to serious physical assaults which had resulted in permanent exclusion.

Table 3.8 Behaviour and exclusions: young people’s perspectives

Behaviour	Number of responses n = 42
No behavioural problems	6
Mild disruption	9
Bullying fighting and assaults on peers	17
Physical abuse and assaults on staff	11
Disruption and unacceptable behaviour	11
Verbal abuse on staff	9
Vandalism/arson	4
Drugs	4
Defiance and disobedience	3
General aggression	3
Theft	1
Verbal abuse on peers	1

* responses do not sum to N as this was a multiple response question

Six young people said they felt that they had had no behavioural problems whilst they were at school. These were young people with attendance problems and were mainly from AEI 2 which was a project focusing on provision for young people with attendance problems. A fifth (nine) of interviewees acknowledged that they had been involved in minor disruption in class, for example talking and ‘mucking about’. However, this did include young people who had been excluded from school, both permanently and for a fixed-term.

Interviewees’ descriptions of their involvement in more serious behavioural incidents mirror the reasons given in Table 3.7 for youngsters’ permanent exclusion. Thus, behaviour focusing on aggression, either towards other pupils or teachers, was the most commonly cited negative behaviour. Two-fifths (17) of interviewees acknowledged that they had been involved in ‘bullying, fighting, and assaults on peers’. Fighting was often justified as a form of self-defence: *‘the lad hit me first’* (male AEI 6), or in defence of a sibling, or because other pupils had *‘wound them up’*, perhaps reflecting an inability to manage peer relationships effectively. Young people had also been involved in serious physical assaults including:

- stabbing a pupil
- setting a girl’s hair on fire
- hitting another pupil with a hammer.

This behaviour had resulted in five fixed-term exclusions and five permanent exclusions, and one young person had been permanently excluded twice for fighting. Another young person also acknowledged that they had also been involved in verbally abusing peers: *‘[I got in trouble for] fighting back with my mouth ... with the kids’* (male AEI 6).

Behaviour: bullying, fighting and assaults on peers

[I was] *bad ... I was fighting ...they would wind me up so I would smack them* (female AEI 1).

The number of physical assaults on school staff were relatively high, with over a quarter (11) of interviewees stating that they had been involved in some sort of physical assault on a member of staff. Behaviour included: locking a teacher in a cupboard, *'chucking things at teachers'*, *'fighting with a teacher'*, and stabbing a teacher. This behaviour was more likely to lead to permanent exclusion, there had been seven permanent exclusions and five fixed-term exclusions, as a result of assaults on staff. One young person had been permanently excluded twice for assaulting members of staff.

Behaviour: physical abuse and assaults on staff

I went to [name of school] because I got kicked out of [name of school] because I smacked a chair round a teacher's legs (female AEI 1).

Young people had also been involved in verbally abusing members of staff. A fifth (nine) of interviewees acknowledged that they had been involved in some sort of verbal abuse, which included threatening teachers, swearing at them and being generally abusive. Threatening behaviour had resulted in permanent exclusion, whereas swearing and other abusive behaviour had resulted in fixed-term exclusions. Two young people acknowledged that drugs and alcohol misuse had influenced their behaviour.

Behaviour: verbal abuse of staff

I used to get drunk in school and tell the teachers to 'f*** off' (female AEI 5).

A further three young people acknowledged that they had been involved in general aggressive behaviour where they did not specify the recipients of their aggression.

The same number (11) of young people who acknowledged that they had been involved in assaults on staff also stated that they had been involved in disruption, and what might be classified as 'unacceptable behaviour'. This included disruption in the classroom, walking around the classroom, shouting in class, snapping teacher's pens, throwing things, setting fire alarm off, and running round the school.

A small number of interviewees also stated that they had been involved in vandalism/arson (4) including two young people who had vandalised teacher's cars, and drugs' misuse (4) including using cannabis and selling drugs. Selling drugs and arson had resulted in permanent exclusion.

Involvement in defiant and disobedient behaviour appeared to have led to an escalation in young people's difficulties, and had resulted in three permanent and one fixed-term exclusion. The types of defiant and disobedient behaviour they had been involved in included, refusing to apologise to teachers or answering back, walking out of class and attitudinal problems.

Behaviour: defiance and disobedience

[Fixed-term exclusion] *because of my attitude and because I weren't doing what they were saying* (female AEI 1).

Young people's feelings about exclusion

Young people were asked to describe their initial feelings when they were excluded and also how they felt about the exclusion now i.e. when they were interviewed at the AEI. Their initial feelings summarised in Table 3.9 showed a range of emotions, but generally they were pleased (9), 'not bothered' (9), or upset/worried about their exclusion (9).

Table 3.9 Initial feelings about permanent exclusion: young people's perspectives

Feelings	Number of responses N = 32
Pleased	9
Not bothered	9
Upset/worried	9
Unfair/unjust	6
Angry	5
Fair	2
Unable to remember	1

** responses do not sum to N as this was a multiple response question*

Those who were pleased about their exclusion highlighted the initial euphoria of escaping an environment which they often found stressful, for them exclusion from school was a relief.

Initial feelings about exclusion: pleased

I was pleased because it was doing my head in (male AEI 3).

Interestingly, equal numbers of young people stated that they had been upset or worried about being excluded. They were generally concerned about the reaction of their parents/carers to their exclusion.

Initial feelings about exclusion: upset/worried

I was wondering where I was going when I got home ... I knew they [parents] were going to kick me out as soon as I got expelled (male AEI 2).

A total of six interviewees felt that their exclusion had been unfair, or that their removal from school was unjust because they had not been permanently excluded but had not been allowed to return to school, or they had been ‘asked to leave’ before they were permanently excluded. Conversely, only two interviewees felt that their exclusion had been fair.

Initial feelings about exclusion: unfair

They didn't have a reason for kicking me out, it's just that the headmaster was one of the people I complained about and I didn't get on with him at all and they were just looking for a reason to chuck me out but they didn't really have one. It was just bad how they treated it because when you get kicked out you are meant to have a letter sent home and then you are meant to have the right to appeal to the governors ... I never got the chance to do that and I think if I did have the chance to do that I would still be in school now because I wasn't really naughty ... they didn't like that I was complaining about things that they was doing (male AEI 3).

A number (5) of youngsters reacted angrily to their exclusion because of the educational limitations they felt it had placed on them, but also because they felt that the exclusion had been unfair or unjust.

Initial feelings about exclusion: angry

I was angry because I just wanted an education (female AEI 6).

When asked their feelings about being excluded now i.e. when they were at the AEI, those young people who responded, highlighted a shift in attitude. A summary of their responses is provided in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10 Feelings about permanent exclusion now: young people's perspectives

Feelings	Number of responses N = 20
Regret	10
Boredom	4
Not bothered	4
Social isolation	4
Pleased	3
Unaffected	1

** responses do not sum to N as this was a multiple response question*

The most common feeling articulated by ten young people at the time of interview was regret at being excluded from school. This focused on:

- General regret about what they had done, which had resulted in their exclusion.
- The length of time they had spent out of education as a result of their exclusion from school.

- A belief that their exclusion would have a detrimental impact on their ability to secure employment.
- That their exclusion meant that they were unable to study for formal qualifications i.e. GCSEs because they were attending the AEI.

Feelings about exclusion now: regret

I won't be able to do my GCSEs that's my only downer (male AEI 3).

I thought it was quite good at first but then I realised that it weren't that good a few weeks later ... It was just a little buzz when you first get kicked out you don't really care much but then you start caring afterwards (male AEI 1).

Boredom was also a factor. This was usually linked to the initial euphoria of being excluded, but as time went on, and nothing happened, youngsters articulated their growing boredom. This was particularly an issue for young people from AEI 3, possibly because a number had been out of school for a considerable length of time, i.e. more than a year, and although they may have received some educational input via home tuition, this would have been extremely limited.

Feelings about exclusion now: boredom

At first it was good ... but after a while it was just boring being in the house all day (male AEI 3).

Interviewees also highlighted the social isolation associated with exclusion, they were missing their friends and the social contact of school. One young person also said that he regretted being excluded from his residential EBD because he missed the teaching staff from the school.

Feelings about exclusion now: social isolation

I thought it was quite good at first, but then I realised it weren't that good a few weeks later ... when I was going to see my mates up there (male AEI 1).

Some (3) young people were still positive about their exclusion because it had resulted in them attending the AEI, which they saw as a positive alternative to, or better than, school.

Feelings about exclusion now: pleased

I'm glad it happened, cos it's better coming here cos you get an education and have a laugh at the same time and don't get done (male AEI 5).

Young people were also asked how long they had been out of school. Their responses, summarised in Table 3.11, ranged from stating that they had 'come straight from school', to being out of school for three years. The majority of young people had spent up to 18 months out of school and a small number (4) stated that they had been out for three years. However, those young people who had been out of school

for more than six months had often received alternative, albeit limited provision, such as home tuition. The following is a summary of the provision provided. The numbers in brackets denote the number of young people who identified this provision.

- home tuition (8)
- another alternative educational placement (PRU, training agency) (6)
- work provided by school (3).

The home tuition that was available to young people out of school was extremely limited, they were often receiving only a couple of hours a week or even less: *'I used to just do maths for about half an hour every Friday'* (female AEI 4). The availability of home tuition also varied between LEAs, which meant that AEI youngsters' educational provision was affected if they moved area:

In the end after two and a half years I got a tutor for six months and then because we moved up to [name of place] she had to pack it in and then I never had nothing and it just went all back down the drain (male AEI 6).

Those who had attended alternative educational placements prior to attending the AEIs involved in the study included youngsters who had to move placement because of their age or because the placement was felt to be more appropriate for meeting their needs.

Work provided by youngsters' schools was generally only for a short period of time, this was usually a 'stop-gap' intervention prior to moving on to something else. Some of the youngsters had experienced a range of provision prior to attending the AEI. For example, initially work might have been provided by their school, they then might have been placed on home tuition and/or secured a placement at another AEI.

Nevertheless, there was a significant number (6) of young people who stated that they had been out of school for more than six months but had received no alternative educational provision prior to attending the AEI. This included one young person who had been out of education for two years:

No educational provision prior to starting at the AEI

I was in Year 8 when I stopped going to school all together and then I started back up in Year 11 so I missed a lot of school ...I did phone up here [the AEI] but they said I had to wait two years until Year 10 (female AEI 4).

Some were clearly frustrated and angry at the time it had taken them to access alternative educational provision. Others, because of their age, had been unable to access the alternative educational provision within their LEA, for example at the AEI or college, because it was only available to older (Year 10 and Year 11) students. However, it should also be noted that some of these youngsters might have found it extremely difficult to, or had refused to engage with, the alternative educational provision available to them.

Table 3.11 Length of time out of school

Length of time	Number of young people N = 27
Straight from school (1 month or less)	6
2 – 6 months	4
7 –11 months	1
12 – 18 months	10
24 – 35 months	2
36 months	4

3.2.4 Attainment

Details of key stage 2 results were virtually non-existent in the paperwork forwarded to AEIs. Three AEIs had no key stage 2 results. Amongst the remaining AEIs, partial key stage 2 data were available for just 16 young people. Information on key stage 3 levels was only marginally better, with data on 40 young people out of a possible 162. It should be noted that in several cases key stage 3 levels were determined by a teacher’s assessment rather than formal testing, and in 11 cases, some results were missing due to absence. The average key stage 3 result, combining the scores for English, maths and science, was level 3, which is well below the national average for performance at key stage 3.

Prior to joining the AEI, very few of the young people had embarked on GSCE courses and again files did not generally hold this information. There were references to NVQs, ASDAN, GNVQ and City and Guilds.

The lack of educational attainment data emphasised the need for assessment on entry to the AEI, in order that working levels could be determined and a programme of appropriate education implemented.

3.2.5 Additional information

As well as the educational data held on young people, staff interviewees provided a further insight into young peoples’ backgrounds and their particular problems.

Young people who attended AEI 1, typically came with not one, but ‘*multi-problems*’, including depression, broken families and mental health problems. Similarly, AEI 6 catered for young people who were ‘*very seriously disturbed*’, and in some cases, were known to have affiliations with local criminal gangs. Previous offending behaviour was mentioned, to varying degrees, by most provisions: the project manager at AEI 1 expressed concerns over the prevalence of drug/alcohol use amongst AEI referrals and AEI 3 noted a slight increase in the number of referrals with criminal backgrounds, as did AEI 4. Referrals to AEI 2 tended to include those young people who could not cope with other forms of provision and required a higher level of support and all-round intervention. This often stemmed from an extended period out of mainstream education, such that they would find it very difficult to be re-integrated into other educational types of provision, e.g. college. Lastly, an interviewee at AEI 4 noticed a move away from young people with serious

behavioural problems, towards a group that included more school phobics and victims of bullying. This AEI was also said to include some young people who were in fact very bright and academically able.

Summary

- Over half of the young people interviewed described their attendance at school as being 'poor'. A significant number of these stated their attendance had been good when they were younger but had deteriorated as they progressed through secondary school, with a marked deterioration around the age of 13 or 14.
- The vulnerability of non-attenders and the link between crime and non-attendance.
- Two-fifths of the interviewees acknowledged that they had been involved in 'bullying, fighting and assaults on peers'. Over a quarter stated that they had been involved in some sort of physical assault on a member of staff.
- A significant number of AEI youngsters expressed regret or had been upset at being excluded from school. Often, initial feelings of euphoria were replaced in time with frustrations and boredom.
- The information received by projects on young people's exclusion/behavioural history was often severely lacking.
- A significant number of young people stated that they had been out of school for more than six months but had received no alternative educational provision prior to attending the AEI.

Chapter 4

Impact

About this chapter

This chapter presents the wide array of outcome measures which it was the evaluation's original brief to collect. It uses a range of data sources; including interview and survey material and 'hard' data collected from AEIs (and also PNC) in accordance with the national evaluation team's requirements. It contains:

- **Educational outcomes** including accreditation data and changed attitudes to learning (using survey and interview data).
- **Behavioural change** relating to personal behaviour, as well as quality of relationships that the young people achieved with family, peers and adults.
- **Attendance levels** at the AEI, including qualitative material on reasons for differences with previous records.
- **Differences in offending levels** using PNC data, survey self-report material and interview data.

Key Findings

- AEs offered a wide range of accreditation opportunities to young people, including education-based certificates, vocational attainments and those related to personal and social skills. Approximately half of all young people registered at the AEs during the evaluation were awarded some form of accreditation.
- Young people said they were more willing to learn, were enjoying learning and, furthermore, were considering the inclusion of education in their futures.
- Over three-quarters of youngsters interviewed reported improved personal behaviour and improved staff/student relationships. Improved relationships with staff was felt to engender positive relationships with adults in general.
- The median attendance rate for all provisions was over 50 per cent, ranging from 56 to 71 per cent. Eighty-nine per cent of the young people interviewed stated that their attendance at the AEI was 'good' when compared to mainstream school. The main reasons given for this improved attendance related to: the social element of the AEI, the different ambience and the time-tabling of the projects.
- An overall increase of recorded offences was evident during the intervention year. However, this was mostly accounted for by two provisions. Whilst more offences were recorded, fewer young people were responsible for these. [Eight young people – from three of the six provisions – accounted for 145 of the 286 recorded offences]. Self-report on crime showed that, by the summer term, about three-quarters of the final sample indicated a reduction or cessation of offending activity, with one in eight acknowledging an increase. Vandalism activity and theft showed the most marked decline in self-reported crime.
- Several different factors were identified by the young people to account for this reduction in offending behaviour: a change of stimulus and environment (attendance at the project providing less boredom, less 'hang-factor' time, different peer groups); a change of prospects (wanting to avoid prison, wanting a job in the future); and a change of attitude (maturation, an internally driven rejection of criminal behaviour or consideration of family's feelings).

4.1 Educational outcomes

This section documents the range of educational outcomes achieved by young people at the AEs, with data derived from three sources. It starts by presenting quantitative evidence extracted from the National Evaluation Team database on the number of young people receiving accreditation. Whilst the achieved accreditation represents an important barometer of AE success, an equally revealing and valid measure concerns any changes in young people's attitudes towards education generally. Staff, parents and young people were therefore questioned to ascertain the full spectrum of educational outcomes and this section includes qualitative interview data based on a wider interpretation of educational outcomes. A third source of educational outcomes data was provided by the NFER questionnaire which included questions on how young people regarded education – whether they perceived its value, whether they enjoyed learning and whether they planned to continue their education after leaving the AEs.

The section presents educational outcomes under the following headings:

- **Accreditation**
- **Acquisition of skills**
- **Attitudes to learning**
- **New interests**
- **Educational outcomes: questionnaire responses.**

4.1.1 Accreditation

The following table lists all reported accreditation achieved by 79 young people attending the six provisions (approximately half the sample). According to the AEs' own records, the programmes offered a wide range of qualifications, apparently broader than mainstream and therefore perhaps more attainable for the young people. The most common form of accreditation was the ASDAN youth award, achieved by a number of young people at AEs 2, 3 and 4. Of the remainder, roughly a third of young people (43) received vocationally-related certificates e.g. vehicle maintenance, hair and beauty. A larger proportion (63) were awarded certificates related to personal and social skills e.g. first aid, Duke of Edinburgh, etc and an equivalent number (64) received educationally-focussed qualifications (excluding ASDAN) e.g. GCSEs, NPTC in numeracy and literacy.

Table 4.1 Certificates awarded

Attainment certificates	Number of young people awarded certificates						
	Total	AEI 1	AEI 2	AEI 3	AEI 4*	AEI 5	AEI 6
AEB health, hygiene and safety	3		3				
AEB life skills	6		6				
AEB literacy	4		4				
AEB numeracy	5		5				
AEB world of work	3		3				
AQA literacy /numeracy	2					2	
ASDAN youth awards	43		10	17	16		
ASDAN foundation literacy	2						2
Basic food and hygiene	6	5		1			
Basis health and safety	11	11					
Certificate of achievement level 3	2					2	
Certificate of forestry – 50% competency	4			4			
Certificate of forestry – full competency	6			6			
CLAIT	2		2				
Duke of Edinburgh bronze award	2					2	
Driving ambitions	2		2				
Foundation literacy	2						2
First aid	5		3	2			
GCSE	5					3	2
GNVQ (e.g. vehicle maintenance)	8						8
Getting connected	1		1				
Key bytes plus	3						3
Keylink Music foundation	1						1
Lifeskills (fairbridge)	2						2
NOCN Pre-foundation progression award	3	3					
NPTC – independent living	10	10					
NPTC – IT	11	11					
NPTC – numeracy and literacy	11	11					
NVQ hair and beauty level 1	2			1		1	
OCR CLAIT	5			1		4	
OCR learning direct – computing	1			1			
OCR National skills	5			5			
Princes Trust outward bound	2	2					
Princes Trust team building	8	8					
Red Cross first aid	8	8					
Team enterprise area finalist award	8			8			
Team enterprise special award	8			8			
Tractor driving stages 1 and 2	2			2			
Vehicle maintenance	2			2			
TOTAL PERCENTAGE of young people receiving a certificate	49%	86%	48%	73%	48%*	23%	43%**

Source: National Evaluation Team templates

* The results for AEI 4 only show attainments for the first term, as data on attainment in subsequent terms was not available to the AEI (accreditation was administered through a local college). The percentage of young people receiving a certificate therefore is most likely much higher as the majority of accreditation would have been achieved at the end of the year.

** The results for AEI 6 include college attainments which were removed from the costs analysis in section 6.3. due to the absence of college cost data.

When responding to the question on the major educational benefits of AEI attendance, eight of the 18 staff interviewed stated that young people were now **accumulating qualifications**, something which would not have been possible previously. For a number of young people, it was their **first taste of academic success** and formal accreditation:

<p>Accumulating qualifications</p>	<p><i>They will all come out with accreditation, well most of them. In fact up to now, the exams they have taken they have all passed. They will come out with a national record of achievement, the same as all mainstream school young people. It's a fact that they have proved to themselves that they can achieve, that they are capable of doing it (project staff, AEI 4).</i></p>
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<p>First taste of academic success</p>	<p><i>I was fortunate enough to come last year and see the prize giving day. Some of the young people that gained certificates, had never had anything in their lives and never been told they were good at anything. It was brilliant, just looking at their faces tells you enough, its like 'wow, look what I have got' (project staff, AEI 2).</i></p>
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Staff felt it was vital that young people should experience feelings of academic achievement, because it demonstrated to them that they had the capacity to achieve and could occupy a place in the education community: *'It's them having a belief that they can be part of that system instead of 'I can't' sort of syndrome'* (project staff, AEI 4). Young people themselves communicated **a sense of pride** over their accomplishments and implied that the end results could have been quite different if they had remained in mainstream:

<p>Sense of pride</p>	<p>Q: Has coming here made a difference to you personally? A: <i>Yes because if I stayed at school and not been expelled I wouldn't have had anything in my record of achievement, but I have got forty odd certificates in my record of achievement, so I have done well (female, AEI 5).</i></p>
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An effective aspect of AEI programmes therefore was offering qualifications that were within the reach and capabilities of young people. Mainstream schools, by comparison, were said to place excessive demands on some pupils who could not always perform at the prescribed levels of attainment:

I think if they had been in school, they would have struggled, some schools insist they have got to access eight GCSEs . Now they would struggle with that, that would put them off, they would either not attend or they would get into trouble (project staff, AEI 5).

Thus, by broadening the accreditation on offer, young people were able to realistically access the curriculum, to complete the work required and ultimately, enjoy the rewards of their labour.

4.1.2 Acquisition of skills

Interviewers also probed for examples of any other skills acquired by young people during their stay at the AEIs. Eight of the 38 young people interviewed during Phase Three mentioned having learnt how to use a computer, or that their existing IT skills had improved. One young person related this to the fact that most of their work was completed on the computer. Seven interviewees simply stated that they had ‘learnt more’ at the AEI, whilst others made specific references to improvements in their numeracy and literacy skills:

Literacy skills	<i>Well at school I couldn't be bothered to learn, but here I like coming and learning so probably it has helped me with my reading and my writing and all that (male, AEI 2).</i>
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Some skills were unique to particular AEIs and developed from distinctive components of the programme. For example, an interviewee from AEI 3, mentioned having gained skills associated with forestry; while a young person from AEI 6 had benefited from the inclusion of electronics in the programme: ‘we can all make Christmas trees with their own flashing lights, we have done loads of stuff’ (male, AEI 6).

Interestingly, seven young people chose to cite enhancements in their social abilities, as opposed to more educationally-related skills: **improved social skills** was seen as an outcome of the AEI programme:

Improved social skills	<i>Now I could walk up to somebody and just introduce myself without going bright red in the face, going really shy. I don't know, I can just talk to people with confidence without embarrassing myself, acting like an idiot (female, AEI 1).</i>
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Indeed, although educational success can be gauged through the number of qualifications achieved or levels of attainment, staff also calibrated young people’s progress by the confidence with which they approached their education. Armed with the belief that they could do well, young people were in a much stronger position to embrace learning, whereas a lack of confidence in the past had presented a barrier. Thus, the ability to tackle **learning with confidence** was deemed an educational outcome in itself. It ensured that young people were receptive to education and that they would now at least be prepared to try:

Learning with confidence	<i>Yes, I am a lot more confident with my work, especially my maths. My maths is the worst subject and that's the main lesson that I would never go to, because of the teachers. Coming here, the [teacher] normally does our maths with us when we are in Year 10 and that has just boosted my confidence because ... if I done something, well, he congratulates me. If I do something not so well, he still would congratulate me, but he would tell me what I have done wrong (male, AEI 4).</i>
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Other new skills included those which were art related, such as drawing and pottery and one young person who referred to sporting activities, namely canoeing and rock climbing.

4.1.3 Attitudes to learning

During the interviews, two-thirds of the young people indicated that they felt positive about learning and education after their AEI experience. Just five interviewees, from four different AEIs, expressed some negativity towards learning:

I just don't care about learning ... What I reckon is that you just get it over and done with but you don't have to worry about it (male, AEI 1).

The exact nature of positive attitudinal change can be categorised in three ways. Young people spoke of being more **willing to learn**, of **enjoying the learning experience** more and that they were now hoping to **continue their education** on leaving the AEI.

In the first instance, 19 young people articulated a new found eagerness to learn: ‘*I work more now*’, ‘*I will actually make an effort and try and get into it*’ and ‘*I have to settle down and do the work*’. A parent also noticed that her son was now happy to complete work that was sent home, whereas in the past he would have outrightly rejected the possibility. Similarly, staff members reported that, amongst their referrals, there were young people that had refused to go to school, but were quite motivated to attend the AEI. Thus, resistance to learning, lack of interest and boredom were replaced by an application to work and a commitment to education:

<p>Willingness to learn</p>	<p><i>When I went to normal school, I used to go to sleep in English, I wouldn't do any work. I would tell all the teachers to F-off and stuff like that and just mess about and wag school all the time ... Here, I have done all my lessons, I have not really argued with any of the teaching staff. I have just got on with my work and I have done all the work that I have had to do and, like, learnt what I had to learn for my GCSEs (female, AEI 5).</i></p> <p><i>The college is a new thing to me and I'm really interested in that. I want to just learn now, like before I never wanted to (male, AEI 4).</i></p>
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Why was it that some young people became increasingly enamoured with education during their AEI experience? AEIs often sought to amplify the links between qualifications and employment and it may be that some young people were able to perceive the relevance of education for their long-term futures. The following comment suggests this connection had been made:

Yeah, because before I didn't want to do nothing, but now I know I need qualifications and I need a job and I am working towards that (male, AEI 5).

The second factor which possibly fuelled a greater desire to work, was the fact that 30 of the 38 young people interviewed during Phase Three said that they found it **easier to learn** at the AEI than at school. The most commonly stated reason concerned the scale of the AEI. Namely, there were fewer students, which was said to minimise

disruptions, assist concentration and most importantly, ensure that individuals received more teacher attention. Other stated reasons for why it was easier to learn included the help given by other students and that it was possible to ‘*work at your own pace*’. Section 6 discusses, in detail, those aspects of the AEI which were believed to enhance learning and prompt changes in the young people.

Not only were young people more prepared to learn, three young people expressed **enjoyment of learning** at the AEIs, something which they had lacked in the past. This impact was also observed by staff who felt that young people no longer regarded education as threatening or intimidating, but instead acknowledged that learning could be fun:

Enjoyment of learning	<i>I didn't used to like learning. I didn't used to like school but I like coming here and learning stuff (male, AEI 2).</i>
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This increased enjoyment of learning was verified by the questionnaire data, outlined in section 4.1.5.

Spurred on by their success at the AEIs, sometimes the young people expressed a **desire to continue further education** opportunities post-16. One individual had gone so far as to map out a career path, with a clear idea of the qualifications he needed. Previously, he had given the future very little thought, a fact substantiated by his foster mother (see below). A member of staff at AEI 4 also noted how young people were more inclined to consider college as part of their future. This decision was most likely influenced by the fact that the AEI maintained close links with a local college, which the young people attended regularly as part of their educational programme. Young people therefore were contemplating a future in which education featured:

A desire to continue further education	<i>Well it has probably changed me quite a bit. When I was back at [school] I didn't care, I just thought that when I was 16 I would get a job, that is all I thought. I never thought forward, but now I know what to do. I have to get four GCSEs for an electrician, a four year apprenticeship and then you'll be working for a firm (male, AEI 4).</i>
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One young person from AEI 2 had already managed to secure a place at sixth form college and this represented a marked turn around, compared to her prospects whilst still at school:

Well, when I left school, they didn't think I would be able to do anything else and that but they have got me a place a sixth form college and everything and I can do my GCSEs again, so it is all looking alright now (female, AEI 2).

4.1.4 Other interests

Lastly, 16 young people mentioned having acquired new interests during their AEI residence. Five expressed an interest in art-based hobbies, whilst six were pursuing more sports-related activities:

<p>New art and sport related interests</p>	<p><i>Glass painting, I love glass painting. I never used to be interested in paint because of the smell of it, but now I just can't stay away from it (female, AEI 1).</i></p> <p><i>Because part of coming here, when we were at the other office we used to go the gym and that and play squash and badminton and I haven't done that before, so I enjoyed that and I still do it now when I am not here (male, AEI 3).</i></p>
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There were also individual references to computing, forestry work and beauty therapy. For one young person, PSE sessions on drug use at the AEI had activated a thirst for reading:

Learning about drugs, I always read books on drugs and that now, like I didn't before. I couldn't be bother to read a book. I just read books now and that (male, AEI 2).

4.1.5 Educational outcomes: questionnaire responses

The NFER questionnaire included items which attempted to assess young people's experiences and attitudes towards education. Questions centred on their stamina for learning, enjoyment of learning, the degree to which they valued education and their desire to continue with education. Questionnaire responses were also used to establish three 'gradings' of attitudes to education (thus representing stances of 'low', 'medium' and 'high' stances of disaffection). In the same way, numbers of self-reported offending behaviours, (including amount of offending and whether offences were done alone) created three sub-samples, namely 'low', 'medium' and 'high' crime groups. Appendix 2 provides a summary of how the crime and disaffection sub-samples were drawn up.

The pre- and post- versions of the questionnaire allowed for a comparison of responses for 57 young people and it was therefore possible to determine whether attitudes had altered over the period of the evaluation. Specifically, young people were asked to indicate their levels of agreement with the following statements:

- I give up when learning is hard
- I quickly lose interest when a topic is difficult
- The things I learn are important to me
- I enjoy learning
- The work would be/has been interesting
- I want to stay in education
- I thought I would do/have done better at the project than at school.

Table 4.2 provides a summary of the young people's responses. The statement: '*I give up when learning is hard*', sought to measure young people's general stamina for learning. In relation to the statement, Table 4.2 indicates there was a very slight drop in those who agreed or strongly agreed (three respondents in total), but a slight increase in those responding 'unsure'. Indeed, there were four respondents (three of which were from the 'high' crime sub-sample), 'strongly agreeing' by the end of the provision. Only one in the high crime group had agreed in the pre-questionnaire, suggesting some better self-understanding of learning behaviour.

Table 4.2 Young people's attitudes towards education

n = 57									
'I give up when learning is hard'									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
5	4	16	14	9	13	19	19	8	7
9%	7%	28%	25%	15%	23%	33%	33%	14%	12%
'I quickly lose interest when a topic is difficult'									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
11	5	10	16	15	10	16	19	5	7
19%	9%	18%	28%	26%	18%	28%	33%	9%	12%
'The things I learn are important to me'									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
11	23	18	28	12	5	11	1	5	0
19%	40%	32%	49%	21%	9%	19%	2%	9%	0%
'I enjoy learning'									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
6	12	23	31	11	11	10	2	7	1
11%	21%	40%	54%	19%	19%	18%	4%	12%	2%
'The work would be/has been interesting'									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
11	9	22	34	20	8	1	6	3	0
19%	16%	39%	60%	35%	14%	2%	10%	5%	-

Table 4.2 cont.

'I want to stay in education'*									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
11	24	18	12	12	13	9	6	7	2
19%	42%	32%	21%	21%	21%	16%	11%	12%	4%
'I thought I would do/have done better at the project than at school'									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
30	33	19	19	4	5	2	0	2	0
53%	58%	33%	33%	7%	9%	4%	0	4%	0

Source: *NFER questionnaire Alternative Education Initiatives 2001*

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and therefore may not sum to 100.

* One non-response

As Table 4.2 shows, in response to the related statement on learning stamina: '*I quickly lose interest when a topic is difficult*', young people displayed a decrease in unsureness: five young people moved from being uncertain, to disagreeing with this statement. Only three of the high disaffection sub-sample disagreed before, five after. However, 11 of the 18 in this sub-sample continued to agree with the statement, compared to only five of the 18 and 21 in the low and medium sub-samples. Some correlation between crime and stamina in learning seems to emerge: among the crime sub-samples, the high crime group continued to be most likely to agree with the statement (11 before and after) compared to about five of the other sub-samples. However, the numbers saying they 'strongly disagreed' dropped from seven to four.

The statement: '*The things I learn are important to me*' gauged the degree to which young people valued education. Table 4.2 shows that approximately half the sample (51 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that what they learnt before coming to the AEI was important to them. By the end of the provision, this view was shared by 89 per cent. More specifically, all 18 girls were positive about the importance of learning, as were 33 out of 38 boys. Six of the seven respondents classified as 'high disaffection' had previously disagreed or strongly disagreed that '*the things I learn are important to me*', but by the end of the project all were positive, with just one 'not sure'. Within the crime sub-samples, only five of the high crime group had agreed with this statement at the start of the project, compared to 14 of the 21 in the post-questionnaires (four of which 'strongly agreed'). These findings indicate an investment in the curriculum at AEIs appeared to be developing amongst some young people.

Before joining the AEIs, a total of 17 (over a quarter) of the questionnaire sample stated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement: '*I enjoy learning*'. In the post-questionnaire, this had fallen to just three of the sample. Furthermore, seven strongly disagreed that they enjoyed learning before the project, only one of the

57 young people retained this strong dislike of learning. From the opposite perspective, some two-thirds of the sample said that they enjoyed learning by the end of the project, compared to just half at the beginning. Only one (male, from the medium crime group) retained strong dislike. The four respondents in the 'high crime' sub-sample reduced their strong dislike to 'not sure' (3) or 'disagree' (1).

Perhaps one of the reasons for enjoying learning more, was the fact that the majority of young people found work more interesting at the AEI. Table 4.2 shows a statistically significant increase in agreement and a considerable reduction in uncertainty emerged from this item. Overall, 43 (three-quarters) of the whole sample were in agreement with the statement: '*The work would be/has been interesting*' by the end of the project, while just over half (33 of the 57) felt this way as they began the project. However, none of the 'high' crime sub-sample were among those strongly agreeing with the statement at the end of the project. More of the female (15 out of 18) sub-sample registered positive statements than was the case for males (27 out of 38).

Table 4.2 shows how responses to the statement: '*I want to stay in education*' indicated a re-engagement with education for some young people. In the post-questionnaire, nearly two-thirds of the sample (36 of the 57) answered in the affirmative, compared to half (29) at the start of the project. In fact, there was more than double the number of young people who 'strongly agreed' with this statement. A clear shift occurred amongst the high disaffection sub-sample, with four of the 18 agreeing with the statement in the pre-questionnaire, rising to a total of ten (eight of which strongly agreed) in the post-questionnaire. The male and female sub-samples both showed similar upturns. It was notable that the high-crime sub-sample had only one respondent 'strongly agreeing' in the pre-questionnaire, compared to seven after. Uncertainty amongst the sample did however remain constant with 12 being unsure before and 13 at the end of the project.

Finally, in the post-questionnaire, young people were asked to consider whether they had done better at the AEI than they would have at school. Apart from the five who were unsure, the remainder of respondents all agreed that they had achieved more at the AEI. In the pre-questionnaire, the item was worded to elicit young peoples' forecasts as to whether they would do better at the AEI. Those few disagreeing came from mid and high crime/disaffection sub-samples. Three of the four respondents who had rejected the statement at the start were girls. Uniquely, no-one from the high crime sub-sample was 'unsure' in the post-questionnaire. Hence, the advantages of the provision seem to be apparent to the most vulnerable of the sample.

Summary

- AEs offered a wide range of accreditation opportunities to young people. As well as achieving education-based certificates, significant proportions received vocational attainments and those related to personal and social skills. Approximately half of all young people registered at the AEs during the evaluation were awarded some form of accreditation.
- Quantitative evidence of educational outcomes however needs to be contextualised, with reference to the AEI intake. Interviewees commented that certificates gained at the AEs were sometimes the first ever to have been received by the young people and therefore represented a landmark in their educational careers. Thus, whilst the level of accreditation is not always comparable to GCSEs, the achievement is still notable given the past experiences of a generally disaffected cohort.
- Interviewees reported the acquisition of education skills, such as reading, numeracy and computing. Perhaps equally valid for this particular group was the development of confidence and social skills which could then be applied in a learning setting.
- Young people's discourse pointed to an attitudinal change in the sense that they were more willing to learn, were enjoying learning and furthermore, were considering the inclusion of education in their futures.
- Questionnaire data showed that by the end of the project, two thirds of young people stated that they enjoyed learning (compared to only half at the beginning). Furthermore, 89 per cent thought what they learnt was important to them (only half stated this was the case in the pre-questionnaire). Again, a similar shift occurred in relation to further education. Half were considering this option at the beginning of the provision, with the proportion increasing to two thirds by the end.
- Young people categorised in the high crime sub-sample were the least likely to show attitudinal changes in relation to learning and therefore remained the most vulnerable young people of the AEI intake.

4.2 Behavioural change

This section presents qualitative data garnered from the interviews with young people, staff and parents about impact of the AEI experience on behaviour. In total 63 young people were interviewed during the fieldwork programme, 19 of these were interviewed in both Phases 1 and 3. Analysis looked at overall numbers of interviewees, and changes over time in the discourse of those 19 young people. In addition, reasons underpinning any behavioural change are highlighted. Finally, parts of the NFER questionnaire also investigated changes in inter-personal relationships and, where appropriate, findings have been incorporated into the relevant sections. Four major types of behavioural change are reported:

- **Personal behaviour**
- **Relationships with family**
- **Relationships with peers**
- **Relationships with staff, teachers and adults.**

4.2.1 Personal behaviour

Interviewees were asked whether or not their general behaviour had changed whilst they had been at the projects. Over three-quarters of respondents felt that it had positively changed. When asked to identify the biggest overall difference that attendance at the AEI had made, twenty of the sixty-three young people nominated improved behaviour. Equally, all staff interviewees reported an improvement in behaviour and attitude as an impact of their provision, one stating *‘Well if we didn’t have behavioural changes on a two year programme like this, I think that we should shut up shop’* (project staff AEI 1). Indeed, a number of project staff also cited attitudinal and behaviour modification as the single most significant change for the young people:

Behaviour: the most significant change

[The most significant change] *is the way they get on with other people, the way they respond to situations, I think that has been a lot better. They are not flying off the handle as much and they are aware of, and are looking at, consequences. But they are not just looking at the consequences for themselves, they are looking at what the consequences are in the home, and in the neighbourhood, and I think they have got a more mature attitude towards things* (project staff AEI 5).

I would say with ninety- five per cent of the students we work with, the most important changes we see are in attitude and behaviour (project staff AEI 4).

General good behaviour was also reported by some of the young people with comments like: *‘It’s gone better than it was in school’*, *‘I ain’t naughty now and stuff like that’*, *‘yeah, I’m a lot better, I am more behaved’*. However, many of the respondents were also able to identify specific ways in which they had changed. Improved behaviour was termed in reference to: **calming down, less verbal abuse and less physical fighting.**

One in five young people stated that they had **calmed down** since they had been at the project; with comments like: *‘I have gone a lot calmer, my temper is not as bad’* (male AEI 5) and *‘I’m just calm and chill out’* (male AEI 4).

A positive change in terms of less **verbal abuse**, including not swearing and being less ‘mouthy’, was noted by seven young people, and also was particularly commented on by one parent describing the change in behaviour at home. Typical comments included: *‘My behaviour has changed, I used to shout and everything, swearing and telling them what to do and that, but I don’t do that any more’* (female AEI 6) and *‘he went a lot calmer an’ all, you see I didn’t have the shouting and the swearing, I don’t have that at home’* (parent AEI 5).

Interviewees noted that another spin-off from calming down and being able to control their temper, was that there was less **physical fighting** with peers than in the school environment, an aspect mentioned by twelve youngsters in total. Their comments included *‘If someone was to say something to me and I didn’t like what they said then I would just get violent, but now I can control my temper’* (male AEI 4).

Some of the young people were able to specifically identify contextual reasons underpinning their improved behaviour. Five major factors were referred to: **the character of the other young people; the size of the group; the qualities of the staff and staff techniques to prevent or address problematic behaviour: setting clear boundaries and talking through transgressions.**

The predominant reason given for a decline in the tendency to fight, was the **character of the other young people** on the project:

Reasons for improved behaviour: the character of the other young people

I come in here and I can’t be bothered to fight, because at school you get boys and that thinking that they are all big and hard and give it all the mouth and that sort of stuff, here they are just not like that (male AEI 1).

Staff members also identified this reason for the change in behaviour. *‘They calm down yes, I mean it’s that you are not having to assert yourself, because you are accepted, you are part of a special group, and they don’t have to be rowdy and loud and showing off’* (project staff AEI 4).

The **size of the class group** in school was also seen to stimulate violent behaviour. Removed from the mainstream environment and placed in a smaller group, this stimulus was no longer an issue as illustrated by comments from young people such as: *‘In [name of school], I used to get dead angry, because there was loads of people in the classes and that, and I just used to mess about and get mad’*. From a staff perspective, smaller group sizes meant an increase in the pupil:teacher ratio, enabling closer monitoring of behaviour than in the mainstream context and the ability to immediately address any transgressions:

Reasons for improved behaviour: smaller class groups

They are challenged every time and it doesn’t ever get out of hand because there’s two of us working with the group and we pick up, very quickly, when something is going to kick off and we stop it before it happens on most occasions. They know how far they can go, and I have to say it doesn’t happen, very very rarely (project staff, AEI 2).

Thirteen young people identified specific **qualities of the staff** compared to teachers in mainstream school, as a reason for their general improved behaviour:

Reasons for improved behaviour: staff qualities

My behaviour has definitely got better ... because the teachers don’t really do nothing to you here for you to like start going mad (male AEI 4).

Oh yes, I have been very well behaved for these staff, more than I did for the other ones. It's because like they actually treat you like people, they don't always give you a crap old time and everything (male AEI 2).

Teacher differences will be further explored later in this chapter. However, young people also mentioned techniques the staff used to address their behaviour. Typically, this involved talking through any problems and discussing transgressions:

Reasons for improved behaviour: talking through problems

Before, whenever I had a problem, I would take it out on people, I would have a bad attitude towards people when I was like going through it and no one understood me ... the teachers here, they are more calm and everything and then they help you, you can talk to people in here (female AEI 4).

Staff felt that results were achieved by setting **clear boundaries**. Like the young people, they also referred to 'talking' through problems, using the opportunity to question and **challenge behaviour**. The flexibility of the programmes allowed them to tackle problems as and when they occurred, although AEI 5 also offered structured anger management courses for those young people who required them. Sometimes young people also noted the effect this had on their own behaviour:

Reasons for improved behaviour: setting clear boundaries and challenging behaviour

It's a process of attrition really. If you sit down with these youngsters calmly and sensitively, they do calm down and treat you with all due respect as well. It takes time, but when they come to us their behaviour is the issue that is addressed at interview. They tell us what their problems are, they tell us what they do, we tell them what's acceptable and we work from there (project staff AEI 1).

I think it's because we don't exclude immediately, we tackle behaviour. Everything that we see, we then challenge and tackle and get the young person to break it down as to exactly what they have done, why it was not acceptable and how they can set themselves 'targets' (but we don't do formal target setting every time), of not displaying that behaviour again. So, we do work a lot on behaviour (project staff AEI 5).

All AEI project workers were able to highlight success stories like the one outlined above, where attendance at the project had a positive impact on the young person's attitude and way of life. The startling transformation in some of the most disruptive young people at AEI 6, touched a staff member there:

*Two pupils in particular who are now at college were referred to us as permanently excluded and I virtually quote verbatim, their records stating that they are 'the worst pupils that we have ever come across', they were constantly telling teachers, no matter how senior they were, including the heads to go **** themselves on a regular basis, until the heads themselves couldn't cope and permanently excluded them. Two of those kids came back last week with cards for me to say thank you for what I had done, and shaking my hand, that brings tears to even my eyes and I'm a cynical old bas****, the change is undeniable (project staff AEI 6).*

However, it is important to note that positive change was not always evident. Section 5.2.1 discusses in detail those 'types' of young people that the projects had less success with.

Only one respondent in the interview sample of over 60 reported that their behaviour was worse at the project when compared with their conduct at school: ‘I reckon that it has made me worse, because I am with all naughtier kids who swear and that, I’ve got a gob on me and that now’ (male AEI 6). Sometimes, project staff also relayed how and why behaviour could remain problematic:

We have had quite a few one or two day exclusions already in the first term. It’s the kids with severe behavioural problems and disruption difficulties that come and think they can just still carry on, because there are fewer boundaries here. There are still boundaries but they are further away and we put more emphasis upon independence. We expect them to behave like young adults, and, whereas they all profess that that’s what they want and nobody has ever given them a chance in mainstream, when they do get here, some of them they can’t actually deal with it (project staff AEI 4).

In this respect, it is useful to look at records of any fixed-term or permanent exclusions which were administered during the evaluation period. Table 4.3 presents a summary of this data.

Table 4.3 AEI exclusions 2000–2001

Exclusions	AEI 1 n= 22	AEI 2 n= 23	AEI 3 N= 15	AEI 4 n=33	AEI 5 n=39	AEI 6 n=30
FIXED TERM						
No. of fixed-term exclusions	7	1	1	7	4	17
No. of young people receiving a fixed-term exclusion	4	1	1	4	3	12
PERMANENT						
No. of permanent exclusions	2	0	0	2	0 (7)*	0
No. of young people receiving permanent exclusions	2	0	0	2	0 (5)*	0

Source: *AEI profiles supplied by the National Evaluation Team*

* Numbers in brackets reflect number of exclusions from external placements

Overall, Table 4.3 shows that four AEIs had not used the sanction of permanent exclusion at all, although AEI 5 (the dispersal model) had examples of five young people being permanently excluded from external placements. Fixed-term exclusion was particularly used in AEI 1, 4 and 6, although in AEI 6 fixed-term exclusions included those imposed by an external college provider. The most common reasons for fixed-term exclusion were disruption/misconduct, unacceptable behaviour and verbal abuse to staff. Other reasons included smoking/alcohol and drugs’ related exclusions, vandalism, defiance and disobedience, physical assaults on staff and bullying peers. In the case of permanent exclusions, the two stated reasons were disruption, misconduct and unacceptable behaviour, and smoking/alcohol/drug use.

The absence of detailed baseline data available to projects from schools makes it difficult to undertake analysis across all AEIs. However, it can be reported that at AEI 1 amongst the eight individuals who were known to have received past fixed-

term exclusions, none were received at the AEI. At AEI 4, of the four young people who had known previous exclusions, two were given the same sanction during their time at the AEI. Twenty-six of the young people in AEI 5 received fixed-term exclusions prior to attendance at the project, but only two of these had this sanction imposed again. In AEI 6, 23 young people had had fixed-term exclusions and ten received this sanction again.

The same analysis for permanent exclusions is limited to AEIs 1 and 5, as those young people permanently excluded from AEI 4 had not been permanently excluded from school. At AEI 1, of the ten young people who were known to have been permanently excluded before joining the provision, one was also permanently excluded from the AEI (for drug use) and two received fixed-term exclusions. At AEI 5, of the 36 known previous permanent excludees, four received a permanent exclusion during the evaluation period.

Hence, the inclusiveness of AEIs is perhaps demonstrated. It could be said that amongst the young people for whom historical data was available, behaviour which warranted a fixed-term or permanent exclusion either diminished at the AEIs, or AEIs operated different exclusion policies compared to mainstream.

4.2.2 Relationship with family

Half of the young people interviewed felt their relationship with their families had improved, while a quarter did not believe attendance at the projects had impacted upon family relations. When asked *‘what has been the biggest change your time at the AEI has made to you?’* four young people volunteered improvements in family relationships as the most important impact of their AEI experience. Five staff members also cited improved relationships and behaviour at home as a major impact of the time spent at the AEI. All of the parents and carers interviewed recognised differences in their children’s behaviour at home, holding positive implications for family relationships. One mother stated: *‘I think as he is quieter everyone else is getting on a lot easier, we don’t mind having him around so much’* (parent AEI 1). Other parents also described their children’s more caring and ‘loving’ approach to family life.

Improved relations at home

We have seen results in terms of behaviour at home. In fact two people have told me today, when I have been round again, because I have asked them, and they have said ‘well six months ago, nine months ago, he was a very angry young man, I was worried that he was going to hit me’ – this is the mother talking – “he’s now very settled, he is more mature, he has a more positive outlook’. The same thing applied to one of the other families, saying very similar things (project staff AEI 5).

(It might be worth noting that staff felt in general ‘involved parents’ were the exception to the rule. The fact that those parents interviewed were willing to give up their time to speak to the researchers, demonstrated their commitment to their children’s education).

Amongst the young people acknowledging better relationships at home, a small number were able to articulate differences and gave examples of **improvements in communication**. Examples also emerged from parents:

Improvements in communication

Q: How were you getting on with them before coming here?

A: *I hardly ever used to talk to them properly, I would only be able to stay in the house for ten minutes before we had an argument.*

Q: Is that changing now?

A: *Yeah, I go up and see my mum every day and I can just sit there for about six hours and not have an argument with her (female AEI 5).*

Yes, I used never to be able to get on with my parents, but now it's like generally talking all the time, we are always having a laugh and that (male AEI 5).

Young people and their parents were able to identify reasons for improvements in family relations: **time away from home; decrease in offending; removal from the mainstream environment** and **receiving an education** were all cited.

A staff worker at AEI 5 referred to evidence of improved relationships within families once previously excluded young people had re-engaged with educational provision and were **spending time away from home**, occupied in structured activity. This view was supported by the testimonies of young people, both excludees and long term non-attenders, from all provisions (also see section 6.1.2, Views on the AEI).

Reasons for improved family relations: time away from the family

I think one thing that does come across often, in relation to improved family relationships, (that's something we pick up through the contacts with the social workers). There's a lot of tension within families when a young person has been excluded from school, and is spending a lot of time at home, not positively involved in anything. When they have re-engaged, that has a knock-on effect often (project staff AEI 5).

I get on better with my mum now cos when we used to be stuck around each other we used to get stressed with each other all the time (female AEI 6).

Four interviewees believed improved relations at home were directly related to a **decrease in their offending**. Although reasons for change in offending behaviour will be addressed later in this section, the direct impact on family life is apparent in these interview extracts:

Reasons for improved family relations: decrease in offending

I think that it's because I've been coming here and staying out of trouble in the daytime and that. Because I used to never go to school, I used to be always in trouble. I'd get nicked about four or five times a day. But now I am in here, I am only getting nicked once a day because that is in the night time and that's when we have got a car (male AEI 6).

A parent's relief that their child was now **receiving an education**, or indeed that they were no longer being pursued by the schools and the education authority because their

child was not receiving an education, was cited by three youngsters as the reason for improved family relations. All were from AEI 2, a provision working exclusively with non-attenders:

Reasons for improved family relations: receiving an education

Well since I have been coming here, me and my mother haven't been falling out, but we don't seem to have arguments anymore. I suppose that was because of the worry of me not going to school and the education department and things like that (male AEI 2).

Some interviewees felt that the school context was a catalyst for problematic behaviour. With **removal from the mainstream environment** their behaviour, and therefore family relationships, had improved. Parents also attributed improved family relationships to the new contexts in which their child was learning. Indeed, one parent described how attendance at the AEI had literally saved her family from falling apart, and commended the provision for its role in this and for their continued support.

Reasons for improved family relations: removal from mainstream environment

Yes I get on a lot better with my parents I don't seem to be having as many arguments as I did in my old school and basically everyone gets on with everyone here, so there's nothing that can disturb you from doing your work.

Q: Why do you think you get on better with your parents?

A: *School used to stress me out a bit, it's so much of a big area, so crowded and so many people around, it just makes you go mad, and I used to go home and be in a mood with my mum, but here, I go home and just be happy, because you don't have to hurry to get here and stuff, it's a lot more easier than long-term school (male AEI 1).*

The NFER questionnaire also elicited responses about changes in family relations. However, here there was less evidence of overall improvements.

Table 4.4 'I get on well with my family'

n = 57									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
31	22	15	24	4	5	5	5	2	1
54%	39%	26%	42%	7%	9%	9%	9%	4%	2%

Source: NFER questionnaire Alternative Education Initiatives 2001

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and therefore may not sum to 100.

As shown in Table 4.4, four out of five, (about 80 per cent) of the survey sample asserted that they got on well with their families on both occasions the questionnaire was administered. However, some reduction in degree of positiveness was apparent, with nine less of the young people 'strongly agreeing' they got on with their family by the end of the project. Notably, seven of these were from the 'high' crime group, and the other two from the 'medium' crime group.

Two staff members put forward suggestions as to why there could be a reduction in positiveness. One felt that attendance at the project opened the youngsters' eyes to an alternative lifestyle and made them realise that perhaps what their parents '*have said, or are doing isn't necessarily correct*'. Another viewed the onset of the young people's own relationships as the primary factor in familial break up.

Reasons for a reduction in improved relations

There's a fair amount of family breakdown for some of them whilst they have been with us, but I don't think that has anything to do with us, I think that it's got a great deal to do with sex rearing its ugly head and generally finding girlfriends and boyfriends more attractive than their mothers and fathers. (project staff AEI 1).

4.2.3 Relationships with adults

Young people were asked '*how do you get on with the staff here?*' Over three-quarters of the sample reported improved staff-student relationships, with the vast majority basing judgement on comparisons to mainstream teachers. Only one girl indicated that relations were poor '*I don't talk to them*' (female AEI 1). She was highly disaffected, never engaged and left the project after a few months.

The young people were able to identify specific qualities of the AEI staff which engendered good relations, namely; **offering respect, equivalence and being a confidant**. Staff felt that the key factor to building and sustaining improved relationships was establishing a basis of **trust**.

Respect was the most cited (thirteen interviewees) reason for improved staff-pupil relationships. As one staff member at AEI 6 stated, '*we teach them to be respectful by the fact that we respect them*'. Many of the young people attending the projects had become disillusioned with authority, reporting continual animosity with teachers who they felt had spoken down to, or ignored them: '*What our young people feel is what they don't get in school is respect from the staff, and that's one thing that we would always say here: 'We respect you. You may have to earn it, or, if you lose it you may have to earn it again. But we will treat you as how we would want to be treated and as long as you are fair to everyone else, we will be fair to you', and that's the first time they have experienced that*' (project staff AEI 2).

Whilst often not immediately apparent, differences in how the young people were responding to AEI staff was an observable measure of change, continually developing throughout their period at the AEI:

Reciprocated respect

Respect for authority I think is significantly increased here. When they come they hate anything which is an authoritative figure in their lives. But, they now know that they can work with authority and that we are here to support them in the long run, even though at the time, we might draw the line and say 'come on, what's your game?'. At the end of the day, two years ago they wouldn't have accepted that. At the end of their period here, they realise that we are here for their benefit and they respond positively towards that challenge (project staff AEI 4).

Improvements in relating to adults was also attributed to the experience of **equivalence**. Indeed, nine young people spoke of staff as ‘friends’ displaying the same characteristics as friends would, including somebody who they were able to have a ‘laugh with’:

Equivalence

I wouldn't class them as teachers I would class them as a friend. ... It's a lot better because they don't act like teachers, just like someone you basically see on the streets or something (female AEI 2).

Here, it's like you are treated equally to them and you have more of a laugh and you are out doing jobs with them so you get to know them (male AEI 3).

Some young people asserted that their relationships with staff had improved because they saw AEI staff as **confidantes**, someone who they trusted enough to go to with their problems. Two parents were also aware, and expressed relief that, their children were speaking to members of staff about their worries:

Confidantes

We see them as teachers, but also as a friend. Because we can tell staff here things that we can't tell teachers. They don't react the same cos they've heard it all before. I mean there is a lot badder than me, and that is it really (male AEI 1).

You can have a conversation and they keep it confidential and, like, if you went with any troubles or anything, you could tell them about it (female AEI 5).

Members of staff also felt that establishing trust was key to improving and building the capacity of the young people to have positive relations, and recognised that it was a process that took time and patience:

Building trust

When we speak to individuals it's always with the utmost confidentiality, and nothing is ever reported back. It's about gaining their trust, and we do try to and we do it bit by bit. They will come in here and sit and tell us who has done what. They know that it won't go out of here, and no one knows what anyone else has said, so yes it's learning that you can trust people, and give them your trust and they will look after you (project staff AEI 4).

There was also evidence in the interviews that respect for AEI staff had had wider reaching effects, translating into a **respect for adults in general**:

Respect for adults

I have got more respect for people (female AEI 2).

Yeah with adults, because at school I was just seeing the teachers being the way they were which I didn't like, giving me no respect. So I thought that all adults were knobs and here you get on well with them so you learn to give them respect and that (male AEI 6).

However, this new found respect for adults did not always extend to teachers in mainstream school. In the Phase 3 interviews young people were asked ‘*thinking back to how you got on with teachers, do you feel any differently about teachers now?*’. One stated view was that they would still not get on with teachers. The young people saw staff in mainstream school as fundamentally different to those in the AEs, lacking in those qualities outlined above, which they commended and were able to relate to.

Attitude to mainstream teachers: unchanged

I don't think I'd be able to do it at all, because in a way you know the staff in here aren't your mates but in a way you still get on with them like mates, at school you can't (male AEI 3).

Another minority perspective was that their attitude to teachers would be different, with comments such as: ‘Loads better, I went to up to my old school the other week and I get on with them now and I sat and talked to them all (female AEI 2)’, and: ‘I would most likely talk to teacher now instead of giving them grief’ (female AEI 5).

The NFER questionnaire also investigated whether or not the young person’s time at the project had improved their relationships with adults in general, as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 ‘I get on well with most adults now’

n = 57									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
17	19	21	29	8	7	5	1	5	1
30%	33%	39%	60%	14%	12%	9%	2%	9%	2%

Source: NFER questionnaire Alternative Education Initiatives 2001

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and therefore may not sum to 100.

In response to the question: ‘*I get on well with most adults now*’ an increase from 39 (about two-thirds of the sample) up to 48 (five out of six) was apparent in the numbers who agreed with this statement by the end of the project. Ten had disagreed at first, but only two respondents (one boy and one girl) expressed poor relations with adults at the post-questionnaire stage. The high crime and high disaffection sub-samples showed the greatest changes: in both cases, eight had disagreed at first but, by the end of the project, 14 out of the 18 (over three-quarters) in these sub-samples now held positive views of their relations with adults. Indeed, three of the six high crime group who had ‘strongly disagreed’ at first, now had completely changed to ‘strongly agreeing’ and ‘agreeing’.

A questionnaire item also sought to discover changes in pupil-teacher dynamics. Respondents were asked to comment on the extent to which they could ‘get on with most teachers now’.

Table 4.6 'I could get on well with teachers'

n = 57									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
8	23	19	27	9	18	8	4	13	3
14%	23%	33%	47%	16%	18%	14%	7%	23%	5%

Source: NFER questionnaire Alternative Education Initiatives 2001

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and therefore may not sum to 100.

The questionnaire response shown in Table 4.6 is at a discordance with the views expressed in the interviews, as a marked increase in the numbers expressing a belief in their capacity to have positive relations with teachers was apparent. Over a third (21) had disagreed at the start of the project, with 13 of these 'strongly disagreeing'. By the end, only seven (about 12 per cent) held this view and just three of these 'strongly disagreed'. In all, by this stage, well over two-thirds (40) agreed, compared to less than half (27) in the pre-questionnaire. Ten from the male sample changed their viewpoint (27 after, 17 before agreed with the statement). The 'high' crime sub-sample showed the greatest reversal: 11 had disagreed (nine 'strongly') in the pre-questionnaire, by the end of the project, just three (and one 'strongly') disagreed. (This compared to four disagreeing before and three afterwards from the 'middle' crime group). 'High' disaffection also saw a shift from three to ten agreeing with the statement by the end of the project: medium and low disaffection groups between them only registering a change by five young people.

4.2.3 Relationships with peers

Interviewees in Phase 3 were asked to describe their relationships with peers. The majority of young people asked this question reported good relationships. Only two young people reported negative relations, '*I never got on with the people there ... they were all on drugs as well,*' (female AEI 2), '*I just don't think that I fit in that much*' (female AEI 1).

For the rest of the sample, the strength of friendships varied, from general 'getting along' with: '*I get on well with everybody here, but they are not kind of mates but I get on with them, just not as mates*' (male AEI 3)... to 'best friends': '*I am best friends with [name of young person] and from when I first started that was it, we was always together, she took me everywhere here, everyone says we are joined at the hip because we have not even known each other a year and we were always together*' (female AEI 4).

Friendships were particularly important to those who had been out of the school environment for a long period of time and who may have experienced social isolation, as one staff member at AEI 1 noted: '*because a lot of these kids have been out of school for so long they have stopped mixing with their own age group and, spend a bit*

too long with Richard and Judy or not enough time with each other, or they get mixed up with kids who are a lot older than them (project staff AEI 1).

One boy, a school refuser for four years, believed that the best thing about the project was *'being around people the same age as me, talking to them'* (male AEI 2).

It was also crucial for those young people who had been bullied (a notable feature of the intake at AEI 4) at their previous schools, who reported 'better' and 'more' friends at the AEs:

'Better' and 'more' friends at the AEI

I am much more confident with my friends, it's like I know they are my friends and I can just be myself, be me, I can come in with no name brand trainers and everyone will still like me, I can come in with the funkiest hairstyle and everyone will still like me. At my school, if you didn't have named something then you weren't noticeable, nobody wanted to talk to you (female AEI 4).

Young people were also aware of, and appreciated, the hard stance the AEs took on bullying: *'They warn everyone anyway when they start, if we find out there's any bullying you are out'* (male AEI 1) and *'There is a bullying policy here anyway, if you get caught, you get kicked off the course'* (female AEI 4).

For these two speakers, the knowledge of the policy gave them peace of mind and a sense of security, allowing them to test out and develop their interpersonal skills. They commented, *'I have got more confidence in myself now, in the way I am and the way I talk to people'* (male AEI 1) and *'I work better with other people, I can work in groups better, got more confidence'* (female AEI 4).

A staff worker at AEI 1 where bullying was *'not accepted'* and *'cracked down on'* was able to observe the differences it had made to those young people who were previously subject to sustained abuse at school: *'you get some quite weak-link children who suddenly become quite strong because they are not being bullied and they start to lead a little bit, it's nice to see'* (project staff AEI 1).

Whilst none of the interviewees reported bullying at the AEs, the carer of one boy acknowledged that it had been an issue for him, but commended the project's handling of the situation:

He has had a bit of trouble of bullying. They have been there, not left him on his own, supported him through that. They rang me up immediately when there was one incident, escorted him around even, you know what I mean, really have looked after him and protected him from that type of thing. It was something that could have escalated and stopped him attending (carer AEI 4).

The smaller group sizes and actual size of the building also helped foster positive group dynamics. AEI 4 was actually set in a house, providing a more intimate atmosphere. A mother who had taken her daughter out of her previous school due to bullying and the school's unwillingness to address the situation, stated: *'Because it's a much smaller group, because she is not very good at making friends because she is very very quiet, but she seems to love it there ... she is more out of herself'*. Staff at the project reported a similar change: *'[name of young person] was so withdrawn and now you*

can't stop her, she is laughing and giggling all the time, she is more open now' (project staff AEI 4).

Staff also reported strategies to facilitate improved group relations including discussion of conflict resolution, communication and placing an emphasis on group work and cohesion. AEI 2 had run a three day course focusing on developing self-confidence and communication skills. A staff member found the transformation in one student after completing the course startling:

The difference since he did that is unbelievable. He had to do a lot of group work, they had to do role-plays and he wasn't forced, he volunteered himself. At the beginning of the year, he chose to sit on his own, on a specific chair and wouldn't move, and he interacts with the rest of the group now (project staff AEI 2).

For a number of young people being comfortable with their peers, impacted on their confidence levels in general:

Improved confidence with peers

We have learnt to become more confident with our friends because it's got such a different atmosphere and we all act the same really. I could walk up to somebody and just introduce myself without going bright red in the face, going really shy. I don't know I can just talk to people with confidence without embarrassing myself like an idiot (female AEI 1).

Evidence in the discourse of those young people interviewed about peer relations suggests that as a result of their time at the project, they were more easily able to form new relationships. This is at a slight discordance with the responses to the questionnaire item, where no significant change in the ability to make new friends was apparent. Young people were asked to mark the extent to which they agreed with the statement *'I find it hard to make new friends'*.

Table 4.7 'I find it hard to make new friends'

n = 57									
Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
3	1	7	5	5	8	26	27	16	16
5%	2%	12%	9%	9%	14%	46%	47%	28%	28%

Source: NFER questionnaire Alternative Education Initiatives 2001

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and therefore may not sum to 100.

Table 4.7 shows that about three-quarters of the sample disagreed with this statement both before and after AEI attendance: despite a drop of four respondents (three girls and one boy) believing they found it hard to make new friends, a slight increase in those who were 'not sure' kept the overall figure constant. However, the 'low' crime sub-group had strongest association with not disagreeing with this statement overall, and the high crime and high disaffection sub-samples were the least uncertain. Put

another way, it is possible that those who were least likely to be involved in offending behaviour remained the most vulnerable to poor peer relationships at the AEs.

Summary: Impact on behaviour

- Over three-quarters of youngsters interviewed reported improved personal behaviour; referred to as calming down, less verbal abuse and less fighting.
- For young people whom historical data was available, it appears behaviour which warranted a fixed-term or permanent exclusion either diminished at the AEs, or AEs operated different exclusion policies compared to mainstream. This perhaps indicates that AEs adopted a more inclusive approach.
- Half of the young people felt that family relations had improved whilst they had been on the project, whilst a quarter believed it had not impacted upon it at all.
- Over three-quarters of the young people interviewed reported improved staff/student relationships. There was evidence in the discourse that improved relationships with staff had engendered positive relationships with adults in general.
- The majority of the sample felt that their peer relations were improved, referring to having 'better' and 'more' friends at the AEs. In some cases, a new found confidence with friends had impacted upon general confidence, and the increased ability of the young people to cope with strangers and new situations.

4.3 Attendance

One of the remits of the AEs was to work with non-attenders and it was highlighted in Section 3.2 'The educational careers of AEI referrals' that the majority of youngsters interviewed described their attendance at mainstream school as 'poor'. One of the more tangible measures of 'impact' of time at the projects therefore, was the attendance levels of the young people during the intervention year, discussed in the following section of the report.

Analysis has been based upon two sources:

- Quantitative data; monitoring information provided by the provisions.
- Qualitative interview data collected in Phase One and Three of the fieldwork programmes from 63 young people, their parents and staff. A sub-set of young people were interviewed in both Phases, and, where any meaningful change in response was apparent, analysis has incorporated comparisons over time. In addition, reasons underpinning any of these changes are highlighted.

4.3.1 Monitoring data

Young people's attendance was monitored by each provision via daily registers detailing the numbers of hours students had attended against their individual timetables.

It must be borne in mind when looking at attendance levels, that the amount of contact time offered, or more accurately, the ability of the young people to cope with the number of sessions offered, varied. Hence, AEI 4 provided a full-time programme, AEI 2 offered a part-time programme initially, with a possible progression to full-time. All provisions offering core part-time programmes also had individuals either attending college (on a full-time basis) or attending work experience where again, 'normal' working hours were expected. Therefore, with the exception of AEI 4, attendance levels for all provisions were not standardised.

Table 4.8 calculates the overall median attendance for each provision and is further broken down by gender and monitoring periods: Autumn Term, September to December 2000, Spring Term, January to April 2001 and finally Summer Term, April to July 2001. The median percentage has been calculated to avoid 'outliers' i.e. those young people whose persistent non-attendance would skew the overall mean average, distorting the actual attendance behaviour of the rest of the intake.

Table 4.8 Median provision attendance by project and gender

Attendance	Median Attendance by project and gender											
	AEI 1 N=22		AEI 2 N=23		AEI 3 N=15		AEI 4 N=33		AEI 5 N=39		AEI 6 N=30	
Monitoring period	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
September – December 2000	72%	63%	64%	74%	67%	82%	73%	56%	57%	61%	67%	75%
TOTAL	71%		70%		67%		63%		58%		68%	
January – April 2001	85%	67%	54%	57%	45%	71%	62%	67%	44%	71%	75%	54%
TOTAL	82%		52%		47%		64%		50%		73%	
April – July 2001	76%	61%	80%	48%	75%	89%	42%	83%	38%	68%	83%	63%
TOTAL	67%		55%		76%		77%		44%		83%	
MEDIAN TOTAL OVER YEAR	69%		56%		57%		63%		56%		71%	

Source: AEI profiles supplied by the National Evaluation Team

Table 4.8 indicates that all six provisions had a median attendance rate of over 50 per cent, varying from 56 per cent for AEI 2 and AEI 5 to 71 per cent in AEI 6. The table also shows the extent to which the median percentage rate differed over the three terms. In three of the provisions (AEI 3, 4 and 6) the attendance rate increased throughout the year, i.e. it was higher at the end of the evaluation period than at the beginning and in the other three (AEIs 1, 2 and 5) the median attendance rate decreased.

Gender dimensions have been highlighted in the table, although each provision appears to be fairly incongruent and no overarching patterns were apparent. The only programme to show a rise in attendance by both sexes was AEI 3, where the median attendance increased from 67 per cent to 75 per cent for the boys and 82 per cent to 89 per cent for the girls, a slump for both sexes is evident in the second term, January to April. In all other AEIs the attendance level rose for one sex, whilst it decreased for the other. An increase in male students attendance was predominant in three provisions (AEIs 1, 2, 6). In AEI 2 and AEI 4 the improvement of one sex's attendance level and demise of the other was most pronounced. In AEI 4 the median female attendance in the first half was just over 50 per cent, this gradually increased throughout the year until the Summer Term where it was calculated to be 83 per cent. Conversely, boys' attendance at this provision began well but saw a gradual demise from 73 to 42 per cent. In AEI 2, it was the girls that started well at 74 per cent, declining to a median average of 48 per cent in the last monitoring period, whilst the boys on the programme increased their attendance from 64 to 80 per cent.

4.3.2 Interview data

Young people were asked to describe their attendance at the projects. Table 4.9 shows that 89 per cent stated that their attendance at the project had been 'good,' six young people felt that it had been 'OK', whilst three chose to term it as 'poor'. The 'OK' category also included those young people interviewed in both fieldwork programmes, who described their attendance as 'good' during one interview and 'poor' in the other.

Table 4.9 Young people's views on their attendance at AEIs

Attendance	Number of responses
'Good'	42
'OK'	6
'Poor'	3

The very fact that these young people who reported improved attendance were present at the AEI on the day of interview, and for those who were interviewed twice, present on both occasions, is indicative of their 'good' or improved attendance. Young people's reports that their attendance at the AEI was better than school was also supported by AEI staff and their parents/carers.

Improved attendance

I haven't missed a day, when I was at school I used to go about once a week (male AEI 2).

They normally have a poor history of attending, now attendance is an outcome for us here. We have quite a good attendance record, we have the odd one or two students who have difficulty, but normally they enjoy coming, so they do come on a regular basis (project staff AEI 1).

When asked why they were attending more often than at mainstream school, for some youngsters the reason was simple: **they enjoyed it**. 'I always come to it because it's good' (male AEI 3), 'I like coming in' (female AEI 4), 'I enjoy coming here and I didn't enjoy going to school' (male AEI 2). Others were able to identify certain qualities of the provision which made it more appealing, the most cited factors included: the **social element**; the **different environment** and the **time-tabling of the projects**.

Staff also made reference to the **stability** the projects offered some youngsters and to the **strategies they employed to address non-attendance**.

Why do you think your attendance has improved? The social element

I have got a lot more friends then I did at [name of school] (male AEI 1).

Because I have got friends here. One of the girls who comes here I get on really well with, so I come in to talk to her, and I go out with her on my dinner break, its good (female AEI 2).

Other interviewees cited the **different environment** in which education was delivered as the predominant factor in their improved attendance; some appreciating the more relaxed atmosphere of the provisions, others the opportunity to get out of the classroom setting altogether.

Why do you think your attendance has improved? Different environment

Q: If it was bad at school, why do you think it's been good here?

A: You are not shut up in a classroom (male AEI 5).

Another positive aspect of the AEs for many students was the **time-tabling** of the projects, with fewer hours and later starting times, than in mainstream schooling:

Why do you think your attendance has improved? Different time-tabling

Q: You said that you played truant, what sort of times would you be having off school?

A: I could go in a morning and I could stay there for 20 minutes and it would do my head in and I would have to go.

Q: So what's the difference here?

A: I can work the hours here, I just don't like getting up on a morning, but it's like an afternoon time (female AEI 2).

It is interesting to note that out of the six respondents who admitted to **truancy at the projects**, four attended AEI 4, the only provision to deliver a full-time programme for

all students. This supports the suggestion made by several young people that a full-time timetable was too demanding.

Why do you miss days? Truancy at the projects

A: My attendance used to be, when I first started it was good, then it went a bit downhill because I started missing about one day or two days a week and now it is kind of average I think.

Q: Why were you missing those days?

A: No apparent reason, I just couldn't be bothered. Oh sometimes I had good reasons though, but now I miss probably about one lesson every two weeks, I am not that bad, but no less than that, I couldn't go two weeks straight at school without missing a day (male AEI 4).

Nevertheless, poor attendance was still an improvement when compared with attendance at school. This point was illustrated by one of the staff at AEI 4:

All of our students consistently achieve attendance of 90 per cent or more. However, sometimes you will get a student who is 70/80 per cent. I think there are a number of factors that you have to bear in mind when their attendance dips like that, I think there are students though who, when they were in mainstream school, well officially, technically, their attendance was often in the 20/25 per cent mark, it's a significant jump, significant ... I mean we have had young people who have not been to school for six or eight months and have attended here every day. Not all of them, I don't want to sound like we are perfect, but 90 per cent of the time I would say their attendance would be ten times better than at school (project staff AEI 4).

The above conviction was held by all staff interviewees. Some of their AEI students has been school refusers or phobics, so that any increase in attendance was viewed as meaningful, especially if it had been extremely low in mainstream school.

It was also acknowledged by staff that increased attendance for some of the young people, was due to the **stability** the projects offered to their otherwise chaotic lives. One girl who had been left homeless at 16 and found hostel accommodation with the help of the project, said of her provision: *'It's like most of the time I look forward to coming to [name of project] because it gets me away from all of that'* (female AEI 4).

I mean, [name of young person], in the afternoon, you can't get him home at 3:30. When he first came in you had to drag him in. It's because they like stability, don't they. They like to know that somebody is thinking about them and somebody is caring about them (project staff AEI 6).

Staff at the projects also referred to their monitoring of attendance and **strategies used to address non-attendance**. These were viewed as additional to the strategies employed with mainstream schools.

Staff strategies to address non-attendance

If a student isn't in by ten o'clock in the morning, it will be nine o'clock next year, I am on the phone ... We have all got mobile phones, so I can make myself very unpopular just phoning up. They soon come in, and I have the facility to do that, a teacher doesn't. At interview, we say to parents, "please don't lie to us, don't tell us that they are sick if you can't get him out of bed, because we understand not getting out of bed, we don't understand a child who is terminally sick". So, I build up as good a relationship as I can with parents, I don't like to be lied to and I make that quite clear. Some parents are so used to having bad relationships with schools that they assume that it's going to carry on being a bad relationship. They don't quite click straight on that we are actually on their side, we don't want to involve the Education Welfare Officer either. So, we are all on the same side trying to get little Johnny in. It's really gaining a trust in us to be honest and realising that they have got an agency that is on their side (project staff AEI 1).

Impact on attendance: Summary

- The median attendance rate for all provisions was over 50 per cent, ranging from 56 to 71 per cent.
- Eighty-nine per cent of the young people interviewed stated that their attendance at the AEI was 'good' when compared to mainstream school. The main reasons given for this improved attendance related to: the social element of the AEI, the different environment of the AEI and the time-tabling of the projects.
- Staff referred to the stability the projects offered the young people and the strategies employed to address non-attendance as having a direct impact on attendance.

4.4 Offending

Introduction

In this section, the issue of how attendance at an AEI may have affected offending levels is discussed. Several data sources are referenced:

1. In November 2001, PNC data on the sample for the intervention year (2000–2001) and data recorded from 1997 onwards was provided for analysis.
2. In the summer term of 2001, the follow-up self-report survey on offending was achieved with 57 of the sample (from the original 97). This final sample's responses were compared to those they gave in the initial questionnaire (administered at the start of the young person's attendance at an AEI in Autumn 2000 or early Spring 2001).
3. Where possible, comparative analysis between PNC and self-report data on offending were also undertaken.

4. In Phases One and Three of the fieldwork programme, qualitative interview data with young people, AEI staff and parents, covered issues about offending levels since young people had begun attending the projects.

4.4.1 The PNC data

This section presents quantitative evidence of the offending behaviour of the young people attending the AEIs, based on information garnered from the police national computer (PNC) and information provided by the young people themselves. The analysis addresses the following areas:

- **Offending history 1997–2001**
- **Patterns of offending during the baseline and intervention period**
- **Numbers of young people offending during the period**

Offending history 1997–2001

Data from the PNC is presented in Table 4.10 and shows the numbers of young people attending the provisions during the intervention year who were charged for any offences committed between January 1997 and September 2001 (one offence was committed in 1996 but this is not included in the following tables and discussion). PNC data includes all recorded offences with a substantive outcome and therefore may be an underrepresentation of total offences committed.

Table 4.10 Offending history of AEI pupils between 1997–2001

AEI	No. enrolled over the year	No. with record of offending	No. of offences	Total % of offences across AEIs
1	22	13 (59%)	94	14%
2	23	10 (43%)	121	17%
3	15	11 (73%)	106	15%
4	33	10 (30%)	29	4%
5	39	23 (59%)	248	36%
6	30	15 (50%)	96	14%
TOTAL	162	82	694	100%

* Source: MHA 2002 from PNC

When looking at the number of offences ever recorded across all provisions, AEIs 1, 2, 3 and 6 all account for similar totals: AEI 4 shows the fewest crimes in the overall sample at four per cent, and AEI 5 the highest. This is not surprising as AEI 5 had the highest number of pupils attending the provision. AEI 4 however represents somewhat of an anomaly, with the second largest number of attendees but the least number of young people with a criminal record. The histories of youngsters taken on to AEI 4 may go some way to explain this: during the intervention year, the intake comprised more school phobics, and young people who had left mainstream education due to bullying than previous years and proportionally, other provisions.

However when looking at the number of young people in each AEI with a record of offending the picture is rather different. The column showing numbers of pupils with a record of offending shows that four provisions (AEIs 1, 3, 5 and 6) had an intake of over half of their young people having recorded criminal histories. The most startling of these is AEI 3, the provision with the fewest number of young people, but of those that did attend 73 per cent, nearly three-quarters of the total had, or went on to obtain, a criminal record.

Type and patterns of offending

The offences committed in 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 are shown in Table 4.11, ranked by category according to frequency in 1999–2000.

Table 4.11 Recorded crime, by AEI and type

	AEI 1		AEI 2		AEI 3		AEI 4		AEI 5		AEI 6		TOTAL	
	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01	99/00*	00/01
Theft	11	13	4	3	5	7	11	2	8	16	6	6	45	47
Criminal Damage	0	4	6	22	8	15	0	0	20	24	10	2	44	67
Other	4	3	1	10	3	5	0	0	21	13	1	7	30	38
Assault	8	0	3	10	1	4	1	0	15	18	1	3	29	36
Disorderly Behaviour	1	0	2	5	1	3	0	0	15	13	8	3	27	24
Vehicle Crime	3	2	3	5	0	0	2	3	6	3	0	5	14	18
Burglary	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	6	3	3	0	11	5
Road traffic/ motoring offences	0	4	0	10	0	9	0	0	6	2	1	3	7	28
Deception (incl fraud)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6	0
Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	2
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	2
Breach of court orders/ bail	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	5
Drugs – Possession	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	2	4
Drugs – Supply	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	4
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	6
TOTAL	29	28	19	66	22	52	16	5	105	101	33	34	224	286

Source: PNC data 2001 from MHA

* Rank order

Table 4.11 shows that there had been an overall increase in the numbers of recorded offences from 224 to 286 across the AEIs during the intervention year. The majority of this growth can be attributed to the sub-samples AEI 2 and 3. In these projects, overall, there were significantly more crimes recorded than in the baseline year, with an increase from 19 to 66 and 22 to 52 respectively. AEI 6 showed a rise by one recorded offence, while in AEIs 1 and 5 one less offence was recorded than the previous year. AEI 4 showed the most significant fall-off from 16 to five.

When looking at the total crime percentages for all provisions, the most notable increase in type of offence recorded was for criminal damage, where a rise of 23 (from 44 to 67) was apparent, making it the most frequently recorded crime in 2000–2001. During the baseline year (1999–2000) property theft at 45 was cited most often. Here, there was also a small rise from 45 to 47. More significant rises over the period were for road traffic/motoring offences (seven to 28) assault (29 to 36) arson (one to six) and vehicle crime (14 to 18). The only types of offences to show a marked decrease in frequency were for burglary (11 to five) and deception (six to nought).

However, total percentages disguise nuances within the offending patterns for individual provisions. For example, whilst criminal damage showed the highest increase overall, no young people in AEI 4 were recorded in either year as committing this particular type of offence. Similarly, incidents of criminal damage in AEI 6 actually decreased from ten to two. Whilst the total number of assault charges rose overall, it in fact only increased in four provisions, significantly in AEI 2, but decreased from eight to no reported cases in AEI 1.

For those categories of crime where less than six offences were recorded overall, these are specific to a couple of provisions, for example, deception relates only to AEI 5, weapons to AEI 3 and 6 and arson AEIs 3 and 5. In the case of arson, the six cases recorded for AEI 3 were attributed to one youngster. (A breakdown for each provision showing the crimes committed by each individual is provided in the appendix to this report.) Such findings clearly illustrate the distinct clientele of each provision. Equally, they perhaps begin to point up the caution required in using only overall PNC figures as a data source for offending patterns per project. As outlined below, certain individuals within projects are responsible for much of the offending behaviour.

Numbers of young people offending

As noted, an important dimension to explore when looking at the recorded offending behaviour of the sample, is the actual numbers of young people in the provisions offending during the two years. Table 4.12 indicates how many young people were offending in 1999–2000 (Year 1) and 2000–2001 (Year 2).

Table 4.12 Number of offenders

No. of offences	AEI 1		AEI 2		AEI 3		AEI 4		AEI 5		AEI 6		Total	
	Yr1	Yr2	Yr1	Yr2	Yr1	Yr2	Yr1	Yr2	Yr1	Yr2	Yr1	Yr2	Yr1	Yr2
1	1	1	1	0	1	2	4	2	3	2	0	1	10	8
2–5	6	4	7	2	5	3	1	1	4	5	6	6	29	21
6–10	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	4	4	2	2	10	10
11–15	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	3	3
16–20	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
21–25	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
26–30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	9	7	8	6	7	8	6	3	15	14	8	9	53	47

*Source PNC data 2001 from MHA

Table 4.12 highlights the fact that six less young people were convicted for criminal behaviour in the intervention year than the baseline year. Therefore, a very significant finding is that whilst more crimes were recorded during 2000–2001, fewer young people were responsible for them: they were committing multiple offences. In both years, the majority of youngsters were recorded as having committed between two to five offences, the exception to this is in AEI 4, where six of the nine young people were convicted for just one offence.

However, the intervention year shows an increase in those young people being convicted for more than 16 offences. In the baseline year, only one youngster was recorded as being convicted for between 16 to 20 offences, this rose to three in 2000–2001. New categories for frequency of offending had to be constructed for the intervention period, with a youngster at AEI 3 being convicted for 21 offences and the most prolific offender in the sample, a young person at AEI 5 recorded for 33.

For the purpose of this analysis, if we use the term ‘persistent offender’ for any young person who has been convicted for more than ten offences in a 12 month period, then it is easy to see that there were twice as many (eight) persistent offenders in the intervention than the baseline year (four). Those eight youngsters account for one-sixth (17 per cent) of the total numbers offending during 2000–2001, but were responsible for 145 of the 286 recorded offences, i.e. they accounted for half of the total number of offences. It is notable that these young people were all male and from AEIs 2, 3 and 5. Therefore, an important caveat to bear in mind when looking at the crime score for the overall crime figures for each AEI in Table 4.12, is that a crime spree by one young person can radically ratchet-up the crime score for a provision. This finding is in line with the Audit Commission’s report ‘Misspent Youth’ where it was stated ‘*a few persistent offenders commit most of the crimes by young people*’. It went on to say that ‘*five per cent of the young men interviewed by Home Office researchers, who admitted to 20 or more crimes in the previous 12 months, were responsible for at least two-thirds of the offences reported by the whole group*’. It must be noted that the Home Office researchers were targeting young offenders, while NFER researchers were investigating attendees at the provisions where any criminal involvement was incidental, and certainly not a condition of attendance. However, it

does illustrate that there are kinds of serious offending youngsters who may be inappropriately placed in AEI provision, or require more specialist support than can be offered within current resourcing levels.

4.4.2 The questionnaire data

The NFER questionnaire was administered in the early phases of AEI attendance and then again at the end. It incorporated a range of questions where offending patterns were self-reported, and as such provides a different ‘take’ on the issue of increases or decreases in offending. Fifty-seven young people completed both surveys. The final sub-samples (related to levels of offending and disaffection) retained similar ratios to those original 97 in the pre-questionnaire. However, the fact that the final 57 were available and willing to continue to support the NFER research may make them a distinctive sample.

In a question beginning ‘*have you committed any criminal offences ...*’ respondents in the survey sample was asked to relay if they had done so at three points in time. In the first questionnaire, ‘*since last Christmas*’ was posited as a time frame to encompass pre AEI attendance; and in the follow-up survey ‘*since being on the project*’ and also ‘*since last doing this survey*’. Table 4.13 shows the basic responses.

Table 4.13 Self-report on criminal offences

Have you committed any criminal offences?	n = 57		
	Yes	No	Don't know/missing
Since last Christmas	36	20	1
Since being on the project	24	31	2
Since last doing this survey	19	36	2

Source: NFER questionnaire ‘*Alternative Education Initiatives*’ Project 2001

Thus, overall the sample of 57 relay a decline in criminal activity. Almost two-thirds (63 per cent) acknowledged offending in the first questionnaire (which attempted to identify criminal behaviour pre AEI attendance). However, by the Summer Term of AEI attendance, only just over a third (35 per cent) were indicating such activity.

The same reduction in offending behaviour was evident when respondents were asked about individual offending behaviours. Table 4.14 shows the rank order of offences admitted to in the initial questionnaire by the sample as a whole, and totals acknowledging offending in the second administration. The numbers of respondents who admitted to the same offence in this follow-up survey are also relayed.

Table 4.14 Self-reported offending behaviours: in rank order

Rank Order:	Initial questionnaire Autumn 2000	Follow-up questionnaire Summer 2001	Nos. reporting same offence Summer 2001	Overall change
	N = 57			
Hurt someone, but they did not need medical treatment	35	30	23	-5
Got into a fight in public somewhere	35	19	18	-16
Damaged or destroyed anything, like a phone box, windows or written graffiti	35	18	10	-17
Used cannabis	32	31	25	-1
Been a passenger in a car that was stolen	29	19	14	-10
Stolen anything from a shop	28	15	8	-13
Beat up or hurt someone not in your family, causing them to need medical treatment	27	13	11	-14
Threatened someone with a weapon, or to beat them up	25	24	15	-1
Set fire to anything on purpose (e.g. building, car, furniture)	25	7	4	-18
Bought, sold or kept anything else you thought was stolen	24	22	14	-2
Stolen anything from a car	21	11	6	-10
Used drugs, other than cannabis	20	18	8	-2
Stolen a car or motorbike	20	13	5	-7
Gone into any other building to try steal anything	19	5	4	-14
Sold drugs to someone else	16	7	4	-9
Driven a car or motorbike when you were drunk	11	9	2	-2
Stolen anything from your family or a friend's house	6	3	1	-3
Beat up or hurt someone in your family, causing them to need medical treatment	5	3	0	-2
Stolen money from a gas or electricity meter, public phone or vending machine	5	3	1	-2
Used or sold a stolen credit card, cheque book, cash card	3	2	0	-1
Snatched anything from someone, like a purse or bag	1	1	0	No change

Source: *NFER questionnaire 'Alternative Education Initiatives' Project 2001*

Table 4.14 does demonstrate the same overall decline in self-reported offending, but with two distinct trends also evident. First, there was enormous variation in the degree to which the different types of reported offending declined. Second, while many individuals indicated they had stopped committing certain offences, ‘new’ perpetrators emerged. In other words, the young people appeared to be trying out – or at least admitting to – different offending behaviours.

Thus, in complete contrast to PNC data, Table 4.14 shows a considerable drop in vandalism-type offending. Overall, 25 out of the original 35 young people did not re-acknowledge ‘*damaging or destroying anything*’ by the end of their AEI attendance, although another eight admitted to this activity for the first time. Similarly, of the 25 stating they had ‘*set fire to anything on purpose*’ in the initial survey, only four indicated they had done this in the follow-up with three ‘new’ offenders emerging. It is, as later qualitative data indicates, likely that being occupied during the day (and avoiding ‘the hang factor’) may be implicated in these findings. Also, the findings here may indicate experimentation with offending is a feature of this AEI age group.

The other offending behaviour showing a marked decline related to theft: references to ‘*stealing anything from a shop*’ dropped by almost half (from 28 to 15, with eight young people indicating a continuation of this activity). Notably, only in this category did girls outrank boys in the follow-up survey, with five girls and three boys continuing to admit shop theft. ‘*Gone into any other building to try and steal something*’ received only five nominations compared to 19 in the original survey (four of which were the same young people): no girl reported this activity in the follow-up. ‘*Stolen anything from a car*’ also virtually halved (21 original nominations reduced to 11 overall in the follow-up, with only six indicating a repeat offence). Repeated admissions of ‘*stealing a car or motorbike*’ and ‘*being a passenger in a stolen car*’ showed some drop-off, with again a male bias (no girl admitted again stealing a car and only two of the 14 indicating they had repeated being a passenger in a stolen car were female). Overall incidences of violent behaviour (‘*hurt someone so needing medical treatment*’) also dropped by half, although the drop off was proportionately higher among the male sub-sample.

In contrast, self-reported drug use and ‘less serious’ physical behaviours (‘*threatening someone*’ or ‘*hurting someone but they did not need medical treatment*’) did not show the same degree of fall-off. ‘*Using drugs other than cannabis*’ particularly showed a high number of new references. However, ‘*selling drugs*’ did receive considerably fewer nominations, with only four of the 16 who had originally reported this indicating continuation (three out of 13 boys and one of the three girls). It was notable that the ‘high’ disaffection group remained as the sub-sample most often nominating any sort of involvement with drugs – and also in ‘*getting into a fight in public*’.

Equally noteworthy is the low level of drug convictions appearing on the PNC compared to this self-report. Only four of the 248 crimes recorded in 2000/1 were for possession of drugs.

Table 4.15 shows the total numbers of young people reporting re-offending behaviour broken down by the crime variables ‘high’ ‘medium’ and ‘low’ (see Appendix 2). Perhaps inevitably (or even tautologically), in both administrations of the survey, the

'high' crime sub-sample shows highest nominations offending in almost all categories. However, the table does appear to indicate that only those in the 'low' crime sub-sample showed any increase in nominating offences in the follow-up survey: particularly in relation to vehicle crime (*'stealing from a car'* and *'stealing a car/motorbike'*), and drug-related activity (both use of and selling). Again, interpretations of this can only be speculative: do 'high' crime youngsters simply admit less? Alternatively, could attendance at the project 'negatively' influence those not previously involved – or not prepared to acknowledge involvement – in crime to report offending activity? Or, could attendance simply coincide with a peak age of adolescent experimentation in anti-social risk taking?

Table 4.15 Crime by crime score

Crime	Low crime sub-sample		Medium crime sub-sample		High crime sub-sample	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Stolen a car or motorbike	2	4	7	4	11	5
Been a passenger in a car that was stolen	4	4	11	7	14	8
Driven a car or motorbike when you were drunk	2	1	2	2	7	6
Damaged or destroyed anything, like a phone box, windows or written graffiti **	4	5	15	5	16	8
Stolen money from a gas or electricity meter, public phone or vending machine**	0	1	1	1	4	1
Stolen anything from a shop**	5	0	10	8	13	7
Stolen anything from your family or friend's house	0	0	2	1	4	2
Gone into any other building to try and steal anything	0	0	9	1	10	4
Stolen anything from a car	0	4	8	4	13	3
Snatched anything from someone, like a purse or bag	0	0	0	1	1	0
Used or sold a stolen credit card, cheque book, cash card	0	0	1	0	2	2
Bought, sold or kept anything else you thought was stolen	0	3	11	10	13	9
Threatened someone with a weapon, or to beat them up***	3	4	10	8	12	12
Got into a fight in public somewhere***	6	4	11	4	18	11
Used cannabis	2	4	14	13	16	14
Used drugs, other than cannabis	1	5	7	4	12	9
Sold drugs to someone else	0	2	6	2	10	3
Set fire to anything on purpose (e.g. building, car, furniture)	2	2	8	2	15	5
Beat up or hurt someone in your family, causing them to need medical treatment ****	1	1	1	0	3	2
Beat up or hurt someone not in your family, causing them to need medical treatment	4	3	9	3	14	7
Hurt someone, but they did not need medical treatment***	5	6	14	11	16	13

Source: NFER questionnaire 'Alternative Education Initiatives' Project 2001

* number of missing cases

A final question in the follow-up survey asked directly, in a closed question, about levels of offending since being on the project. Table 4.16 shows the overall results:

Table 4.16 Self-reported offending during the AEI project

Since being on the project, I have committed ...	N = 57	%
A lot less offences	14	24
A few less offences	13	23
Stopped committing offences	13	23
A few more offences	6	10
A lot more offences	1	2
None ticked	11	18

Overall, Table 4.16 shows a continuation of the trend emerging from elsewhere in the survey: about three-quarters suggested some reduction or complete renunciation of offending, with only one in eight indicating any increase. Notably, the ‘high’ crime sub-sample showed the highest number reporting less offending (14 out of the total of 18 classified in that sub-group ticked these options, evenly split between ‘lot less’ and ‘few less’). However, only two of the 13 in the sample as a whole who indicated they had stopped offending were ‘high’ crime youngsters. Girls particularly outnumbered boys in this response also. Notably, four of the seven young people stating any increase in crime were from the ‘low’ crime group. AEI 4 and AEI 1 were the two projects where no increase in offending was reported. AEI 3 contained the youngster (classified as highly disaffected but low crime) who admitted to ‘*a lot more*’ offending. At AEI 5 (the dispersal model), three of the 11 responding youngsters noted committing ‘*a few more offences*’ (in effect half of the sample as a whole who gave this response). This may suggest some influence from peers particularly where sustained pastoral support is less evident.

4.4.3 Comparison of self-report and PNC

A final piece of analysis sought to compare, where possible, differences between the PNC and self-report data on offending.

As already noted, the respondents who completed the questionnaire were not entirely the same sample as the young people recorded by the PNC, who were those with a known history of offending. The categories of type of crime in the self-report survey were also different to the PNC offence classification and, therefore direct comparisons between the two data sets were somewhat limited. Acknowledging this important caveat, some analysis has been attempted and is based around Table 4.17. Table 4.17 shows the categories of overlap and differences in self-report and PNC data from the young people in the sample for whom comparisons could be made. It shows how numbers of young people over- or under-reported their criminal activities. The fact that some of the young people who under-reported crimes in the self-report were the most persistent offenders, according to PNC data, may in part account for any major discrepancies.

Table 4.17 shows that 41 of the 55 young people (over three-quarters) over-reported crimes. Clarification of the term ‘over-reporting’ is required before any further discussion: it is impossible to know whether, or if so, the extent to which, the young people were ‘over-reporting’ or exaggerating the total amounts of crimes they had committed, or indeed offering accurate accounts. Therefore the term is used in reference to the difference between the self-report and the PNC data. Based on this definition, two types of apparent over-reporting were apparent: those not present on the PNC at all and those present on the PNC but self-reporting more and different offences.

Table 4.17 Comparisons between self-reporting and PNC data

	AEI number						
	AEI 1 N=9	AEI 2 N=9	AEI 3 N=8	AEI 4 N=9	AEI 5 N=10	AEI 6 N=10	N=55*
Nil reporting	2	2	0	3	1	1	9
Under-reporting	0	2	0	0	3	0	5
Over-reporting: Unidentified by the PNC	5	4	5	5	2	7	28
Over-reporting: recorded by the PNC	2	1	3	1	4	2	13
TOTAL	9	9	8	9	10	10	55

Source: *NFER questionnaire ‘Alternative Education Initiatives’ Project 2001*
PNC data 2001

* Two missing cases

Nil reporting

Table 4.17 shows that a total of nine young people stated that they had not committed any offences and were not logged by the PNC as having done so. Only AEI 3 had no exemplars of nil-reporting. Conversely, three of the nine respondents in AEI 4 had no offending background in either data sources. This finding is in line with the point made earlier where it was noted that PNC data showed some 73 per cent of AEI 3’s intake having criminal histories, compared to ten per cent in AEI 4.

Under-reporting

Five youngsters with a PNC record of offending self-reported fewer offences than they were recorded for: two of these were from AEI 2 and three from AEI 5. Four out of five of this group were the most persistent offenders in the entire sample.

Over-reporting: unidentified by PNC

Table 4.17 also shows that the PNC did not have any record of 28 of the young people, i.e. half of the sample. It is universally acknowledged that recorded crime is only a subset of crime committed so we should not be too surprised by this finding. The numbers of young people falling into this category varied, from two of the ten in

AEI 5, to seven of the ten who did self-report in AEI 3. However, AEI projects 3, 4 and 6 showed the most startling examples of over-reporting/unidentified by the PNC.

Over-reporting: recorded by PNC

Over a quarter of the total number of young people who over reported criminal activity in Phase 3 of the fieldwork were recorded by the PNC as having committed offences in 2000–2001. Table 4.17 has shown the numbers who fell into this category varied by project, from one youngster out of nine in AEIs 2 and 4, to four out of ten in AEI 5. This group of young people were admitting to more crimes on average (nine) than those who were self-reporting crime but not known to the PNC (five). It is timely to reiterate the difficulty of comparability between the two data sets, as different categories are presented in both. However, interpretations can be made for each type of crime, for example:

Self report classification	PNC categories
<i>'Damaged or destroyed anything, like a phone box, windows or written graffiti'</i>	Criminal damage
<i>'Beat up or hurt someone (family or non family) causing them to need medical treatment'</i>	Assault
<i>'Stolen anything from a shop' or 'gone into any other building to try to steal something'</i>	Property theft
<i>'Stolen a car or motorbike' 'Been a passenger in a stolen car' 'Stolen anything from a car'</i>	Vehicle crime
<i>'Got into a fight in public somewhere'</i>	Disorderly behaviour

Based on these assumptions of transferability, three-quarters of the young people in this group (9/13) were admitting to crimes recorded by the PNC in addition to the numerous others they acknowledged.

Despite these difficulties, one fact remains indisputable: this sample was admitting to significant criminal involvement, the vast majority of which remained undetected. It might also be of note, that this group completed the questionnaire at the end of the evaluation period, indicating a sustained engagement as they were still attending. As will be discussed in 4.4.4 of this section, staff at the projects drew a direct link between levels of engagement and vulnerability to crime, positing that high level offenders did not engage with the provision. If this is the case, it could be intimated that our survey sample might represent a more 'reformed' or lower offending type than is evident across the AEI cohort as a whole. The extent to which the young people completing the survey were exaggerating their criminality, referring to a different time span than requested (i.e. since they had been on the project) or how they interpreted the questions also ultimately remains an unknown quantity. It must also be acknowledged that some caveats might be applied to the accuracy of the PNC: how soon are convictions entered onto the database?

4.4.4 The interview data

In addition to the survey material, questions were posed to the sixty three young people who were interviewed about any changes in offending levels whilst on the project, and, in addition, what respondents saw as the reasons for these. Of particular interest was how far attendance at an AEI might be seen to directly be responsible for reductions in offending behaviour.

Again, it may be timely to reiterate that AEIs are not instituted to have a specific focus on crime reduction. However, project staff often indicated that there were responsive and informal ways in which they addressed the issue of offending, within their individuated pastoral support and/or as part of PSE programmes (e.g. the needs-based introduction of other agencies such as YOT drugs counsellors), as outlined in earlier sections of the report.

Although they readily acknowledged their overview of offending behaviours was not comprehensive, being dependent on disclosure by the young person or contact by criminal justice agencies (such as YOTs or police), it was clear that project staff were acutely aware of young people's continuing vulnerability to crime beyond the project.

[A decline in offending behaviour] varies, and I am not going to say 'Oh yes, none of them ever offend again'. I think we often will get the hardcore offender where there is a lot of work to be done: it's not just trying to change their patterns of offending behaviour, it's trying to change them. A lot of that work is related to their outside environment, home and their peers ... I couldn't say 'Oh yes, every day they finish here, they don't do anything', we are not naïve, not stupid (project staff, AEI 4).

Nevertheless, a clear view that a young person's commitment to engaging with the project could affect crime levels emerged from staff: it was the less engaged youngsters who remained most vulnerable to crime. Conversely, examples of high-level offenders not engaging with the projects were cited:

There are some people who have got involved in offending behaviour. I would say it's 50/50 really ... and again it's been the ones that haven't really engaged with the provision that the offending behaviour has remained or occurred more I think (project staff, AEI 5).

Interview data from the young people themselves confirmed this perspective of variability in reduction of offending. The responses of a small number who were interviewed indicated **no change** in offending levels or attitudes to offending, but a greater proportion identified that there was. Reasons given by the young people for such reduction in offending activity varied, and fell into several distinct categories:

- **A change of stimulus and environment** (attendance at the project providing less boredom, less 'hang-factor' time; different peer groups)
- **A change of prospects** (wanting to avoid prison, wanting a job in the future)

- **A change of attitude** (maturation, renunciation or consideration of family's feelings).

As an overview, these differences perhaps represent a continuum: from an 'extrinsic' interpretation, with change being accounted for by the experience of new contexts, to a qualitatively different 'intrinsic' perspective, that placed change as an internalised rejection of the causes and consequences of offending.

For those young people admitting **no change**, the discourse accompanying their accounts and examples of offending behaviour implied some fatalism or lack of this sense of consequence:

No change in offending	<i>I'd still go out [and offend] because if I get nicked, I get nicked ... I'm not that bothered ... but when I get nicked, that's when I'll be worried about my job and that, whether I'll get a job when I am older (male, AEI 6).</i>
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Sometimes, interviewees' responses implied they were not offending to such an extent:

Less offending	<i>I still do them sort of things ... but not as much as I used to now (male, AEI 1). I haven't [been in trouble with police] as often since I have come here to the project. I have only had a couple of fights, about three I reckon, three or four. But they haven't been severe where I have really damaged them or they have really damaged me, or whatever. It's just been a silly little slap and walk away, but that's it (female, AEI 1).</i>
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In contrast, those youngsters who suggested that **a change of stimulus** accounted for a significant reduction in crime clearly saw less time and boredom as being key factors. Having 'my mind taken off offending', 'my mind being occupied' surfaced in some of this discourse as did no longer having 'time on my hands' and now 'having something to do'. References to no longer being 'bored' or even simply being 'too knackered' after a day at the outdoor provision, were cited by the young people.

Change of stimulus: less time/less boredom	<p>Q: <i>You've done some offences, can I ask, are you still doing some things now since you started on the project ... are you doing more or less do you think? Do you think coming here has had any impact on that?</i></p> <p>A: <i>Yes, a lot more impact, because obviously quite a large number of pupils get excluded permanently from school, and like, a bit ago, when I wasn't doing the project, I was spending all day with my mates, and you used to get bored and that, and get into trouble. Like, when you were out all day, some of my mates, if they had no money, they would go and steal something, it takes up part of the day...</i></p> <p>Q: <i>Do you think coming to a place like this affects your attitude, do you think it makes you think about things a bit more?</i></p> <p>A: <i>Coming here changes the way I think, because, like, when I here, I don't really think about offending ... it takes your mind off it when you are doing somat. If you are going out in the morning you don't have to think 'Oh yes, what am I going to do all today'. You know you are going to come here and have got something to do (male, AEI 3).</i></p>
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Another perspective on the changed context affecting offending levels offered by the young people was the lack of contact with previous peer group or the new peers they now mixed with: a viewpoint noted by girls particularly.

Change of context: different peers	<p><i>I used to go out with my mates all the time and cause trouble, get into trouble with the police and that. But now I am here [at the project] I don't really have time to go out with my mates and just don't do those things anymore.</i></p> <p>Q: <i>Have you got a different group of friends would you say?</i></p> <p>A: <i>Yes ... it's the people here now (female, AEI 4).</i></p>
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A third aspect of contextual change was removal from the mainstream school environment which had directly stimulated problematic behaviour.

Change of context: not at school	<p>Q: <i>Getting into trouble with the police, committing crimes ... has there been any changes in this area for you [since being on the project]</i></p> <p>A: <i>Well if I wasn't here now, I would probably be up the school now smashing or causing trouble somewhere. So, like, I am out of trouble here now aren't I? (male, AEI 2).</i></p>
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For some young people, **a change of prospects** was cited as the reason for reduction in offending. Here, such reductions were being correlated with more than just a change of context and greater stimulus: rather it is the recognition of jeopardising futures, particularly employment opportunity. However, a more pragmatic reason for changes to criminal activity was cited in one instance: this young person's perception of the proximity of a youth crime watershed appeared to affect his attitude to offending.

In contrast, two girls put potential employment as a key factor: the capacity to consider futures in this way may well be associated with the kinds of experiences offered by AEs. The phrase *'I've such a lot going for me now'* in the second quotation below seems a particularly powerful statement about empowerment, confidence and self-esteem.

Change of prospects:	<p><i>When I was at school, I was getting in bother all the time, fighting, criminal damage and theft, all sorts, but I don't know, I have never been in trouble with them since January, since I got my last sentence. I got a 12-month probation order, and a P. Programme. I finished that yesterday. Next time I go back I am going straight to jail, so I'm not going back.</i></p> <p>Interviewer: <i>So why do you think you look at things differently now than you did? Because I have got so much going for me now. I can work and all that lot. If I go to jail, get in trouble and go to jail, then all that is just going to get chucked away (female, AEI 5).</i></p>
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The third major type of explanation for a reduction in offending related to **attitudinal change**. Here, the young people's accounts specified some internal growth, maturation or a 'moving on' from previous patterns of behaviour. The word '*realise*' surfaced in this discourse on a number of occasions: the consequences of criminal activity were becoming evident.

Attitudinal change: 'realisation'	<p>Q: <i>You said before you went through a stage of getting into trouble a lot ... has that changed as a result of being here or for other reasons?</i></p> <p>A: <i>Other reasons mostly. Plus, I have to change anyway, because I have come here for a fresh start and to catch up and just sort out my life, that is why I am here. But I changed 'cos I woke up and realised that I had to change cos it was a waste of time (male, AEI 4).</i></p>
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Another feature of the young people who articulated a change in offending behaviour related to family influence. Here, the accounts showed variation in terms of consideration of their family's feelings of shame and distress; awareness of family support; as well as fear of maternal reprisal. *My mum said like if she ever got home and there was police knocking on the door, she would put me away sort of thing (male, AEI 4).* Sometimes, parental interviews also highlighted this influence.

Attitudinal change: family influence	<p>Q: <i>What sort of things were you up to before you came here then, how do you behave now?</i></p> <p>A: <i>I used to be a little thief, but I've stopped now – I just ask my dad for money</i></p> <p>Q: <i>So why do you think you've changed like that?</i></p> <p>A: <i>Don't know, 'cos I have stopped doing it. There have been people helping me, telling me to stay off it</i></p> <p>Q: <i>What these here at the project?</i></p> <p>A: <i>No ... my dad, my sister and everyone (male, AEI 3).</i></p> <p>Q: <i>You say you don't get into trouble with the police any more?</i></p> <p>A: <i>Yes, before it was police at the door and everything like that</i></p>
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A sense of outgrowing and renouncing offending activity also was articulated. (However, significantly, in the second interview extract quoted below, it is clear that this may not necessarily coincide with extrication from criminal reputations.) There were examples of parent and project staff perspectives also reflecting this view.

<p>Attitudinal change: renunciation of crime</p>	<p>Q: <i>You mentioned before you weren't hanging around with the same people, and that you weren't getting into trouble as much ... can you explain how and why you think you're committing less offences?</i></p> <p>A: <i>I can't explain it. I don't know really. It's just one day I was going out and stealing and whatever, and now I just think why? It's wrecking people's lives, it's wrecking my life for getting into trouble with the police. I might as well just settle down until the end of June till I get a job and then I won't have to steal or beat people or whatever. There is no need for it, you know what I mean. I have just grown up really I suppose (male, AEI 3).</i></p>
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How far the projects themselves were directly or solely responsible for any change in offending behaviour was not always articulated in the interviews. However, examples from young people and parents did occasionally surface.

<p>Attitudinal change: the project's contribution</p>	<p><i>I think it was [the project], really that made me think about what I was doing, because I never thought before I did it before (male, AEI 5).</i></p>
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Equally, staff relayed how the projects' pastoral support and personal commitment to the young people and their parents could be significant contributing factors. As one drug counsellor put it '*any positive contact with adults, giving positive influences has to be good*'. Another project highlighted how the key worker role was so important because '*those that are offending have more opportunity of stopping offending if they have an attachment to the place*'. In another instance, the value of learning anger management at the project was noted as '*... crime is borne of poor anger management*'. Notwithstanding this, there was some caution about the degree to which the project could directly resolve certain offending activity: crime around youth drug culture and involvement in the distribution of retail crime particularly were mentioned.

4.4.5 Victim of crime

A final issue from the offending component of the survey asked respondents to identify whether they had experiences as a recipient or victim of crime. Table 4.18 itemises the responses which the 57 young people gave in the introductory and final questionnaire administration.

Table 4.18 Victim of crime

Victim of crime n = 57	Pre	Post
1. Been beaten up	0	6
2. Been threatened by other(s)	7	10
3. Had your home burgled	0	5
4. Had a family car stolen	8	4
5. Had something of yours stolen	6	6
6. Been racially abused	0	2
7. Been racially attacked	0	1
8. Been bullied	4	6
9. Don't know	1	1
10. Had someone steal your mobile phone	n/a	0
11. None of these	27	39

Source: *NFER questionnaire 'Alternative Education Initiatives' Project 2001*

An overall increase in those reporting 'none' of the victim-status experiences is evident (two-thirds of the sample indicating this at the end of the project, compared to about half in the pre-questionnaire). Twenty-seven of the 38 boys and 11 of the 18 girls said they had had none of these experiences: hence, proportionately more girls acknowledged their victim-status). However, for those experiencing victimhood, there appears to be quite some rise in the range of offences suffered. Five of the six acknowledging bullying were girls and all those indicating any racist experiences were also girls. Equally, those from the 'high' crime sub-sample registered more victim experiences: for instance, in the end-of-project questionnaire, five of the six beaten up; three of the five with houses burgled and the female pupil racially attacked were all from this category. Hence involvement in crime and being a victim of crime show some association.

Summary

- Overall, across the six AEIs, 50 per cent of young people had been recorded on the PNC between 1997-2001. One provision (AEI 3), had the greatest proportion, at almost three-quarters (73 per cent), compared to AEI 4 which had the lowest offending rate at less than one in three (30 per cent) of its pupils.
- An overall increase of recorded offences was evident during the intervention year. However, this was mostly accounted for by two provisions. In addition, whilst more offences were recorded, fewer young people were responsible for these. Eight young people (from three of the six provisions) accounted for 145 of the 286 recorded offences.
- Self report on crime showed that, by the summer term, about three quarters of the final sample indicated a reduction or cessation of offending activity, with one in eight acknowledging an increase. There was enormous variation in the types of self-reported crime that the young people said had declined, and equally 'new' perpetrators emerged. Vandalist activity and theft showed the most marked decline in self-reported crime. Qualitative data may support the inference that being occupied during the day underpinned this finding.
- Comparisons of the PNC and self-report data showed only nine of the sample of 57 had neither self-reported crime nor had any PNC conviction. However, it was those who might be categorised as persistent offenders according to the PNC that were most likely to refute or 'under-report' such activity in the self-report exercise. Half of those self-reporting criminal activity had no PNC record. Hence ultimately, accounts of reduced offending cannot be refuted by PNC data.
- Interview data suggested that several different factors were being identified by the young people to account for reduction in offending behaviour: a change of stimulus and environment (attendance at the project providing less boredom, less 'hang-factor' time, different peer groups); a change of prospects (wanting to avoid prison, wanting a job in the future); and a change of attitude (maturation, an internally driven rejection of criminal behaviour or consideration of family's feelings).
- An overall increase in those reporting 'none' of the victim-status experiences is evident (two thirds of the sample indicating this at the end of the project, compared to about half in the pre-questionnaire). However, for those experiencing victimhood, there appears to be some rise in the range of offences suffered. Equally, those from the 'high' crime sub-sample registered more victim experiences.

Chapter 5

Retention, aspirations and destinations of students from AElS

About this chapter

This chapter examines the retention, aspirations and destinations of students who attended the projects over the course of the evaluation. It explores:

- The retention of students at the AElS and, for those who left before the end of the year, the reasons for their departure.
- The type of students that projects had most success with, as well as those with whom they had less success.
- The aspirations and expectations of students from AElS interviewed during the course of the evaluation.
- The destinations of students from AElS after they left the projects and presents a discussion of what might have happened if youngsters had not attended the AElS.
- Students' stated aspirations and actual destinations.

Key findings

- Most of the young people who left the AElS over the course of the year were non-attenders. There is a need for effective monitoring of these students' destinations to ensure that they do not become 'lost' from the educational system.
- The availability of provision to meet the needs of young parents and a coordinated approach to provision for looked after youngsters might assist in the retention of some students.
- Projects were seen as being most successful where young people's behaviours had not become entrenched, highlighting the benefits of early intervention.
- Young people had gained an awareness of training opportunities as a result of attending the AElS. Further efforts to raise awareness of the availability of training opportunities might be beneficial for all young people including those in school.
- There appeared to be an increasing realism in young people's aspirations and expectations as a result of attending the AElS.
- Young people noted a significant change in confidence in relation to themselves and their futures as a result of attending the projects.
- Interviewees highlighted the importance of post-programme support; AEI staff were continuing to support youngsters after they had finished at the projects.
- The lack of other alternative educational provision available to young people was highlighted, along with the mental health concerns of AEI youngsters.

5.1 Retention rates and reasons for leaving

The following section explores the retention rates of the AElS and the reasons youngsters left the projects throughout the course of the year. The actual destinations of the whole cohort sample at the end of the evaluation phase are explored in further detail in Section 5.4.

Table 5.1 shows the retention rates of the AElS and the reasons young people left the projects throughout the course of the year. It highlights that retention rates varied enormously between AElS, ranging from just over a third (35 per cent) in AEl 2, to 97 per cent in AEl 5. However, it should be noted that project staff intimated that they were accepting a wide range of young people who were not always suited to particular interventions. Leaving an intervention did not necessarily mean the end of educational engagement for the young person. For example, although AEl 2 showed the lowest retention rate, youngsters who no longer attended the provision were referred back to the LEA, which then endeavoured to secure alternative placements for them. Furthermore, although AEl 6's retention rate was just over half (57 per cent), many pupils left the project for positive reasons, that is, they were reintegrated back into mainstream or special school.

Table 5.1 Retention rates and reasons for leaving

	AEI 1	AEI 2	AEI 3	AEI 4	AEI 5	AEI 6	TOTAL
Retention rate	73% (16/22)	35% (8/23)	60% (9/15)	64% (21/33)	97% (38/49)	57% (17/30)	67% (109/162)
Number who left	6	15	6	12	1	13	53
Reasons for leaving							
Non-attendance	0	9	2	4	0	4	19
Reintegrated to school	0	0	0	2	0	6	8
Moved away	1	3	2	1	1	0	8
Alternative placement	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Excluded	2	0	0	2	0	0	4
Custodial sentence	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Childcare/pregnancy	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
Health concerns	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Employment	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	0	1	0	0	1

Source: *NFER data templates*

Table 5.1 shows that by far the most common reason for young people leaving the AElS during the course of the evaluation was non-attendance; they had elected not to come. Well over half (9/15) of the youngsters taken off the roll of AEl 2 were non-attenders. Whilst in AEl 3, staff felt that the distance some students had to travel in order to access the project had exacerbated their non-attendance. In AEl 2 and AEl 6, non-attenders had been referred back to the LEA in order to secure more appropriate placements/provision, for example in college. However, two of the identified non-attenders in AEl 6 were on full-time college placements.

As highlighted previously, there were positive reasons for young people leaving the projects, that is they were reintegrated back into school or moved on to alternative

placements. AEI 6 and AEI 4 had both reintegrated youngsters back into school throughout the course of the year. This is interesting as these projects could be viewed as being at either end of the disengaged continuum. AEI 4 was the closest to a 'school type' provision, i.e. full time, classroom-based and school curriculum-focused, and therefore might have been expected to reintegrate youngsters back into mainstream school. In contrast, AEI 6 was working with some very disturbed young people, including those with severe EBD, but still reintegrated a number of pupils back into mainstream and special schools. In AEI 6 this process was perhaps assisted by the younger age of some of the students and because some pupils had remained on a school (special or mainstream school) roll whilst attending the AEI and there was an expectation that they would be reintegrated. The four young people who left the projects and transferred to alternative placements were moving to interventions which suited their needs more appropriately, for example, college, or because they were closer to home, or their offending behaviour had necessitated an alternative placement.

All the projects, apart from AEI 6, had young people in the category 'moved away', highlighting the transient lives of many of the youngsters attending alternative provision, particularly looked after youngsters.

Young people also left, or were excluded from the projects because of the problems they were experiencing, for example drugs' misuse, offending behaviour and health (mental and physical) concerns. However, it should be noted that a small number of youngsters left projects because of the need to work (1) and due to childcare commitments/pregnancy (3). It is interesting to note that the two projects (AEI 1 and AEI 4) which had permanently excluded youngsters were at either end of the disengaged continuum. Students' offending behaviour had also affected project retention rates; three young people had left AEI 6 because of a custodial sentence. Furthermore, project staff in AEI 2, AEI 3 and AEI 6 felt that individual youngsters were not attending because of their offending behaviour.

In Phase One interviews staff were also asked what they thought were the main reasons for young people leaving the programme. Their responses can be seen as falling into four, often interlinked, areas (the numbers in brackets denote the number of times these factors were mentioned by respondents):

- **Individual factors** such as young people's offending behaviour (2); drugs' misuse (1); frustration/low self-esteem (1); looked after status (1) (this was viewed as increasing youngsters' vulnerability to not being retained at the project); pregnancy (2); and lack of commitment to the project (2) (for example, only attending to comply with a supervision order or because there was a financial incentive to attend. When these incentives were removed youngsters stopped attending the project).
- **Family factors** such as lack of parental support (2), for example in relation to attendance at the project; pressure from a young person's family not to attend (3), for example, due to a belief that they should be working/earning money; moving away (3), this also included a looked after youngster who was moved out of the area for their own safety.

- **Community factors** (1). This focused on peer group relationships within the community, specifically youngsters associating with other young people who were not in education or work.
- **Project factors** such as distance to travel to the project (1), which was a particular retention issue for staff in AEI 3; structure of the provision (4), for example, staff at the ‘brokering’ project (AEI 5) felt that there was a need to increase the flexibility of the provision by offering outreach intervention to young people. There was also concern here that the lack of a centralised project base had a negative impact on retention rates because young people were unable to access activities immediately on referral to the AEI. There was a belief that the AEI ‘lost’ some youngsters because they could not immediately ‘hook them in’ on referral. It was notable that this AEI had five young people excluded from outreach provision that they were originally assigned to. Similarly, in AEI 4 staff felt that the project was unsuitable for some of its referrals because the structure of the AEI activities and provision offered a degree of independence and responsibility which some youngsters were unable to manage.

5.1.1 The types of young people AEIs were most and least successful with

This section explores the type of young people that projects had most success with, as well as those with whom they had less. Both young people and staff interviewed were asked about the types of young person the projects worked best for, and also about the types of young people for whom it worked less well.

Staff views

Collectively staff felt that they had **most success** with vulnerable youngsters, and those who had experienced difficulties in coping with mainstream education. **Vulnerable youngsters** included those young people who had been, or were: bullied at school, school phobics, experiencing instability in their home lives e.g. being fostered, or lacking in trust. Staff felt that the projects offered vulnerable youngsters the stability and support that they had been unable to, or had been prevented from, accessing elsewhere: *‘it works for kids who are being bullied, it works for kids who have an unstable home life’* (project staff AEI 6). Projects could provide vulnerable young people with a safe, secure, environment and time to begin to address their problems and needs. So, an AEI was seen by staff as successful for one young person who had recently been fostered because it had given him: *‘self-esteem, a bit of love, continuity and a bit of stability and trust’* (project staff AEI 6) at an extremely vulnerable time in his life. Projects were also viewed as being successful with those youngsters who were receiving very little attention from home (mentioned by three interviewees) and needed *‘befrienders, someone who is going to take an interest in them’* (project staff AEI 5). *‘They just need someone to spend time with them’* (project staff AEI 2), *‘those who haven’t got a secure family background, we have the most success with’* (project staff AEI 5).

Vulnerable youngsters often experienced difficulties coping with mainstream education and with the culture of school, and interviewees also felt that they had

particular success with youngsters who were **unable to cope in mainstream** education. This was seen as a success of the college provision linked to AEI 4: *'I think we are very successful with disenfranchised young people who haven't been able to manage mainstream education'* (college provider AEI 4). College was seen as offering these youngsters greater flexibility, fewer rules and a less structured environment. Projects were also seen as successful in working with young people who required additional support and/or attention which was unavailable to them in mainstream education, they were the ones who tended to get *'lost in the system'* (project staff AEI 1). Similarly, young people who had struggled through school and had experienced many *'knock-backs'* and *'don't think anything about themselves and have got no self-esteem'* (project staff AEI 2) were seen to have benefited from attending the projects.

Interviewees also felt that they had experienced success with young people with **behavioural problems**. However, this view was qualified by a member of staff from AEI 4, who felt that the project was most successful with young people with minor, rather than major, behavioural problems. Other interviewees felt that AEIs were successful with young people with behavioural difficulties because they placed them in informal environments, for example college, and provided flexible, individualised programmes to suit young people's needs. Similarly, staff from AEI 1 felt that they were most successful with the 'loud', 'aggressive' youngsters who were masking their learning difficulties with their behaviour because the project was in a position to address those learning needs.

Linked to projects' perceived success with behavioural difficulties, a member of staff from AEI 2 also felt that they were successful with **disaffected youngsters**: *'I think we have the most impact on the disaffected pupils, the really hard, difficult kids that nobody else will work with for whatever reason'*. This interviewee also felt that the project was successful with young people with emotional problems because these difficulties were specifically addressed at the intervention.

Similarly, success with young people with **learning difficulties** was also highlighted. This included youngsters with poor basic skills and associated problems, such as low self-esteem and behavioural difficulties, as well as young people who had missed education or had undiagnosed problems, including dyslexia.

Interviewees also felt that their success with AEI youngsters was dependent on the commitment of the young people themselves and their parents. Projects were successful with **'committed youngsters'**, they had to be *'willing to engage'* (project staff AEI 3). Those youngsters who had an awareness of what they wanted to do after they left the project were also seen as being successful in AEI 3. This perhaps reflected the fact that the provision was for Year 11s and was vocationally focused.

One interviewee also felt that the project was successful with **offenders**. Again this was quite specific to the nature of this provision (AEI 4), and entailed work experience at a local shopping centre. The person who ran this particular work experience placement felt that it was very successful with young people who had a *'history of retail crime'* as it provided them with an opportunity to understand the consequences of their crime.

Finally, three interviewees felt that there was **no particular type** of young person with whom they were successful.

When staff were asked about the types of young people they felt projects were **less successful** with, similar categories were identified as those they felt they were most successful with. For instance, staff felt that they were least successful with '**damaged young people**'. This category could be viewed as a more extreme version of the 'vulnerable youngsters' with whom staff felt they were most successful. These young people were described as damaged: emotionally, mentally and indeed physically, and included those youngsters who had experienced serious abuse, often from a young age.

Less successful with: damaged young people

If they are emotionally damaged, like seriously damaged then this is not the place for them (project staff AEI 6).

This level of damage, in some instances, was quite severe. Talking about a specific young person a member of staff observed: '*He has had a lot of trauma in his life and the answer for him is one-to-one, 24 hours residential ... he needs somebody all the time ... he's a classic EBD ...so we can't do much for him*' (project staff AEI 6). This category also included young people with psychiatric problems and severe EBD, who were said to require intensive support and counselling, which projects were not in a position to provide.

The second most common type of youngster that staff felt there was less success with related to young people's **attitude**. This included young people who:

- refused to acknowledge that they had a problem (1)
- chose not to engage (1)
- were not committed to attending the project (2)
- had an attitude to authority which made them conflictual even in the less disciplinary environment of the AEI provision (1).

The difficulties of working with young people who would not acknowledge that they had a problem was regarded by staff to result in a situation in which the AEI could not reach them. Similarly, there was recognition that there were some young people who would not engage:

I think you have always got the young person who doesn't want to ever do anything and as hard as you try you will never ever get anything out of that young person (project staff AEI 2).

Other reasons given by staff for the lack of success with students focused on their **behaviour**, in particular their offending, drugs' misuse, non-attendance and general behavioural difficulties. Staff felt that projects were less successful with young people who were offenders, particularly those who were engaged in deep-rooted offending behaviour. These youngsters were described by one member of staff as '*cynical criminals*' (project staff AEI 6).

Less successful with young offenders

Those who are cynical criminals, who are mature ... I can think of one in particular ... who had absolutely no intention of attending our place or in trying to improve himself ... he was a very mature young man who had decided that life for him involved crime and that's how he was going to make his money and if coming to our place was going to get educational welfare off his back then that's what he would do (project staff AEI 6).

Staff felt that projects were unable to compete with this type of offending behaviour/attitude, or offer enough of a diversionary mechanism. As has already been highlighted, a number of youngsters left projects due to custodial sentences. Further information about offending and young offenders at the AEs appears in Chapter Four.

Drugs' misuse also impacted on the success of projects working with young people. Project staff did not always feel that they had sufficient skills to deal with '*persistent drug users*' and that these youngsters needed '*a different kind of help*' (project staff AEI 3). There was a feeling that staff were unable to cope with, or challenge, the entrenched behaviours of those students who were heavily involved in drugs' misuse.

In the case of chronic **non-attenders**, it was deemed to be very difficult to challenge established behaviour, especially in Years 10 or 11, if youngsters had never, or rarely, attended secondary school:

Less successful with: non-attenders

Sometimes it's difficult for the pupils that have had chronic attendance difficulties ... I would say those are the most difficult ones. The ones who have not been in school for years at a time ... once it gets to key stage 4 it is very difficult to engage with them and move them on (project staff AEI 5).

Similarly, staff within AEI 2 felt that they were least successful with young people with severe **behavioural difficulties** and special needs, including **learning difficulties**:

Less successful with: behavioural and learning difficulties

The only two areas that we do struggle with are those with severe behavioural difficulties and severe special needs. Really we are not a place for those, and if somebody has got really strong learning needs they need to go to a specialist provider (project staff AEI 2).

This perhaps reflected the type of provision and expertise of staff within this AEI, which was a youth work-focused provision. Thus, staff felt that they did not have the expertise to cope with severe learning difficulties.

The other areas where staff felt projects were less successful related to family and community factors, including: lack of parental support (2), difficult home backgrounds (2), looked after status (3), relationships in the local community (1), and young parents (1). Staff in AEI 1 and AEI 3 particularly raised the first three factors. As has already been highlighted, parental support for the programme and for their child's attendance at the programme was viewed as one of the factors in assisting in a

project's success. Conversely, a lack of parental support was viewed in AEI 3 as having a detrimental impact on the project's success. Similarly, projects found it extremely difficult to counteract some of the influences of young people's difficult home backgrounds where families were under enormous pressure and stress. Placements at projects did break down because of problems and difficulties which were beyond staff control. Connected to this were the challenges associated with maintaining looked after young people at the projects. Staff from both AEI 1 and AEI 3 felt they had been less successful with looked after youngsters. The reasons given focused on the often complex difficulties associated with the young people themselves, but also on the support available to these youngsters:

Less successful with: looked after youngsters

We have particular problems with children who are in care ... we can't be parent and educational facility at the same time ... we can't do as much pastoral support as they need because they need something after five o'clock at night and at weekends and during the holidays (project staff AEI 1).

The impact of peer relationships in the local community, where youngsters were associating with young people who were not attending school, was viewed as another area which could mitigate against the project's success. It was seen as '*very hard to break that pattern*' (project staff AEI 4), particularly when it was also linked to offending behaviour, a point again worth noting for the project's impact on criminality .

A staff member at AEI 2 felt that it was less successful with young parents because there was no specialist provision for young mothers within the local area. This meant that young mothers had great difficulty accessing any alternative educational provision.

One interviewee in AEI 4 felt that there were no particular types of young people that the project was less successful with, and an interviewee in AEI 5 felt that it was difficult to pinpoint why they were successful with some students and not others.

Young people's views

Young people attending the projects were asked to describe the students they thought the intervention had worked well for, and also to talk about those they thought the programmes had not worked so well for. Young people found it quite difficult to respond to this question and their responses tended to focus on individual youngsters. Many of the young people's responses reflected those given by staff and focused on AEs working well in terms of:

- generally working well for many or all students (5)
- behaviour (3)
- attendance (3)
- relationships with staff and other young people (3)
- self-confidence (2)
- offending (1)
- new opportunities (1)

- the activities available (1).

Young people felt that projects had worked less well in terms of:

- attendance (9)
- behaviour (5)
- not engaging (3)
- home factors (2)
- drugs (2)
- offending (1).

A further seven young people were not sure whether the project had worked particularly well, and five young people felt that the projects had worked well for many, or all of the students, but were unable to articulate why. For those who were able to give reasons, these focused on an improvement in young people's **behaviour**, including general behaviour on the project, and improved **attendance**. Young people noted an improvement in other student's attendance: '*he is coming more regular now and I know that he used to be really bad in his old school*' (young person AEI 4), and improvements in behaviour, for example, other youngsters' had become less aggressive (young person AEI 5). In addition in AEI 3, a reduction in **offending** behaviour was also noted.

When interviewees were asked to give examples of why they thought projects had been less successful, the reasons presented again focused on **behaviour**, primarily **attendance**. Young people felt that the primary indicator of a project being less successful with individual youngsters was that they had elected not to attend:

Less successful: non-attendance

A couple of people have just stopped coming. I have got a friend who used to come here and she has just stopped coming. She just didn't like it ... she just didn't like working (female AEI 2).

Furthermore, less stringent monitoring of attendance, for example at college, was viewed as making non-attendance an 'easier option' within alternative educational provision: '*A few people didn't go as much like, but it was just because they couldn't be bothered weren't it?*' When asked the reason for that the young person replied: '*Well just probably because they told their mum's that they don't have to be in college that day, I've done that ... they don't ring your house*' (male AEI 5).

Young people's continuing **behavioural problems** were seen by interviewees as an indicator that projects had been less successful: '*they just mess around every day, like jump on the pool tables and don't do their work*' (male AEI 6). A project was seen as being unsuccessful with one young person because of his continuing challenging behaviour. The interviewee observed that this student had to be accompanied by two members of staff when they went out on project activities '*because he is so naughty, he can get out of control*' (female AEI 3). However, one interviewee felt that a project had been unsuccessful with one young person primarily because the intervention had tried to address his attention-seeking behaviour. The project had not worked for this student because '*he likes being around a load of people, so he can*

show himself off and he likes to be the centre of attention, but no-one gave it him here' (female AEI 2).

Interviewees thought projects could have very little impact on those young people who **could not**, or **would not, engage**. Comments related to youngsters' inability, or reluctance to engage with project activities.

Less successful: not engaging

He don't listen he's always going off to the shops or going outside for a fag or something, he never listens (male AEI 3).

Factors outside the projects were also viewed as impacting on their success with individual youngsters. Young people highlighted **home factors, drugs' misuse** and **offending behaviour** as reasons for less success at the projects. Students were aware of the impact of these external factors on other youngsters' ability to engage with projects. Home factors could be both negative and positive:

Less successful: home factors

Some of them don't like coming in some days and then they come in. It depends how they feel at home (male AEI 4).

Similarly, one student described another young person who had been fostered and had now returned home to live with his mother: *'he was in a foster home, he wanted to be with his mum, and now he is with his mum I think he just wants to spend the whole time with her again instead of school' (female AEI 4).*

Drugs' misuse was viewed as impacting on youngsters' success at the projects and was also given as the reason why one young person had been excluded. Attendance was affected by drugs' misuse: *'when we said about residential he said he couldn't go on a residential without taking drugs and then he never come again' (male AEI 5).* In one project an interviewee felt that many of the students were still offending: *'most of the people who come here are all going to end up in prison because they don't care' (male AEI 3).*

Summary: retention, reasons for departure and variations in success

- The majority of youngsters who left the AEIs over the course of the year were non-attenders. There is a need to ensure that these students are effectively monitored to ensure that they do not become ‘lost’ from the educational system.
- However, reasons for leaving the AEI could also be positive. A significant number of young people left the AEIs over the course of the year because they had been reintegrated back to school.
- Possible areas for development which might assist in the retention of young people at AEIs might include the availability of provision to meet the needs of young parents and a coordinated approach to provision for looked after youngsters.
- Project staff felt that they were most successful where young people’s behaviours had not become entrenched, for example with ‘vulnerable’ rather than ‘damaged’ youngsters, highlighting the benefits of early intervention.
- Projects appeared to be less successful where behaviours, for example offending behaviour, had become entrenched.

Having examined the reasons why young people left the AEIs, the following section examines the aspirations and expectations of AEI youngsters prior to their departure.

5.2 Future aspirations

Young people interviewed in both Phases One and Three of the research were asked what they wanted to do when they left the project. An overview of their responses and their post-evaluation destinations are summarised in Table 5.11 in Appendix 3.

Table 5.2 shows that AEI youngsters’ had a range of expectations and aspirations. This included fairly stereotypical aspirations of wanting to join the army, be a mechanic, or work with small animals and children, to more ‘ambitious’ expectations, for example, wanting to be a touring car driver, a super bike rider, a pop star, and an architect. A number of interviewees highlighted a range of aspirations, some of which were quite diverse: *‘I was thinking about joining the army ... I have also considered working with exotic animals and oh what was the other one, architecture’* (male AEI 1).

Some interviewees’ expectations, for example wanting to be a policeman or fireman, were probably quite unrealistic, given their level of disengagement, but nevertheless they fitted the ‘traditional’, gendered, aspirational role models. Most youngsters’ expectations conformed to traditional roles. The numbers in brackets denote the number of respondents.

The boys wanted to be:

- mechanics (7)
- to go into the army (3)
- fire/police service (2)
- bricklaying (2)
- painters and decorators (2)
- electricians (1).

Girls' stated ambitions and expectations also revealed that they wanted to work in what might be considered traditional female occupations. For example, they wanted to work in:

- childcare (6)
- leisure and tourism (3)
- work with small animals (2)
- to be a beautician (1).

Those who expressed a desire to work in childcare often stated that they had wanted to do this for a considerable length of time and also felt that they had the relevant experience:

Aspirations childcare

I have always wanted, always wanted to work with little children (female AEI 2).

The boys' expectations were often quite 'ambitious', for example, one young person wanted to work in Africa '*preserving the wildlife*' but he had no concept of how he was going to achieve this goal. Another boy said: '*I want to be a mechanic, but I want to go abroad and do it*'. When asked how he was going to do that, he replied:

My uncle works in a garage, it's his own garage and he said he will teach me and that I can go and work there for a bit and save all my money and try and go and live abroad and then just try and start talking their language and then get a job there doing mechanics ... before I was going to go abroad I was going to go to college and learn a language so it would be easier for me to get a job straight away (male AEI 6).

What was also seen in this and other boys' responses (but not the girls) was an expectation that they could rely on support from family contacts to access future training and/or employment. One boy said that he was going to work for his cousin '*he has three companies so he said whichever one I want to go to I can just work for him ... I said fine so I know what I am doing when I leave school*' (male AEI 4). Others stated that they were going to work with their granddad or their '*dad's mate*'. Boys' responses highlighted an awareness of informal economic networks, whereas girls focused on more traditional educational, training and/or vocational routes.

Despite some ambitious expectations, such as those highlighted above, some of the boys' responses were also realistic. For example, one interviewee stated that he wanted to join the army because there was very little employment in the local area, whilst another was aware that he was probably not going to be a touring car driver, so

he saw joining the army as a more realistic goal. One young person wanted to use their own experience of drugs and offending to assist others in similar situations.

Aspirations – drugs’ counsellor

When I’m finished here I would like to do something to do with drugs, drugs counselling or something to do with the law because I am quite interested in that, but not being a police officer or anything like that, supporting people that are in trouble with the police ... because I have had problems with my family and my family have been involved in taking drugs and I have seen it all and I would like to help people with them problems ... when I committed the offence which I am in trouble for now that was committed about a year ago but it’s still at court now, the way I was treated by the police and that, and like helping other people that have been treated [like that]. I got to think that I would like to do that job (male AEI 3).

These insightful comments about being able to relate to, and empathise with such individuals were reinforced by his own enquiries: he had spoken to drugs’ counsellors about what their job entailed, and the qualifications required.

Interviewees’ comments also suggested that they were conscious of the links between the work they were doing at the AEI and their future aspirations. For example, one young person (female) from AEI 6 was completing a childcare course with a training agency, so she felt that she would be in a position to secure a childcare job in the future. Many of the Year 11s had attended college tasters or courses, and perhaps completed work experience by the time they were interviewed in Phase Three of the research. They demonstrated quite detailed knowledge of the college courses and qualifications required for their chosen career.

Awareness of future progression

If I can get at least three Cs on my GCSEs [at college] and do my GNVQs and then be a nursery teacher and I have got a voluntary job at [name of primary school] starting in September (female AEI 2).

Both these young people were also interviewed in Phase One and although their early aspirations were very similar, their awareness of what they would need to fulfil their ambitions was far more realistic in Phase Three. Attending the project had allowed the young person who made the final comments highlighted above, to see that her ambition could be a realisable goal, one that she felt would have been unachievable if she had not attended the project. Her negative experiences at school meant that prior to attending the project she would not have considered going to college. Furthermore, she felt that she would have not had the confidence to arrange the primary school placement or have had the opportunity to discuss a placement at college had she not attended the AEI.

Most Year 11 Phase Three interviewees appeared to have an awareness of the opportunities available to them, and to have considered where they might go on leaving the project. This sense of progression reflected the age of these youngsters and the career development work that projects carried out with youngsters prior to their departure. This preparation for progression is discussed in further detail in Section 5.5.1. As Section 2.4 showed, all the AEIs were providing college visits,

tasters, or courses and, where possible knowledge about and access to, work experience placements. Interviewees from AEI 4 appeared particularly knowledgeable about the college opportunities available to them, which might reflect the fact that in Year 11 they attended college for three days a week. This inevitably increased their awareness and assisted in their choice of post-programme progression.

Given their level of engagement with education and the fact that they were attending an AEI with a school-like curriculum, it is perhaps unsurprising that young people from AEI 4 were the only interviewees (apart from one young person in AEI 2) who mentioned that they wanted to go on to college to complete their GCSEs. For many of the youngsters in the other projects their learning needs meant that the completion of GCSEs was not a realistic possibility.

Aspirations – complete GCSEs

I want to stay on at college and do my GCSEs and get a part-time job (male AEI 4).

When the aspirations of youngsters attending individual projects were examined a number of interesting factors were identified. In AEI 1, all the young people interviewed wanted a job on leaving the project, whereas in other AEIs youngsters expressed a range of expectations, such as college or training, prior to accessing employment. Although only one of the AEI 1 youngsters interviewed actually secured employment, when the destination data for the whole cohort from this project were examined (see Section 5.5.2), nearly a third of young people did go into work after they left the project. This was an area of high employment, thus youngsters' expectations reflected that position. None of those young people interviewed from AEI 1 went on to college and this trend was also reflected in the destination data for the whole cohort.

In AEI 3 all the young people interviewed in Phase Three also wanted to go into employment when they left the project apart from one who wanted to go to college. However, in Phase Three two of the students who had previously stated that they wanted to go into employment now stated that they wanted to go to college or training, perhaps reflecting a growing realism in their expectations.

In contrast to the other projects, the majority (11 out of 13) of young people interviewed in AEI 4 wanted to go on to college, although three of the 11 aspired to college and/or employment. This might reflect, as noted earlier, the fact that these youngsters were more academically able, had greater awareness of the opportunities available to them at college and perhaps had limited local employment opportunities. The latter was reflected in the fact that only one young person secured a job on leaving AEI 4. The relatively large numbers of young people who aspired to attend college from this AEI was reflected in the numbers who went on to attend college. AEI 4 had the largest number (six) of youngsters going on to college after they had finished at the project (see Section 5.5.2). Both the young people from AEI 4 who wanted to go on to employment after the project were male.

In Phase Three, there was a notable inclusion of **training agencies** in young people's projections, which were not mentioned as an aspiration or expectation by those young people interviewed in Phase One. This again might suggest that these youngsters'

future aspirations had become more realistic as a result of attending the AEI. In Phase Three some young people were already attending a training agency as part of the AEI provision, which provided them with additional insights into the opportunities available from training agencies. This was reinforced by the destination data; AEI youngsters were going on to placements with training agencies after they left the projects.

It was noteworthy that there was less reference to completing GCSEs at college in Phase Three; only one young person mentioned this, compared to four in Phase One. However, in Phase Three there was reference to a more diverse range of college opportunities, such as leisure and tourism, music and bricklaying courses, than those identified in Phase One. This perhaps reflects young people's **increased awareness of the actual opportunities available to them at college** and greater certainty about the courses they wanted to pursue.

A shift in attitude can be seen between Phases One and Three for those young people who wanted to be mechanics. Those in Phase One wanted to go to college, whereas those in Phase Three wanted to get a job as a mechanic, or train with a training agency. A growing realism in young people's attitudes towards the future may also be reflected in the fewer numbers of young people who wanted to work with animals in Phase Three. Only one young person said they wanted to work with animals in Phase Three compared to four youngsters in Phase One. Whilst this might reflect the different aspirations of different youngsters it might also suggest a growing realism in their future expectations. An increasing re-engagement with learning might also be reflected in the fact that in Phase Three, one youngster wanted to be reintegrated back into school.

5.3 Attitudes towards the future

Those young people interviewed in Phase Three of the research were also asked if they felt any differently about the future since attending the project, and their responses are summarised below. The 27 responses were made by 26 youngsters, as one young person identified two areas where she felt differently about the future.

The numbers reflect the number of young people who made reference to these differences, whilst the letters in brackets highlight whether they were male (M) or female (F). Young people's changed attitudes to the future fell into the following categories:

- increased confidence 7 (4F, 3M)
- more positive attitude to employment 6 (2F, 4M)
- no change 6 (M)
- considering college or training 5 (3F, 2M)
- thinking about the future 1 (1F)
- reassessing aspirations 1 (1M)
- less confident about the future 1 (1M).

Thus, responses show that overall, these young people felt more positive about the future after having attended AEIs. For example, the opportunity to attend college as

part of the project had provided youngsters with an invaluable insight into college life, and a more realistic expectation of what it would be like. Projects were also opening-up and making young people consider new opportunities. One girl, for example, had completed a mechanics course with a training agency. Without attending the project she may not have had the opportunity to experience this course and be able to consider mechanics as a career option. In Phase One she said she wanted to work with small animals, and although she still wanted to do this in Phase Three, she was also considering mechanics, because she had experienced this training opportunity.

The biggest change identified by young people related to an **increase in confidence**, in themselves and about their future, in particular in relation to post-project positive progression. As noted earlier, attending the project had provided youngsters with increased confidence through the accreditation of their work. Young people who would not have gained any qualifications at school were gaining accreditation for their work at the projects, which they felt they could then use to secure employment and/or future placements.

Increased confidence

Pretty confident. I know I can get somewhere in life now because I have got the certificates to prove I can do things so I can definitely get somewhere in life, I ain't got that worry on my back (female AEI 1).

These feelings were often in distinct contrast to those they had about their future when they were at school:

When I was at school I didn't think that I was going to have any chance because I wasn't paying any attention to what was going on at school. So I didn't think that I was going to have any future going for me but then when I got here [names of project staff] said that they could sort me out with a placement and it's been sorted (female AEI 2).

The project had provided them with a second chance to engage with learning and as a result to plan their future in a constructive way. Youngsters' increased confidence was also reflected in their comments about being **more positive** and **optimistic about their future**.

The second most frequently identified change by young people who were interviewed was a change in their **attitude to employment**. Young people felt that as a result of attending the project they had a more positive attitude to their future employment prospects. This included youngsters who previously had not considered getting a job but who were now beginning to think that this might be a realistic and beneficial option for them. Interviewees' comments also reflected increased confidence in their ability to actually secure employment. A number felt, that as a result of attending the project they would secure, or had a higher chance of, securing employment, including (as the last quote illustrates) young people who had been complete non-attenders at school.

More positive attitude to employment

Before I didn't even care to get a job, but now I need a job, to get a life, to get on in life you have to have a job, you can't get nowhere with no money (female AEI 3).

Despite most young people acknowledging that they felt differently about the future, nearly a quarter of interviewees (six out of 26) felt that their **attitude to the future had not changed**. It was interesting to note that all these youngsters were male. The reasons given reflected a confidence and certainty about the future; these were young people who already had plans, for example they had always wanted to get a job, or as noted earlier, they were going to work for a relative.

Attitude to future not changed

In response to the question: *Do you feel differently about the future now?*

No, I already got my future ... I am going to work for my cousin (male AEI 4).

The third most common response regarding changed attitudes to the future reflected the fact that young people were now considering or actually going on to **college or further training**. This can be viewed as a significant step for these youngsters many of whom were completely disengaged from education prior to attending the project. For example, one young person observed that she would not have thought of going to college whilst she was at school '*not at all*'. However, because she had attended college as part of the AEI programme she was thinking of going on leaving the project: '*because I have been there I have seen it, it's like good*' (female AEI 4). Projects provided young people with a positive introduction to educational progression, opportunities and activities that previously would not have been available to them, or that they would not have taken up if they had not attended the AEI. They also provided youngsters with opportunities to reconsider learning/education in a different context to their previous (negative) experiences of school. Such comments do raise the issue that exclusion from school was a necessary precursor for young people to have the opportunity to experience these sorts of training and other activities which appeared to be successful components of their re-engagement.

Considering college and training

At school I didn't think I would ever do anything ... [I would have ended up] on the dole when I left when I was old enough. If I was still at school I would never be going to college because I would never have tried the [activities] (male AEI 3).

Interviewees' comments also reflected a realisation that they needed qualifications to fulfil their ambitions. Projects had made them think about their future aspirations, but also more importantly, how they were going to achieve these: '*I didn't want to go to college [when at school] ... but now I know you have to get like qualifications for the things that I want to do*' (female AEI 4). This ability to see an 'end-point' and conceptualise future goals is something that disengaged youngsters often find very difficult to do. As has already been highlighted in the challenges section of this report, AEI youngsters' lives were frequently in such turmoil that they could not conceptualise any idea of future progression when they first attended the projects. AEIs were helping youngsters to consider future progression and positive next steps (see section 5.5.1 Preparation for progression).

Young people were now **thinking about the future**. Although this change was only specifically identified by one interviewee, it was raised in the comments of many others when they were talking about progressing on to college and employment (see previous quotations). Given their levels of disengagement, it may be considered highly significant that youngsters were actually thinking positively about the future.

Thinking about the future

Well I never used to think about it, I just used to say 'oh when it comes I will think about it' but when I come here I realised that I should think about it (female AEI 4).

Attending the projects had also provided young people with an opportunity to **reassess their future aspirations and ambitions**. For example, the IT opportunities available at one AEI had resulted in one young person wanting to pursue a career in this field, whereas when he had been at school he had wanted to join the army.

Although the vast majority of interviewees felt more positive about their future there was one young person who felt **less confident** about their future as a result of attending the AEI. This related to the fact that at college he was not able to complete the range of GCSEs that he would have taken, had he been able to remain in mainstream school.

Less confident

I feel less confident than I did when I was at school ... because of the fact that I won't be able to do my GCSEs that I would have done at school. I will only do my generals: maths, English and science. I wanted to do art and PE and I wanted to do IT and stuff like that (male AEI 5).

This is an important point for those youngsters capable of completing GCSEs. None of the AEIs were able to offer GCSE courses, and even where youngsters could access GCSE courses at college, the range of opportunities may have been limited.

Summary: future aspirations and expectations

- Generally young people's aspirations and expectations conformed to traditional gendered role models. Opportunities and attempts to extend this range of vocational and career-oriented experiences may be beneficial.
- There was an expectation amongst some of the boys, but none of the girls, that they could utilise family contacts to access training or employment, reflecting the importance of the informal economy.
- Youngsters' aspirations reflected local training and employment opportunities. AEI youngsters need to continue to be made aware of the opportunities available locally.
- Intensive preparation for college work increases youngsters' awareness of the opportunities available and may increase the likelihood of successfully accessing college on departure from the AEI.
- Young people gained an awareness of training opportunities as a result of attending the AEIs. Further efforts to raise awareness of the availability of training opportunities might be beneficial for all young people including those in school.
- There appeared to be an increasing realism in young people's aspirations and expectations as a result of attending the AEIs.
- Young people noted a significant change in confidence in relation to themselves and their futures as a result of attending the projects. They also noted changes in their attitudes to employment, college and training; these had now become realistic options for them.
- The limited opportunities for youngsters to complete GCSEs at AEIs was still an issue for those young people who were capable of completing them.

Having considered the aspirations and attitudes towards the future of the young people attending the AEIs the following section goes on to examine the destinations of AEI youngsters after they left the projects.

5.4 Destinations

The first part of this section explores AEI staff involvement in preparing young people for post-project progression. This is followed by a brief overview of the actual destinations of AEI youngsters, and an exploration of what might have happened to the young people had they not attended the AEIs. The chapter concludes by bringing together the aspirational and destination data for the young people interviewed over the course of the evaluation.

5.4.1 Preparation for progression

As previously noted, all the AEIs were focusing on providing support to assist young people's positive progression, whether this was into further education, training, employment, or on to another supported placement. The focus of this support was dependent on the nature of the intervention and the type of young people staff were working with. For example, AEI 4 was the most academically focused AEI and some of the students were quite able, so its preparation for progression was quite firmly orientated towards college and/or employment. AEI 3 in contrast was more of a work-focused intervention and although preparation for progression did include college-focused work, it was less intensive than in AEI 4 and there was more of a focus on employment-related activities. In AEI 2 employment-related activities were of an introductory nature and there was a greater focus on preparing students for further training or college.

Preparation for progression focused on: careers activities, college-focused activities, employment-focused activities and school-focused activities. As previously noted, all the projects provided **careers activities**. This included general careers-focused activities run by AEI staff, or external experts who would come in and work with the young people on site. The projects also had nominated careers advisors who would either visit the young people at the AEI or youngsters would see them at the Careers Service for individual interviews. If appropriate, AEI staff would provide support by accompanying young people to their careers interviews, and youngsters might attend three or four interviews in their final year at the AEI. Staff felt that young people would then be in a better position to access the Careers Service independently. This practice of accompanying youngsters on a number of careers' interviews highlights the intensive support provided by AEI staff in preparing for positive progression. One of the AEIs actually had its own careers advisor based at the provision. This was the brokering AEI so careers days were organised when youngsters would come in and have presentations on a variety of career options, learn about their entitlement to benefits etc.

Another important careers-focused activity AEI staff were involved in was actually getting youngsters to think about their future and possible careers. As has been shown in the aspirations section of this chapter, employment was something that a number of these youngsters had not considered prior to attending the AEI. So, AEI staff actually needed to address the basic question of: *'What do you want to do when you leave here?'* as a starting point for the work they were going to undertake in preparing youngsters for positive progression. This also included preparing youngsters emotionally for leaving the projects. The AEIs were often a source of stability in youngsters' lives so the prospect of leaving the project was quite traumatic for some youngsters.

There was also an emphasis on the provision of **college-focused activities**, particularly in AEI 4. The college-focused activities in the AEI programmes included visits, tasters and access to courses. All the projects were providing some type of college-focused activity. A significant component of AEI 4's transition work for its Year 11 students focused on providing 'college tasters' for a variety of courses including, painting and decorating, carpentry, and hair and beauty. College tasters were an integral part of the transition work completed in AEI 4. Tasters were viewed as increasing the likelihood of positive progression on to further education: *'college,*

because of the transition work, is not this nasty big building, it's somewhere that they choose to go, it's their choice, and it becomes quite attractive' (project staff AEI 4). The AEs were slowly preparing youngsters for their next step, building their confidence and offering them a variety of vocational experiences. Year 11s at AEI 4 for example, attended college two days a week with the support of project staff. At the beginning of the year this support was fairly intensive: *'when they first start we will actually take them to college because it's a big impersonal building'* (project staff AEI 4). As the year progressed staff would begin to gradually remove support so that by Easter *'we would not go up with them every lesson, or we might just pop in and then come back here'* (project staff AEI 4). Similarly, in AEI 6 where Year 11s were attending college full-time, they were still linked to, and given support by the AEI. As in AEI 4, the member of staff supporting college placements in AEI 6 would, given there were no concerns, gradually withdraw his support as the year progressed, so that his role became one of monitoring.

Another interesting area of pre-college, but post-programme support was available in AEI 2, to those youngsters who had been accepted into college at the beginning of the autumn term. These summer programmes ensured that youngsters were not 'lost' over the summer period, prior to them starting college in September. This post-programme support maintained a crucial link with the provision over the summer and was viewed by staff as increasing the likelihood of successful progression on to further education. These were young people who could easily become disengaged over the summer period, six weeks was deemed to be a long time for them not to have anything to do. In addition, AEI staff felt they played an important role in informing youngsters about the practicalities of attending college, for example, letting them know that they could receive financial support for attending college.

Employment-focused activities included providing general information about the workplace, assisting youngsters in completing job and college application forms, giving them job-seeking tips, for example, where to look for jobs, and assisting young people in completing CVs and application letters. AEs also provided work experience placements, which were viewed as vital preparation for future employment as it gave youngsters the chance to see whether they wanted to pursue a career in that area, as well as providing future references.

Furthermore, some work placements resulted in young people being offered employment and/or training after they left the AEI: *'One young guy ... started a work experience at a local garage and he is now in employment at that garage ... he is on an apprenticeship'* (project staff AEI 2). In AEI 4, work placements were also viewed as an essential component of the project's transition work. Unfortunately, projects were not always able to secure work placements for AEI students because they were competing with schools for a limited number of places, or because of the negative image of AEs held by some employers, or due to the offending behaviour of the youngsters.

Project staff also highlighted that they would provide young people with assistance even after they had left the AEI:

They know they can come back, even when they have left. A lot of them will come back and say 'can you help me fill out this application form?' Which obviously we would do, not a problem (project staff AEI 4).

The level of post-programme support that staff were involved in should be acknowledged, and was also important for the young people.

The final preparation for progression, mentioned by one AEI, as this was a project reintegrating youngsters back into school, was preparation to **return to school**. This involved: *‘preparing them for the demands of school, for the rules, the regulations, the expectations, the homework, all the practicalities of it’* (project staff AEI 6).

5.4.2 Actual destinations

All the AEs recorded students’ planned or actual destination on leaving the project. The amount and extent of data collected varied between projects. For example, AEI 5 only kept details of young people’s proposed destination, however the Careers Service was responsible for tracking them for two years after they had left the project. Other AEs followed young people for up to one year after they had officially left the project, (although this would not include those discharged from the AEI prior to their official departure date). For example, AEI 1 tracked students for a year after they had left the project. It was noted that this monitoring was in contrast to mainstream schools where there was no obligation to track pupils after they had left.

Tracking

I am expected to track them for a year ... we were inspected by Ofsted and they asked us about tracking ... and I told him what we were going to do ... and I said ‘as a matter of fact what are mainstream schools expected to do?’ And he said ‘nothing, they just fall off the edge’, which is terrible (project staff AEI 1).

In addition, it was felt that the post of a specific ‘transitional worker’ to provide vital post-programme support and to work with youngsters after they had left the AEI would be beneficial. The difficulties experienced by AEI youngsters meant that they required additional support from someone who could respond to their needs at this key transitional stage, where they might be particularly vulnerable to disengagement. It was felt that a transitional worker could fill this gap in provision, although Connexions staff might partly fill this role.

For an intervention such as AEI 6, that was reintegrating youngsters back into school, or was dual-registering them with college, regular opportunities for feedback from schools and college had been implemented into the reintegration/integration process in order to monitor youngsters’ progress and ensure positive progression.

Monitoring progression

We get regular feedback from the college and from schools. If it’s in schools we will meet the Head Of Year ... for the first two or three months at least. If the signs are positive then we wouldn’t meet the child, unless it was within the first month then you would want to see the child just to make sure (project staff AEI 6).

Informal monitoring of young people’s post-programme progression also occurred because many youngsters returned to the projects after they had officially left to

inform staff of their progress, or to ask for assistance, for example, with completing forms. This shows the strong bonds forged between the young people and project staff, illustrating that youngsters had established trusting relationships with staff, which they wanted to maintain. This desire to return to the AEI might also reflect the fact that it took many of these youngsters a considerable length of time to develop trusting relationships because of difficulties they had experienced.

Monitoring progress

A lot of last years kept coming in, even if it was just for a chat. They just kept turning up until they found their feet, asking can you just tell me how to do this, can you show me this ...I didn't always feel that they were comfortable with some of the tutors, even though they had perhaps got extra support ... they felt more comfortable coming back and asking for help (project staff AEI 2).

Youngsters' destinations, were also in part, determined by **staff awareness of opportunities** available locally.

Staff awareness of local opportunities

It's about project workers being aware of alternative provision in the local area. So, if you have got a young person who wants to pursue painting and decorating, but isn't ready to pursue it at college because they can't cope with the college environment, we latch onto other training providers (project staff AEI 2).

The following section provides a brief overview of the actual destinations of AEI students involved in the evaluation phase of the research. Table 5.3 provides a breakdown of the actual destinations of this year's AEI students, second or ultimate destinations are used where known:

Table 5.3 Actual destinations of AEI students

Destination	AEI 1 n = 22	AEI 2 n = 23	AEI 3 n = 15	AEI 4 n = 33	AEI 5 n = 39	AEI 6 n = 30	Total n = 162
Staying at project	5	4	1	13	14	3	40
Unknown	2	3	4	7	9	3	28
Employment	8	1	4	1	7	2	23
College	0	4	4	6	4	3	21
Training	4	4	2	1	4	6	21
Reintegrated to school	0	0	0	2	0	8	10
Unemployed	0	5	0	0	0	1	6
Referred back to LEA	1	1	0	0	0	3	5
Pregnancy/childcare	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
Excluded	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Custodial sentence	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Supervision order	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Source: *NFER data templates*

As Table 5.3 shows, the most common destination for AEI students was that they actually **stayed at the project**. Nearly a quarter (40 out of 162) were continuing at

the project in the next year. Many of these youngsters were on a two-year (Years 10 and 11) programme and were transferring into their final year. Thus, in AEIs 4 and 5, a total of 13 (nearly 40 per cent) and 14 (36 per cent) young people were continuing at the projects in the following year. In contrast, only one young person was staying at AEI 3 because this was a Year 11 provision. This young person had been enrolled on the project in Year 10 due to special circumstances.

For those students who actually left the AEI the most common destination was **'unknown'** (28/162). This included young people who had moved out of the area so projects were unable to track their destinations. A small but still significant number (13) of AEI youngsters had left the projects because they had moved out of the area, or even left the country, highlighting the transient lifestyles of some AEI youngsters. The three youngsters who had left AEI 5 represented 8 per cent of the AEI's roll. Two of these young people were looked after youngsters who had been moved out of the area because of a change in placement, and in AEI 3 one young person had left the project because s/he absconded from his/her children's home. Young people with unknown destinations at the end of the year also included those who were undecided as to what they wanted to do, those who were trying to access further provision, as well as those who were unwilling to engage with any provision. Some of these young people were also experiencing other difficulties, for example, they were homeless or were misusing drugs. A number of youngsters were being supported by other organisations and agencies, for example, Social Services and the Education Welfare Service (EWS) were working with one looked after youngster who was refusing to engage with any provision. However, links with other support services and agencies were not always maintained, for example in AEI 3, one young person had stopped attending the AEI, and although the Youth Offending Team had maintained contact and was endeavouring to access alternative provision the young person had subsequently 'disappeared'. In AEI 5, nine youngsters' destinations were unknown, however the Careers Service was tracking the progress of five of them, and a further three had moved out of the area.

A similar number of youngsters had gone on to **secure employment** (23/162), or **access college** (21/162), or **training** (21/162). Those who had secured employment were generally working in the informal economy, typified by low pay and a lack of job security and included: manual labour e.g. gardening, roofing and window cleaning; retail work; construction/painting and decorating; and work in the service sector e.g. fast food outlets.

It should be remembered, however, that many of these youngsters were referred to the AEIs with a range of difficulties, including emotional and behavioural problems, so the fact that they had managed to gain employment, however insecure, may be viewed as a positive outcome. For a number of interviewees gaining employment reflected a fundamental change in their attitude towards work, as has already been highlighted in the Attitudes to the Future Section (5.3) of this chapter.

Table 5.3 shows that the numbers of youngsters accessing employment ranged between the projects, from only one young person in AEIs 2 and 4, to seven young people in AEI 5, and eight in AEI 1. In AEI 1, those securing employment represented over a third of the project's students and perhaps, as noted elsewhere, reflected the high employment rates in the local area.

Twenty-one AEI students had gone on to college and were accessing a range of courses including: Learning Gateway; NVQs, GCSEs and A'levels; alternative accreditation e.g. ASDAN; and vocational courses e.g. computing, electrical engineering, forestry and conservation, horticulture, construction and sports studies. Again, given the fact that many of these youngsters had been out of school for a number of years, the numbers who successfully progressed on to college may be viewed as a positive outcome. In AEI 6 and AEI 3, four of the young people who were accessing college were continuing students. Those young people who had successfully accessed college on leaving the AEI included two youngsters whose AEI placements had been unsuccessful. AEI 1 was the only project where no youngsters accessed college after they left the project. As noted previously, this might be linked to the greater employment opportunities within the local area meaning that college was viewed as a less 'attractive' option.

Twenty-one young people went on to **further training** and were accessing training providers within the local area. Some of these young people would have had an opportunity to experience training 'tasters' with these providers whilst they were attending the AEI. Training providers were offering young people a range of practical vocational training and work experience. Young people had taken up training courses in a range of areas, including: mechanics, painting and decorating, joinery, parenting and rugby. The latter was an apprenticeship with a local rugby club, which also included a college placement. Training was also linked to youngsters' current needs, for example a young mother was completing a parenting programme which, in addition to providing practical skills, also included childcare qualifications. Similarly, another project was assisting one young person to secure employment as a mechanic. One young person was accessing 'alternative training' as part of an intensive supervision and surveillance plan, which was a seven-day a week, alternative to custody, programme. Another young person had also successfully accessed a Youth Service based 'life skills' training programme after completing a custodial sentence and had been assigned a personal advisor via Connexions. This highlights that training providers were working with some of the most disengaged youngsters, as well as those who had particular vocational aspirations.

A total of ten youngsters had been **reintegrated back into school**, but only from two projects, AEI 4 and AEI 6. The former had some of the most academically able youngsters, whilst the latter had some of the most disengaged. The majority (8) of youngsters reintegrated into school were from AEI 6, reflecting the age of the youngsters and the focus of the provision. As noted earlier, this reflected the fact that some youngsters attending AEI 6 remained dual-registered with schools and therefore had a possible route back into mainstream or special school. Five young people had been reintegrated back into mainstream and three were reintegrated back into special schools.

The six youngsters who were identified as unemployed came from two projects, the majority (5) were from AEI 2. However, all these youngsters had been referred back to the LEA by the project for non-attendance. The remaining young person who was unemployed had contact with the local college. Four of the five young people **referred back to the LEA** had been referred back due to non-attendance, whilst the fifth had been referred back because of mental health issues.

A small number of girls (3) left due to **pregnancy** or **childcare commitments**. One left the AEI because she was pregnant, another left due to her childcare commitments, and the third left the AEI at the end of the year but her destination was unknown because of her pregnancy.

Of the two young people who were **excluded** from projects, one's destination was unknown, whilst Social Services were continuing to work with the young person and their family and AEI staff were continuing to attend review meetings. Two young people left the projects because of a **custodial sentence**, whilst another young person had been placed on a supervision order as an alternative to custody.

Summary: preparation for progression and destinations

- AEs were successful in actually getting youngsters to think about their future progression.
- The importance of post-programme support; AEI staff were continuing to support youngsters after they had finished at the projects. They were providing crucial support at times when AEI youngsters may be in danger of becoming 'lost', for example, during the summer holidays between finishing at the project and starting at college. The employment of transitional workers might fulfil this role.
- The difficulty of securing work experience placements for AEI youngsters was an issue.
- The importance of staff being aware of opportunities available for AEI youngsters in the local area.
- Training tasters offered at the AEI had led to a number of youngsters accessing training provision when they left the projects. In addition, training agencies were working with some of the most disengaged youngsters.
- The numbers of young people leaving the projects, whilst not high overall, was still significant. Furthermore, the movement of looked after youngsters did appear an area for concern.
- Childcare commitments meant that a small number of young women were unable to continue accessing AEI provision. This perhaps highlights a need for access to childcare provision for AEI youngsters.

5.4.3 Possible consequences of not attending the AEI

Having explored the post-programme progression routes of AEI youngsters, the following section examines what might have happened to the young people if they had not attended the projects. In the final round of interviews, staff, young people and parents were asked what they thought might have happened if the young people had not attended the project. Their responses are summarised in Table 5.4. Although

only speculative, interviewees' responses present a vivid portrayal of what might have happened if young people had been unable to access a placement at the AEI.

Table 5.4 Possible consequences of not attending the AEI

	Staff* (n = 7)	Young people (n = 27)	Parents (n = 6)	Total
Continuation of offending behaviour	7	7	4	18
Nothing	3	12	0	15
Alternative provision	4	3	1	8
Not attended school	1	5	1	7
Deterioration of family situation	2	3	1	6
Mental health problems	5	0	0	5
Benefit dependent	1	3	0	4
Excluded from school	2	1	0	3
Back to mainstream	1	1	0	2
No concept of future progression	1	0	0	1
Relationships	0	1	0	1
Don't know	0	1	0	1

* Numbers in the staff column relate to the number of young people nominated by staff

The most probable outcomes of not attending AEIs identified by interviewees, was that either youngsters' levels of **offending** would have been maintained, or even increased, or that they would be doing **nothing**. A belief that their children's level of offending would have continued, or even increased, was the most common response given by parents, it was also highlighted as a possible consequence by more than half of the staff (in relation to seven young people), and nearly a quarter of the young people interviewed. Thus, the association between non-attendance at any educational provision and crime was reinforced. Furthermore, interviewees, including young people themselves, felt that if they had not attended the AEI their levels of offending would have resulted in custodial sentences. Three of the four parents, who felt that their youngsters' offending behaviour would have increased, also felt that this would have resulted in a custodial sentence: *'I think he would have been in with these kids in a young offenders institute'* (parent AEI 1).

Low-level criminal activity was viewed as being a direct consequence of young people having too much spare time on their hands. The diversionary role of AEIs in reducing low-level criminal activity was also reflected in the findings from the young people's self-report offending questionnaire. So, although AEIs were not established as crime reduction initiatives in their own right, there was a belief that they were having a positive impact on reducing youngsters' offending behaviour.

The other most frequently identified consequence of not attending the AEI was that young people would have been doing **nothing** if they had not attended the projects. This was the most frequent response given by young people; half of those interviewed identified this as a likely consequence of their not attending the AEI. They would have remained out of school and stayed at home, or been out on the streets at risk of offending. This was also identified as a likely outcome by project staff, but not by

any parents or carers. Staff observed that if youngsters did not attend the AEI there was none, or very limited alternative educational provision within the local area.

The third most frequently identified consequence of young people not attending the AEI was that they would have been **referred to an alternative placement**, or continued to attend the alternative provision they were at prior to their referral to the AEI. For example, staff observed that if students had not attended the AEI they would have remained at, or been referred to a PRU, or tuition centre. Staff in AEI 4 felt that these alternative placements were inadequate because they were only able to offer youngsters part-time provision when they needed full-time provision. At the opposite extreme, for two young people, the consequence of not securing a place at the AEI would have resulted in referral to more specialist provision, including a residential placement out of the area. The AEI offered opportunities for youngsters to remain within the community and in a more mainstream, rather than special school, environment.

A number of the AEI youngsters were school non-attenders, and they felt that had they not secured placements at the AEs they would have continued not to attend school. Some young people, who were not complete non-attenders, felt that their attendance would have declined further if they had continued at school. Staff and parents also reiterated this opinion.

Interviewees also felt that young people's **family situation might have deteriorated** if they had not attended the AEI. For example, it may have resulted in them becoming 'looked after', or re-accommodated by the authority, because their placement would have broken down due to the pressure carers were experiencing. Their comments highlighted the wide-ranging implications that secure educational provision can have, not just on individual youngsters, but also on their family/carers.

Not only did interviewees feel that youngsters' family circumstances might have changed if they had not attended the AEI, they also felt that their **mental health might have deteriorated**. Staff felt that if some youngsters had not attended the AEI their psychological well-being might have deteriorated further.

Linked to having nothing to do and no concept of future progression, was a belief that young people would have become **benefit dependent** if they had not attended the AEI. Three young people and one member of staff raised this as a possible consequence.

For those young people attending AEs as an alternative to exclusion, interviewees felt that if youngsters had not attended the AEI they would have been **excluded from school**. Two members of staff and one young person mentioned this. However, staff were aware that if they had returned to mainstream school they were likely to be excluded. Thus, attendance at the AEI had averted the negative consequences associated with exclusion.

Summary: possible consequences of not attending the AEI

- The lack of other alternative educational provision available to young people was highlighted. If youngsters had not attended the AEIs, many would not have had the opportunity to attend any other alternative provision.
- The mental health concerns of AEI youngsters may have been exacerbated had they not attended the AEI. However, this did raise the issue of whether AEI staff had sufficient training to support youngsters with often quite severe psychological problems.
- The perceived link between attending the AEI and maintaining stability at home/within the family was evident.

5.5 Aspirations and destinations: questionnaire responses

Young people's attitudes towards the future were also explored in the questionnaire. The questions focused on young people's general attitudes towards the future and whether they felt that coming to the project would help their future progression to positive destinations. The pre- and post-questionnaires allowed comparison of responses for 57 young people and it was therefore possible to determine whether attitudes towards the future had altered over the period of the evaluation. Young people were asked to indicate their levels of agreement with the following statements:

- **I feel positive about my future**
- **Coming to the project will help me to get a job or go to college**
- **I want to stay in education**
- **I will have a job**
- **I will be in FE.**

Respondents showed a slight but positive shift in relation to their attitudes towards the future and a belief that coming to the project would help them get a job or go to college.

'I feel positive about my future'

This question sought to examine young people's general attitude towards their future. Table 5.5 shows that almost a quarter (13) of the young people '*disagreed*' or '*strongly disagreed*' (nine and four respectively) with this statement in the pre-questionnaire. By the end of the project, just two '*disagreed*' (one from each of the '*medium*' and '*high*' disaffection sub-samples). Although an increase of six in the whole sample was evident in the '*unsure*' response. Hence, overall a slight and tentative change to positive future perspectives may be evident. However, all four of the '*high*' crime sub-sample who disagreed originally did not reiterate this view in the post-questionnaire.

Table 5.5 'I feel positive about my future'

Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
12	15	18	20	14	20	9	2	4	0

Source: NFER questionnaire alternative education initiatives 2001

'Coming to the project will help me to get a job or go to college'

Table 5.6 shows that questionnaire respondents reiterated the belief that attending the project would help them secure employment or a place at college. In response to 'coming to the project will help me to get a job or go to college', 50 of the 57 youngsters agreed with this statement by the end of the project and none disagreed. The 'high' crime and 'high' disaffection sub-samples showed the greatest shift: eight high disaffection young people finally 'strongly' agreed, while only three had in the pre-questionnaire; 14 of the high crime group agreed by the end, whereas nine had at the start. The two who had strongly disagreed at first were from 'high' crime and disaffection groups and both now 'agreed'.

Table 5.6 'Coming to project will help me to get a job or go to college'

Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
23	22	23	28	9	7	0	0	2	0

Source: NFER questionnaire alternative education initiatives 2001

'I want to stay in education'

Similarly, questionnaire respondents affirmed that they were considering staying in education. Table 5.7 indicates that nearly two-thirds (36 of the 57) of the whole questionnaire sample now affirmed their agreement with the statement on 'staying in education', compared with about half (29) at the start of the project. There was more than double the number who 'strongly agreed' (11 before and 24 after their time at the project). Notably, the 'high' disaffection sub-sample moved from just four of the 18 'agreeing' at the start of the project, to a total of ten (eight of which 'strongly' agreed) by the end of their time at the provision. The male and female sub-samples both showed similar up-turns. It was notable that the high-crime sub-sample had only one respondent 'strongly agreeing' in the pre-questionnaire, compared to seven after. Uncertainty did remain constant (12 being unsure before and 13 at the end of the project).

Table 5.7 'I want to stay in education'

Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
11	24	18	12	12	13	9	6	7	2

Source: *NFER questionnaire alternative education initiatives 2001*

Young people were also asked to comment on a number of statements relating to their likely future destinations.

'I will have a job'

Table 5.8 relays responses to the future statement '*I will have a job*'. Questionnaire respondents showed minor shifts in strengths' of viewpoints, but still nine out of ten young people held this positive view of the future. Notably, three of the '*high*' crime sub-sample who accounted for all the '*unlikely*' statements at the beginning, each moved in the post-questionnaire to either '*fairly likely*', '*very unlikely*' or '*don't know*'.

Table 5.8 'I will have a job'

Very likely		Fairly likely		Fairly unlikely		Very unlikely		Don't know	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
36	35	15	19	0	0	3	0	3	3

Source: *NFER questionnaire alternative education initiatives 2001*

'I will be in FE'

Young people's changing attitude towards participation in FE was also assessed in the questionnaire (see Table 5.9). Although this was perhaps an unlikely scenario, the '*high*' crime sub-sample showed the biggest drop in suggesting this prognostication was '*very likely*', and the low disaffection group accounted for seven of the 12 who held this view at the end of the project.

Table 5.9 'I will be in FE'

Very likely		Fairly likely		Fairly unlikely		Very unlikely		Don't know	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
13	12	12	8	8	9	10	17	10	6

* 4 missing cases

Source: *NFER questionnaire alternative education initiatives 2001*

Both pre- and post- questionnaires concluded by asking respondents about what they would like to do after the project, selecting from a list of educational training or employment options. Table 5.10 shows the changes across the sample as a whole.

Table 5.10 Post-project projection

	Pre		Post	
Get a job	36	[63%]	24	[42%]
Go to college	7	[12%]	14	[26%]
Begin training for a job	5	[9%]	11	[20%]
Not sure	8	[14%]	3	[5%]
Other	1	[2%]	0	[0%]
No response	0	[0%]	4	[7%]

Thus, a notable drop in those wishing to go straight to employment was evident, and concomitantly, there was a doubling of the numbers of young people preferring to take up further educational or training opportunities. It was evident that the sub-sample least likely to change from the desire to move straight to a job was the *'high'* crime category: ten had stated this at the start of the project, and nine still held this view at the end. In comparison, the *'medium'* crime sub-sample had dropped from 15 to only eight wanting to get a job post-project, and the *'low'* crime pupils preferring this option dropped from 11 to seven.

The *'high'* disaffection sub-sample showed as big an increase in those wishing to go to college or training as their peers in the *'low'* disaffection category (from five up to ten). Boys accounted for nine of the 11 young people wishing to train for a job by the end of the project: only two had chosen this option in the pre-questionnaire. At the start of the project, over two-thirds of the boys (27) had wanted to get a job upon leaving, by the end this had dropped to half (19). Hence, a raising of employment aspirations does seem to have been an outcome of AEI attendance.

Summary

- All the AEIs were monitoring the destination of students after they left the projects. However, there appeared to be a need for careful monitoring of the actual destinations of all AEI leavers, especially those leaving during the academic year, to ensure that they were not 'lost' from educational provision.
- Support for looked after children was still an area for concern. AEI staff felt that a lack of additional agency support for looked after children had a detrimental impact on these youngsters' ability to successfully engage with alternative educational provision. Furthermore, the movement of looked after youngsters was also seen as having a negative impact on their opportunities to receive consistent educational provision.
- Provision for young parents was lacking within AEIs. Childcare commitments had resulted in a small number of AEI students leaving the projects. This perhaps highlights a need for access to childcare provision for AEI youngsters.
- Young people's expectations and aspirations appeared to have become more realistic as a result of attending the AEIs. They also showed a more positive attitude to the future in relation to employment, college and training.
- There was a reduction in the number of young people who were unsure about their future progression routes as a result of attending the provision. This suggests that AEIs' preparation for progression had a beneficial impact on young people, as it increased their awareness of opportunities available.
- Intensive preparation for college work increased youngsters' awareness of the opportunities available and may increase the likelihood of them successfully accessing college on departure from the AEI.
- Young people gained an awareness of training opportunities as a result of attending the AEIs. Questionnaire and interview respondents showed an increase in their desire to go into training, reflecting more realistic expectations and greater awareness of training opportunities, this might be seen as a direct consequence of attending the AEI. Further efforts to raise awareness of the availability of training opportunities might be beneficial for all young people, including those in school.
- When exploring the possible consequences of young people not attending the AEI it was notable that the most frequent response given by interviewees was that young people's offending would have been maintained or even increased.
- Staff felt that the mental health concerns of AEI youngsters might also have been exacerbated had they not attended the AEI. However, this concern raised the issue of whether AEI staff had sufficient training to support youngsters with often quite severe psychological problems.
- In addition, the perceived link between attending the AEI and maintaining stability at home/within the family was also evident.

Chapter 6

Effective practice in alternative provision

About this chapter

This chapter presents an overview of what were seen to be the key components or factors which underpinned successful AEI provision. It covers:

- Young people's views on the provision they attended including evaluative comments on areas for improvement
- Staff views on effective practice, including the role of other agencies.

Earlier in this report, the outcomes and impacts of alternative educational provision were documented, and when talking about improvements in attendance, learning, behaviour or offending, interviewees often hinted at the reasons underlying these changes. It is important to stress that, in some instances, views on effective provision inevitably linked to impact or changes in the young people and a certain overlap in the findings therefore occurs.

Key findings

- The quality of relationships between staff and young people emerged as perhaps the most critical factor in young people's successful re-engagement (both socially and educationally). Particularly well received by young people was the fact that they were treated like an adult and that interaction and relationships were based on mutual respect.
- Interviewees highlighted several other AEI features which they regarded as effective. They pointed to the variety and flexibility within each programme, and to the fact that programmes could be tailored to meet the needs of individuals. Also commended was the physical setting and general ambience of AEIs, which young people found conducive to work. The high staff pupil ratios and small group sizes were also identified as positive factors.
- AEI staff recognised the interplay between a young person's social and emotional wellbeing and their educational performance. Programmes were therefore underpinned by a strong pastoral element. As part of this holistic package AEI staff sought to forge links with families and in some cases, extended their support to the parents of AEI students.

6.1 Young people's views on the provision

As the 'consumers' of alternative provision, young people were given the chance to provide evaluative comment on the programmes they experienced. In total 63 young people were interviewed over the period of the evaluation. They were asked to recall their first impressions of the AEI, to talk about what they liked and disliked, and also whether they would change anything about the AEI programmes. They were then asked to think what was it about the programme that had helped them the most. This question served to identify the effective elements of AEIs from the vantage point of the young people.

Very often, those aspects of the programme which young people said they 'liked', were also nominated as reasons for change. Their overall responses therefore will be presented on a 'feature' basis to avoid unnecessary repetition (e.g. views on the staff, the environment, etc.).

This section therefore addresses the following areas:

- **First impressions**
- **Views on the AEIs** (including 'likes' and 'reasons for change')
- **Dislikes**
- **Suggestions for improvement.**

6.1.1 First impressions

The vast majority of interviewees spoke of positive first impressions and 11 (from all six AEIs) also commented that the AEIs compared favourably to school. In particular, they highlighted smaller classrooms, fewer students and more help from staff. They seemed to prefer this kind of environment and recognised the benefits for learning:

When I came for the interview and I looked around I thought yes, it's not that big, the classrooms are not that big, so obviously there's not going to be a lot of students here, so I probably will get my head down and do some work (male, AEI 3).

Just seven interviewees, from three different provisions, expressed some negativity. Generally, though negative recollections were largely due to a fear of the unknown and general apprehension about starting something new. Consequently, five of the seven young people eventually overcame their initial nerves and after a settling in period, stated that they now liked the AEIs:

At first I didn't like it because I didn't know nobody and it was strange because I had been out of education for six months, but I got used to it (female, AEI 2).

Such insights may also intimate the fragility and insecurity underpinning the acting out behaviour of young people in previous circumstances.

6.1.2 Views on the AEI

This section pools together young people's responses to the following questions:

- What have you enjoyed most about your time here?
- What do you like most about this project?
- What is the main thing about this project, which makes it better than/different from school?
- What is it about this project that has helped you the most?

As stated earlier the features they nominated tended to overlap and for this reason their combined responses will be presented under each of the following AEI features:

- **Staff and their approach**
- **Environment and atmosphere**
- **Programme content**
- **Variety, choice and fun**
- **Number of hours**
- **Number of students/young people.**

Table 6.1 provides a summary of the proportion of young people citing these features as reasons for change.

Table 6.1 Reasons for change

AEI FEATURES	Factors mentioned in YOUNG PEOPLE'S REASONS FOR CHANGE n=62	
Staff and their approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being treated as an adult • Being treated with respect • Staff who are on the same wavelength • Sense of equality • More time and attention from staff 	46
Number of other young people at AEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More help from teachers • Easier to learn • Fewer distractions • Less bullying • Easier to make friends 	17
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More relaxed rules • Freedom of movement • Colourful/welcoming décor • Safe environment • Not like a school 	9
Programme content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being forced to do things • Having a say in their education • Having a wider choice of activities 	5
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents demanding a change 	6
Being occupied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having something to do • Not being at home all the time 	12
Other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having more friends • Mixing with their peer group • Common history, share same problems • Encouragement of others to change 	8
Personal decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing up • Understanding the consequences and wanting to change 	8
Number of hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer hours are more manageable 	3
Fresh start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A chance to start again • No-one knows your history 	3

Staff and their approach

Overwhelmingly, the most frequently commended feature of the AEIs was the staff and the way in which they interacted with young people (nominated by 53 out of 62 young people). Furthermore, over 70 per cent of the sample (45 young people) identified features of the AEI staffing as a reason for change. They highlighted **positive staff-student relationships**, being **treated like adults**, having a sense of **equality** with staff, being **treated with respect** and receiving **more time and attention** from staff.

In relation to **positive staff-student relationships**, thirteen interviews simply liked the fact that they got on better with staff at the AEIs than teachers in school. When considering the reasons for any change, 12 young people commented that it was because they were treated better or differently to teachers in mainstream: *'They just treat you the way you want to be treated'* (male, AEI 4) and *'They treat you a bit differently'* (male, AEI 4).

One particular individual described a transformation in her attitudes towards others. A victim of bullying, she had developed hostility towards others. Her time at the AEI however, had demonstrated to her that people can in fact be caring and consequently she felt ‘more relaxed’ and ‘I just feel better’:

I just hated people, I hated everyone, I hated my mum, I hated my gran everything. Coming here has just made me realise that they are some people that do actually care (female, AEI 4).

Others were able to specify the particular aspects of the staffing which they liked or found helpful. Firstly, ten interviewees from all AEIs (four from AEI 3) enjoyed **being treated like adults** ‘*like little officer worker people*’. Three young people also implied that being treated in such a way, had positive repercussions for their behaviour, whilst parent interviews verified that a more adult-like atmosphere generated positive responses amongst their children:

<p>Staff and their approach:</p> <p>being treated like adults</p>	<p><i>I think just the whole project, like I have said the atmosphere and the influence, not just from ... but the influence from the other students, [the staff] try to treat them like adults and that makes a difference and I think that has an ongoing effect (parent, AEI 1).</i></p>
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On a related theme, young people preferred the way in which staff operated by conveying a sense of **equality**. In terms of reasons for change, eight interviewees attributed change to the fact that staff were ‘*on the same wavelength*’, the ‘*same level*’. Half of these interviewees came from an AEI staffed by youth workers, which is perhaps indicative of the profession’s approach to working with young people. The absence of a perceived hierarchy created a different type of relationship between staff and young people. Five interviewees did not really see staff as teachers, more as friends. Another five young people commented that they found staff more friendly in general and 12 explained that the staff were able to ‘*laugh with you*’, whilst at the same time continuing to learn. Young people could therefore relate to staff and found them more approachable. Several spoke of confiding in staff when they encountered problems:

<p>Staff and their approach:</p> <p>a sense of equality</p>	<p><i>I wouldn't really class them as teachers; I would class them as a friend. They are someone you can talk to as well, not just asking about schoolwork (female, AEI 2).</i></p> <p><i>Here they are like; they can speak to you personally, like they are your one-to-ones (male, AEI 1).</i></p>
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As well as being treated like adults and as equals, interviewees also credited the **respect** they were given by staff. Interviewees noted that compared to their school experiences, staff at the AEI treated them with politeness and respect, something they could respond to. Parent interviews provided further affirmation that an air of respect would go a long way with young people:

<p>Staff and their approach:</p> <p>being treated with respect</p>	<p><i>He was impressed; yes he was impressed and still is. I know he gives them a bit of trouble, but he still reckons it's different to school and they treat him like an adult, they given him respect even though he has not always given it back, he does respect the fact that they do treat him more as an adult (parent, AEI 4).</i></p>
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Finally, interviewees appreciated staff because they were said to give young people **more time and attention**, which in turn assisted their academic progress. Young people also felt more able to seek help, even to the most basic questions, which in mainstream would conjure up feelings of shame or embarrassment. In addition, by receiving the attention they craved, some young people felt they were less prone to frustration and subsequent bad behaviour:

<p>Staff and their approach:</p> <p>more time and attention</p>	<p><i>We are taught better and we understand it more, but with the school they would ignore you and that's when you start flipping on them, but here they are just patient with you and then you get on with them (male, AEI 6).</i></p>
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Clearly, from the perspectives of young people, positive staff-student relationships and access to staff, exerted a significant influence on both the learning process and their general behaviour. When asked why it was easier to learn at one AEI, the interviewee replied, *'because you get to know the teachers as your friends'*. A parent also intimated that positive staff-student relationships were instrumental in her daughter's progress at the AEI:

She loves the teachers; she is always mentioning them. So the rapport with them is just really, really good. It's done her wonders I think (parent, AEI 4).

Environment and atmosphere

Just under a third (18) of all young people interviewed, highlighted aspects of the AEI environment as something that they liked or enjoyed. For interviewees from all AEIs, except AEI 6, it was the environment which acted as a catalyst for change.

Four interviewees made specific references to preferring the more relaxed rules, such as not having to wear a uniform. Five others enjoyed the greater freedom they were given. By comparison, they had found mainstream school a much more oppressive and claustrophobic environment. They concluded that the AEI was *'better than sitting in some boxed-up room all day'* and *'I like to be active not dead'*. Clearly, some of the young people attending AEIs were prone to feeling stifled and restricted in traditional educational environments. Consequently, they preferred the more relaxed educational environment of the AEI, one that included opportunities for physical movement. For some youngsters, this greater freedom helped diffuse tensions and avoided the 'pressure cooker' environment they had experienced at school:

Environment and atmosphere	<i>It's just in school you are always shut in there and like here, you can just, well you can just get up and wander round the room like and talk to people and stuff like that, whereas you can't at school ... When I was at school I used to fight all the time, but when I come here I don't fight and I haven't fought for ages (male, AEI 2).</i>
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Other features of the environment which young people approved of were the colourful décor and a sense of safety:

The rooms are different colours and all that, instead of just one same colour at school, and chalk board on the wall (male, AEI 2).

You can feel safe and settled here and like you have got cameras ... so it's good on security, so you can feel safe, you can be happy when you are here (female, AEI 2).

Lastly, at AEI 1, an interviewee concluded that the ambience of the AEI was very unlike school (the provision was based in a city centre office block). At the same time, however, it was conducive to learning and as a result, promoted attendance:

It doesn't feel like you are at school. It feels like it's just like a meeting place where you go to meet everybody, have a laugh, have fun and do some work. It doesn't seem like school at all really ... I didn't want to learn in [school] I didn't want to go there at all. But here, because I think it's the different atmosphere, it makes you want to come, it makes you want to do your work, it makes you want to get a good education, makes you want to get a good job (female, AEI 1).

The degree to which the AEIs resembled school was investigated within the questionnaire survey. Over time, the sample showed increased agreement that the project was not like school (see Table 6.2). By the end of their AEI experience, two-thirds (39 of the 57) disagreed that the AEI was like school, compared to considerably less than half (23) at the start. The numbers registering in both the 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree' categories also showed marked change. Notably, it was almost half of the 'low' crime group that strongly disagreed (7 out of 18) with any comparison with school, compared to just two of the 18 respondents in the 'high crime' category.

Table 6.2 'The project would be/was like school'

Strongly agree		Agree		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
10	2	10	11	12	5	17	26	6	13

In conclusion, the fact that young people simply felt more comfortable in the AEIs was enough to precipitate change and as one young person said: 'it has shocked me the way the environment changes you' (male, AEI 5). This association was supported by the comments of parents, who believed their children were happier in a more informal setting:

So I think this compared [with school] is just a more relaxed, informal environment, and I think he feels more comfortable (parent, AEI 5).

Programme content

A number of stated 'likes' concerned particular activities or subjects timetabled into the AEI programme. A total of 17 young people welcomed the opportunity to partake in more leisure-focused activities, which were a part of every AEI. They mentioned enjoying outdoor pursuits, bowling, ice-skating, football and rock climbing. A third of young people from AEI 3 liked working out in the forest, doing '*practical things with your hands*'. Others liked the fact that '*they take you everywhere*' (AEI 4) and '*some days, they will send you somewhere and you aren't stuck indoors all day*' (AEI 2). Leisure activities therefore, apart from being enjoyable in themselves, also guaranteed variety and the chance to experience other settings.

Seven young people mentioned specific subjects (e.g. music, maths, computers, English) that they enjoyed. Five interviewees from AEI 4 and AEI 6 nominated the inclusion of college in the programme, because it offered possible openings to future careers:

Just going to college mainly, because I want to be a chef so it will help me in the long run, so if I can start now ... (male, AEI 4).

Another young person, also from AEI 4, noted that the programme provided an insight into college life, which they felt would assist their progression onto college, once they left the AEI.

The third aspect of programmes that was enjoyed by young people was simply 'learning'. Seven interviewees spoke of having enjoyed the work and the fact that they had progressed educationally, for example: '*I am learning more*'. Indeed, one interviewee from AEI 6 summarised the benefits: '*it has given me an education*'.

Variety, choice and fun

As well as liking specific programme activities, young people also considered the range of activities to be a bonus: '*they just give you all sorts of different things*' (female, AEI 1) and '*you do different things, instead of the same thing all the time*' (female, AEI 2). In addition, seven young people also appreciated being able to choose what they wanted to do, and five of them linked this to a reason for change. Young people had an input to their educational programmes at AEs – self-selection and voluntary attendance had served to heighten their enthusiasm for learning. Rather than being 'forced' into a common curriculum they were presented with choices and options. In this way, young people could pursue programmes of study that they were most interested in. Parent interviewees also endorsed the variety and choice embedded within the programmes and noted the rewards in terms of the impact on young people's behaviour. Whereas previous educational experiences had elicited apathy or disruption, the chance to pursue a range of different activities generated enthusiasm and good behaviour.

Lastly, eight interviews (three from AEI 1) simply described the ‘fun factor’ as the best part of their AEI experience. Furthermore, they correlated learning with fun and claimed that it was easier to learn when you were enjoying yourself.

Number of hours

The fact that AEIs often required fewer hours of attendance was noted as an enjoyment factor by interviewees in Phase One only. Of the ten young people who mentioned fewer hours, most did not verbalise the benefits, apart from it being ‘*less hassle*’ and being able to have a lie-in every morning. One young person from AEI 2, however, thought that the school day had been arduous and unmanageable because of the longer hours. They much preferred a part-time programme:

[What do you like most about the project?] *The hours I think, it’s not a six-hour schedule, it’s like a few hours here. So I think it were a bit better because I think that’s was what did it when I were at school, the hours* (female, AEI 2).

This particular ‘like’ was not cited by interviewees in Phase Three of the evaluation which would suggest that, by this time, young people had perhaps realised that the AEIs offered many other positive experiences.

In terms of changes, improved attendance was associated with a part-time programme by three young people. One young person was asked how they would react if their programme was increased to a full day and they replied ‘*walk out*’. As from September 2002 the government has stipulated that AEIs must offer 25 hours a week of provision. The fact that some young people may reject a full-time programme has implications for this policy.

Number of young people at the AEI

In response to the question: ‘*What is the main thing about this project, which makes it better than/different to school?*’ 11 young people (from all six AEIs) mentioned the fact that fewer young people attended the provision. In addition, 17 out of the 62 young people (from all AEIs) stated that working with smaller numbers of students had played a part in helping them to change.

Ten interviewees noted that they received additional assistance and support from teachers, because the group was smaller, which in turn had benefited their educational outcomes. They often contrasted AEI staff to pupil ratios with staffing ratios in mainstream schools, where in a class of 30 with one teacher they found it harder to access the help they needed:

<p>Number of young people: more attention</p>	<p><i>Because it’s smaller, there’s not as many people and you can speak to the teachers more and get more help and that, if you ask you will just get it because they haven’t got to go round everybody. You have got one teacher to a class in a normal school, they have got to go round everybody, [and] it’s a bit hard to get round</i> (female, AEI 4).</p>
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As well as guaranteeing greater staff attention, three young people found it much easier to learn in smaller groups because they felt it minimised distractions and the environment was generally calmer: *'I think that it's easier to work here because at school you had loads of people making noise and that'* (male, AEI 3). Another two interviewees felt less self-conscious in smaller groups and were therefore more likely to seek help and participate in learning. A parent believed that, in a class of 30, her son was too intimidated to ask for help, or admit to not understanding. At the AEI however:

Yes, he liked the fact that there was only probably two or three of them in lessons, and I think he found that not as threatening. I would say that he found that he understood better what they was on about than being in a bigger class where he didn't know what they were talking about and then he would act the goat and end up being thrown out of the class (parent, AEI 1).

Hence, smaller groups were viewed as having a positive impact on behaviour. Young people often reflected on how they behaved in school, commenting that fellow classmates either wound them up or encouraged them to show off. AEIs, with much smaller numbers of students and sometimes one-to-one tuition, removed one of the triggers responsible for disruptive behaviour. Lastly, smaller numbers were also liked because it reduced the likelihood of bullying and helped foster positive group dynamics:

<p>Number of young people:</p> <p>better behaviour</p>	<p><i>It's got better [behaviour than at school] because it's smaller, isn't it? I hate going to school like because they are bigger and that, aren't they? There's more people in the classroom and that and then they wind you up, you just start going mad and that</i> (male, AEI 6).</p>
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Other young people at the AEI

Either as a result of exclusion or non-attendance, a number of the young people had been out of school for long periods of time. Cut off from their school peers, some may have suffered from a degree of social isolation. Consequently, seven young people (including four from AEI 4) cited the chance to socialise with other youngsters as the most enjoyable part of attending the AEI:

[What have you enjoyed most about your time here?] *Being with people, being able to talk to people and be with your friends and stuff, the association – there have been a few good jokes and it's fun* (male, AEI 4).

Change was also associated with the influence of other young people at the AEI, in different ways. For example, one interviewee felt their attendance was helped by having more friends at the AEI, than at school. Another said that their behaviour benefited because all the students shared a common history, *'all [have] been expelled from school'*, so no-one has a *'point to prove'*. One particular young person linked their growing confidence and reduced offending to her new friends at the AEI, who offered encouragement:

They was like saying 'oh come on, you can joke about as well' because like in my other school people were so loud and I was scared to talk and say anything (female, AEI 4).

Two other young people simply enjoyed the chance to meet new people and in doing so, grew in confidence:

I think it's actually coming in and being with the group and learning to get on with people my own age. I still don't like being around people my own age, but I am more confident with it now, so that is a big change (male, AEI 2).

Other reasons for change

Finally, interviewees mentioned more general factors, sometimes not particularly associated with the AEs, as reasons for change. They were: being occupied in a purposeful activity, having a fresh start, making a personal decision to change and the influence of the family. All these factors have been covered in detail in Chapter Four.

6.1.3 Dislikes

Young people were also given the opportunity to nominate any features of the AEI which they did not like. Apart from eight individuals who disliked 'getting up in the morning' and the five whose dislikes pertained to not getting on with particular members of staff or other young people, there were a total of 16 interviewees who highlighted something about the actual programme. However, no particular pattern emerged with regards to the type of activity which was disliked. For example, there were individual references to not liking ice-skating, first aid, bowling, English, writing and work experience. No particular AEI featured more than others in the number of dislikes reported. Hence, expressed dislikes tended to relate more to personal preferences than to any particular deficit or fault in the AEI programme.

6.1.4 Suggestions for improvement

Young people were invited to suggest any changes or improvements that could be made to the existing programmes. In total 25 young people were able to think of some improvements.

Two interviewees, both from AEI 4, felt the work could be more challenging and that the pace of work was sometimes a little slow:

It was a bit weird doing the Youth Awards because they seemed so easy. I was used to doing really hard work at school because I was in all the top groups and my work was harder (female, AEI 4).

It's got a bit slower in here, because you have to keep to other people's paces, as soon as you have finished you have to wait until someone else finishes and it's a bit slow (male, AEI 4).

Four interviewees were concerned that the qualifications they were working towards were not equivalent to those awarded in mainstream. In particular, they missed the opportunity to take GCSEs and the alternatives 'are not as good as GCSEs, so your qualifications are not as good' (male, AEI 5). Consequently, this individual now felt less confident about the future because they believed they were at a disadvantage

relative to other school leavers. Another young person from AEI 3 wished that history and science could be included in the programme. A parent also voiced concern that AEI qualifications would not be recognised by colleges:

I would like them to do more qualifications because he has got problems with some of the computer courses that he wants to do because he needs one GCSE (parent, AEI 1).

These comments signal the difficulties faced by AEIs in having to satisfy such a varied clientele. On the one hand they worked with some young people who were extremely disengaged from learning, and on the other they were also catering for a small number who were both capable of, and willing to, pursue GCSEs.

Two interviewees from AEI 3 and AEI 5 expressed a desire for the number of hours on AEI programmes to be increased, because when they were not at the provision they were at home doing nothing. Again, this underlines the diversity of AEI referrals. Whilst some interviewees dismissed the notion of a full-time programme, others were requesting it. AEIs therefore have to operate flexibly to accommodate the different demands of their target group.

Five interviewees requested more leisure and/or outdoor activities. For example, young people suggested adding swimming and football to the programme. At AEI 3 two interviewees expressed a preference for more outdoor forestry activities. Rather perceptively, an interviewee from the same AEI thought the inclusion of a car mechanics programme could help reduce crime levels. He had heard of a scheme where young offenders worked with cars in order to channel their interests constructively. He also noted that AEIs should:

Concentrate more on getting people to not commit crime, than just making people enjoy themselves, because that ain't going to stop people committing crime at all (male, AEI 3).

Finally, five young people suggested improvements to the actual AEI building, two recommending extensions to create more space and three recommending general refurbishment.

6.2 Staff views on effective practice

Staff were invited to highlight those aspects of the provision which they believed were 'effective' practice in alternative provision. Their responses made reference to:

- **Programme content**
- **The quality of relationships**
- **The environment**
- **Levels of pastoral support**
- **Staff to pupil ratios**
- **Nature and quality of staffing**
- **The involvement and support of families**
- **Use of other agencies.**

6.2.1 Programme content

As would be expected, interviewees cited elements of the actual AEI programmes as effective. The first three elements were closely related and concerned the personalised, flexible and varied nature of the programmes (mentioned by nine interviewees at AEI 2, AEI 3, AEI 5 and AEI 6). Flexibility ensured programmes were designed in accordance with young people's needs and interests – hence there was a close match between supply and demand:

We are not suggesting that a young person, on referral, necessarily has to comply with a rigid timetable, that a young person necessarily has to access all elements of the provision immediately ... If it's clear that a young person will not access all elements of the provision we can be flexible and try to engage them with one or two, and then develop the programme (project staff, AEI 5).

An 'holistic approach' which incorporated a number of different activities (e.g. work experience, outdoor learning, Duke of Edinburgh, etc.) was believed to increase the chances of re-engagement: 'He did settle down when he came here and I think that ... usually when they come to places like this they find out that there are other options' (parent, AEI 5). Programmes were therefore customised to suit individual preferences and the in-built flexibility of AEIs enabled them to respond to specific requests:

I think [the project manager] adapts to whatever they want to be, she adapts our work towards it. If somebody wants to be a bricklayer, then he will be given an opportunity to go to college, it's a very personal plan we abide [to] (project staff, AEI 3).

At two AEIs interviewees placed importance on offering a relevant curriculum, one which could be geared towards future training and employment. Both provisions were vocationally orientated, with one AEI staffed by 'training advisors':

And so everything they learn with us, they see how it ties directly into the job or the college course that they want. It's not just 'you will do religious education because it's on the curriculum'. It's like 'you are going to maths because you need it for this and this and this' (project staff, AEI 3).

They [staff] also keep the orientation towards the future career, so that it's more future orientated rather than past orientated, and I think that helps a lot of them to sort of see where they are going and allows them to take a more grown-up decision to be part of it (other agency provider, AEI 1).

At AEI 3, staff requested good behaviour by linking it to consequences in the workplace, for example, they would point out that rudeness and disruption may result in dismissal. The same behaviour in a school setting however, may simply lead to detention, or another similar sanction. By stressing the real life implications of poor behaviour, staff believed young people were better able to grasp the importance of appropriate behaviour and therefore conformed to the expectations of the programme. Likewise, by linking education with employment it was thought that young people were more inclined to subscribe to the programme, because they could envisage the end results.

Furthermore an educational psychologist noted that by consulting young people in the selection of activities, youngsters were less likely to rebel against the curriculum, as often happened in mainstream education. A member of staff from the same AEI, implied that voluntary entry to the programme also secured young people's

commitment. Ultimately, it was their decision to join the AEI and by doing so, they were thought to invest more in the programme. Essentially, interviewees were advocating that young people had greater control over their educational programmes. This was a view reiterated by a college provider:

We sort of give them scope to work as an adult and to try and give them a say in their own education. If they are asked their opinions about things and about how they feel about this, that and the other, they do feel like they have got a say in their own outcomes (college provider).

A parent interview provided evidence that self-selection of activities can sometimes lead to a dramatic transformation:

I used to have to drag him, literally drag him to school sometimes kicking and screaming down the road, I won't do that again. But he is really eager to come here, and now that he has got his work placement, he loves it, he is actually getting me to wake him up at half-six, Monday and Tuesday morning (parent, AEI 1).

In terms of teaching style, interviewees at three AEIs described approaching educational activities in a slightly less overt manner than at school. They recognised that many AEI students had been 'turned off' by traditional learning methods in the past. Rather than approaching subjects directly, staff would sometimes take a more lateral approach – they would use leisure-type activities to capture the interest of young people and then subtly introduce a more academic element. The use of drama at AEI 1 to introduce reading has already been highlighted. Similarly, at AEI 3 forestry activities were used to incorporate maths, history and biology into the programme.

AEI 1 was the only provision where staff highlighted a specific activity as being particularly effective. In this instance, it was the performing arts and an outward-bound course. The former was nominated because it was seen to boost confidence and self-esteem:

[Name of young person] didn't even give eye contact when she first came here and [teacher] got her singing. We have had students who wouldn't read, reading drama scripts, we have had them singing solo and in groups, girls with boys, boys with girls, which in itself is quite something (project staff, AEI 1).

An outward-bound course was viewed as working well because it required teamwork and fostered trust. As a result when the group returned, staff detected a shift in attitudes amongst the young people. Finally, at AEI 4 a structured approach was identified as an effective element, mainly because the young people lacked structure in other areas of their lives. The programme was based around the national curriculum, although staff were keen to emphasise the equal balance of social and academic education, as well as differentiation to suit the individual student.

6.2.2 The quality of relationships

Interviewees at all six AEIs maintained that success grew from positive relationships between the staff and young people. This was deemed absolutely crucial if there was to be any hope of re-engagement:

Once that relationship is in situ then you have a real opportunity to engage the children in more structured activities, and I don't believe they can be re-engaged unless you build up that relationship (project staff, AEI 6).

To establish this necessary rapport, AEI staff often took a less formal, personalised approach. For instance, staff were sometimes known on a first name basis and sought to treat young people as equals and with fairness. As a result, staff were said to earn the trust and respect of young people and once secured, staff were in a position to introduce more educational pursuits. A member of staff from AEI 6 illustrated this induction process:

So, when they first come here, they only come in an hour a day and we don't try to teach them anything, you just sit them down and talk to them and listen, just listen and eventually when they have got your trust ... then you sneak up on them with a little bit of [education].

Adult-like relationships were rated as a successful element at AEI 3, where the emphasis was on preparation for work. An EWO officer, who liaised with the provision, summed up the effective aspects of the staff approach:

[The project manager] has a great gift of looking at young adults and working wonders with them, because they are treated ... it's not a pupil/staff relationship, it's very much you are treated as though you are an adult really. And there is respect there, she respects them and she starts from that premise and that's where the relationship is built up. And she has got a whole gambit of schemes and strategies, personal strategies which she can employ and she has got a great personality and she just seems to be able to have the rapport with these young people.

When identifying the successful elements of each AEI, representatives from other agencies also underlined the role of relationships in re-engagement. An educational psychologist noted that at one AEI the emphasis was on relationships and that this was 'critical':

The staff treat these young people as more grown up, they engage them in having some direction and where they want to go and they work with that.

6.2.3 The environment

The third effective ingredient of alternative provision concerned the quality of the environment, which was nominated by 12 interviewees. Staff felt that it was important to create an ambience which would be appealing to young people. At three AEIs (AEI 1, AEI 2 and AEI 6) there were references to the colourful and welcoming décor. Staff from AEI 1, AEI 4, and AEI 6 described the general atmosphere as tranquil and relaxing: *'There is something very calming about the colour scheme and I think that was probably deliberate'* (project staff, AEI 1).

Young people's ownership of the environment was another valued feature. At some AEIs, this had been encouraged by allowing young people to decorate the rooms: *'they painted the walls, they chose the colours, it's their place'* (project staff, AEI 2). At AEI 1 the project walls were covered in posters made by the young people. A member of staff explained how this had resulted in a shared ownership of the project: *'it's not ours, it not theirs, it's all of ours'*. At AEI 4, a sense of belonging was linked to positive academic and social outcomes, because the young people felt at home in

the environment. Indeed the concept of a safe haven was something which also surfaced during interviews: *'they are safe, which is important to an awful lot of them, a lot haven't been safe all their lives, so it's extremely important to them'* (project staff, AEI 4). In this kind of setting young people could relax and *'become a little bit more open minded about education'* (project staff, AEI 6).

At AEI 3 there was a deliberate intention to steer the project away from a school-like environment towards a more workplace atmosphere. Staff acknowledged that many of the AEI youngsters were *'seriously turned off the whole concept'* of school and would be resistant to anything which resembled it. Staff therefore strove to make the AEI look and feel as much like a workplace as possible. Likewise, another agency interviewee from AEI 1 suspected that young people liked the fact that the project was not a school. Instead they attended an office-type building, in the centre of town, which, in the young people's eyes, gave the project a degree of 'credibility' and kudos.

6.2.4 Levels of pastoral support

Young people who were referred to the AEs often arrived with a number of personal and social problems, problems which could ultimately impinge on their ability to perform educationally. AEs therefore invested a great deal of time providing young people with high levels of pastoral support, an approach noted by seven interviewees, at AEI 1, AEI 2 and AEI 4 :

I think the success of the programme ... is the underpinning pastoral support we give them because almost without exception, they have problems at home and they have problems with drink and they have problems with drugs and whilst they are aware that we do not condone the behaviour... they know that we will support them in their efforts to get themselves cleaned up (project staff, AEI 1).

An interviewee from an external agency supported the provision of holistic AEI programmes, whereby all the young people's needs were addressed. S/he stated that a purely educational focus to the AEs would not be as effective because staff were unable to disregard the external factors which often had a significant impact on AEI youngsters ability to engage:

I mean it's all inter-related anyway, because someone might be pregnant ... it's going to affect how they are here and what they are able to do and it's going to affect how they function outside as well. So whatever they bring you have got to respond to, and support them, in dealing with it (college provider, AEI 4).

Similarly, whilst acknowledging the educational objectives of AEs, a parent also gave credit to the broad base of support provided by the projects:

So it isn't just the education side of it, it is the whole full package and the whole full support ... I think because they are working alongside us and they are on the same wavelength as us, trying to get the children to think for themselves, to take responsibility for themselves and we do seem to be on the same wavelength. So, I think that is what's so good and it is working. Where as a normal mainstream school has not got that time, have they? Not one-to-one like that (parent, AEI 4).

The importance of pastoral support is perhaps best exemplified by the following example. One young person described how their attendance at the AEI had been sporadic due to periods of homelessness. However, once staff were notified of the situation they intervened and stabilised the girl's living arrangements. From this point, the young person was able to complete their education and on leaving the AEI, they progressed onto a college course:

My mum kicked me out when I first started, which left me homeless ... no money to get into [the AEI] anyways, and because I didn't really know the teachers, I didn't really ring them up to ask for any help. I am not the sort of person that will ask for help, I will try and do it all myself. But then I was living with someone and we settled down and my mum was giving me some money a week. I was managing to get a couple of days a week and that, showing my face and that, and then when I got kicked out of where I was living and I was actually homeless, which was only actually a couple of months ago, [the AEI] did everything they could to help me in every way and I am in a hostel now, I am getting my benefits, I am much better (female, AEI 4).

6.2.5 Staff to pupil ratios

The fact that such a degree of pastoral support was possible at AEIs, stemmed from their ability to work with smaller groups of young people. Nine interviewees from AEI 1, AEI 2, AEI 4 and AEI 5 highlighted the advantages of high staff to pupil ratios. Firstly, it allowed staff the time to resolve difficulties as they emerged: *'The beauty of being such a small environment, is that you can really tackle those problems and deal with the students' needs'* (project staff, AEI 4). Secondly, it afforded young people the time to express their feelings, *'to sit down and discuss things'*. Indeed, one interviewee maintained *'that all they need is that extra time ... they just need someone to spend time with them'*. Thirdly, higher staff pupil ratios were useful in terms of surveillance; it was harder for a young person to misbehave within the environment of the AEI because staff would quickly detect it. Finally, the size of AEIs was said to benefit young people academically, because it allowed for more one-to-one tuition:

I think the 'small is beautiful' philosophy does work as well because I think it cuts out a lot of the other things.... [We are able to] teach the kids, we are in a very small ... environment (education provider, AEI 5).

On a related issue, at AEI 4, the support for young people also extended to external activities. Unusually, the AEI accompanied young people to college and were available to offer additional assistance in the classroom, alongside the college tutor. A member of staff suggested that this continuity and support ensured that AEI youngsters perhaps coped better than young people referred from other provisions.

6.2.6 Nature and quality of staffing

There were three facets of staffing that interviewees linked to overall effectiveness, these were: experience, dedication and strong teamwork. At AEI 4 and AEI 6, interviewees commented on the high levels of staff expertise:

We've [name of member of staff] with 20 years experience in teaching and the difference is there to be seen in just sheer understanding with children ... we have got someone who has mothered five children ... she might only be knee high to a grasshopper, but she is a mountain in this place (project staff, AEI 6).

Staff also displayed dedication to the job, often working extra hours:

We would go that extra half-mile. We are interested in them. We are prepared to spend hours working on problems that they've got at home (project staff, AEI 1).

A particular feature of AEI staffing emphasised by interviewees, was the cohesiveness of the 'team': staff worked collaboratively and information was exchanged both up and down the hierarchy. For example, project managers, although not necessarily involved in the day-to-day delivery of the programmes, still invested time in getting to know the young people and their individual circumstances:

They [the young people] are introduced to everybody, [the project manager], will come in and get involved with the young people. So it's not like this is my boss, that's her boss, we all work as a team. We work strongly as a team and, if we didn't, it would fall apart (project staff, AEI 2).

Interviewees often referred to very positive staff dynamics, underpinned by a cooperative and supportive working environment: *'the team that we have got together now ... I think is smashing, they work together as a team, everybody is working towards the same goals'* (project staff, AEI 5).

6.2.7 The involvement and support of families

AEIs also extended their work to include families and carers. At AEI 5 social workers were able to provide a *'lifeline... not just for the young people but to the families as well'* (this particular provision ran a parents' support group). Parents felt they had someone to turn to and, for one particular parent, this support was viewed as invaluable:

I felt like I couldn't carry on much longer, to the stage where it was like I think he was going to have to go and live elsewhere because I couldn't cope with him, but now it's like all so much more easier [help] is only a phone call away. I think like I have got a life-line, someone to talk to if I need to, where I didn't feel that before and it's made me some good friends with some good people, made me happier as well (parent, AEI 5).

Similarly, AEI 1 placed great importance on involving parents in the programme. Parents were required to accompany their children to interview and would be contacted immediately in the event of any problems. Staff spoke of having worked *'quite comprehensively'* with families, and supporting parents themselves.

6.2.8 Use of other agencies

Other agency interviewees commented that a strength of AEI 1 and AEI 4 was their willingness to be involved with other professionals and seek advice when needed:

I also think the involvement with the community ... my understanding is that they are in contact with people round here and they are in contact with the police and the mentoring schemes and I think that is really important (college provider, AEI 4).

Indeed project staff from AEI 4 attributed their success partly to the intervention's continual development and the fact that they were always open to working with new agencies:

I think one of the biggest reasons that we are successful and continue to be successful is that we haven't stood still in 30 years, we have continuously developed as an organisation, we have creatively used the resources we have, we have always looked at different ways of working, working with other providers, joint working (project staff, AEI 4).

Summary

- Generally, views on the effective ingredients of alternative provision were shared across the six AEIs and there was also a degree of consensus between the different types of interviewee.
- Above all, interviewees considered the quality of relationships between staff and young people as fundamental to re-engagement. Staff maintained that positive adult relations were the starting point of the educational process. When recalling their school experiences, many young people vocalised hostility towards teachers, which ultimately prohibited the development of a productive learning relationship. Staff at the AEIs therefore strove to establish trust, respect and a sense of equity with their intake and from that foundation, embark on an educational programme. Staff interviewees, in particular, project managers also valued the experience of their staff and the dedication shown to the job.
- AEI staff also recognised the interplay between the social and emotional well being of young people and their educational performance. Programmes were therefore supported by a strong pastoral element, within which staff allocated time to address a whole myriad of issues, including health concerns, financial problems, and accommodation needs. As part of this holistic package, AEI staff also established links with the families and in some cases, extended their support to the parents of AEI referrals.
- The actual AEI programmes were regarded as effective because of their variety, flexibility and the fact that they could be customised to suit individual needs. Young people, in particular, contrasted the 'menu-based' system of AEI programmes to the more prescriptive curriculum of mainstream education. Some mentioned being consulted about what they wanted to do and they seemed to value this greater 'consumer' choice. Staff implied that by allowing young people some degree of control and personal ownership of their education, they became more committed to the programmes. Other young people were able to engage with the programmes because of the opportunity to attend part-time. Where appropriate, the hours could be increased but only if, and when, the young person was ready. The programme therefore was constructed around the individual, as opposed to a common programme being imposed upon them. The range of activities was made possible by AEI staff willingness and ability to tap into other agencies for their input.

- The physical setting and general ambience of AEIs was also cited as a factor associated with change or effectiveness. AEIs generally tried to avoid resembling a typical mainstream classroom – many of their referrals harboured bad memories of school and AEIs wanted to avoid stirring up negative emotions by replicating this environment. Thus, interviewees described creating an atmosphere more akin to the workplace, decorating the walls with colour and allowing young people greater mobility within the building. By placing young people in a more relaxed and informal context it was hoped that they would approach education with a fresh perspective.
- One staff interviewee used the adage '*small is beautiful*' to identify the effective qualities of their AEI. Young people seemed to agree that the scale of the AEI was a positive feature, namely that they were guaranteed more teacher attention and fewer students in the groups minimised distractions, which in turn aided their concentration. Small group sizes were the second most commonly identified reason for change by young people.
- Finally, the availability of alternative provision was a particular issue raised by interviewees. A number of young people were simply glad to be occupied, attending a purposeful activity and socialising again with their peers. Exclusion or long term non-attendance can alienate young people from their peers and lead to a sense of isolation. Therefore the stimulus for change was, for some young people, the chance to start again and have their days filled constructively. This in turn was linked to a reduction in their offending behaviour.

Chapter 7

Issues of cost for alternative provision

About this Chapter

This chapter focuses on the issues surrounding costs and cost-effectiveness of alternative provision. It covers:

- **Funding issues**, as perceived by AEI providers
- **Perceptions of cost-effectiveness** from AEI staff
- **An economic evaluation**, incorporating data collated by the National Evaluation Team, and offering a variety of different cost-effectiveness measures.

Key findings

- Interviewees from four out of the six AEIs expressed a need for additional funding, which could be used to enhance existing programmes and expand the range of activities.
- Costs were minimised because AEIs accessed free resources where possible and put other resources to their optimal use. At the same time, interviewees felt that relatively low staff salaries contributed to the overall economy of alternative provision. However, the consequences for staff retention and the ultimate impact on young people suggests that this is a dimension of AEIs which needs to be adequately funded in order to attract and retain experienced staff.
- The average cost per young person enrolled at the AEIs was £3,800; 165 per cent of the average Age-Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) for the LEAs.
- In total, 71 per cent of young people went to desirable destinations at an average cost of £5,200 (137 per cent) of the average per-person expenditure.
- Young people with undesirable destinations were 28 per cent more likely to offend, and committed, on average, 32 per cent more crime than those young people with desirable destinations.

7.1 Funding issues: an AEI perspective

Interviewees were asked whether they were aware of any funding issues which affected alternative educational provision. The following points were raised:

- a need for more funding
- concerns over the allocation of funding
- the problem of temporary/annual funding.

Interviewees from four provisions shared a desire for additional funding, as this could potentially increase the number and variety of activities offered. Essentially, the *'more money we have the more we can do for the students'* (project staff, AEI 1). Three interviewees from different AEIs were in agreement that funding could be used to provide more external activities, thus enriching youngsters' experiences at the projects. One interviewee felt that their provision was constrained by current funding levels and that young people were sometimes deprived of the same privileges enjoyed by mainstream students.

Three AEIs claimed to lose out because of the way in which funds were distributed. At AEI 2 any extra resources were said to be channelled directly into schools, rather than being allocated through the education department. Thus, it was said that this alternative provision failed to reap the benefits of additional funding and had to survive on the minimum funding, in the form of on-roll payments for each young person:

I think the general issue is that we just get the minimum and I think it's difficult for the education department to give us more because the extra resources that are going into schools are going directly into school. They are not going through the education department in a lot of cases. It's going straight into the school and the school will only pay the on-roll payment for that person. They don't give you a percentage of the additional funding that they are receiving (project staff, AEI 2).

A similar experience was described in relation to AEI 5, where a programme provider reported difficulties in transferring funds attached to a young person from their school to the new provision:

The schools don't want to let the money go, they want to get rid of the young person very often, but they don't want the money to follow them, so you have always got that problem of trying to make the schools pay and some schools are better than others (college provider, AEI 5).

This interviewee was therefore forced to negotiate with schools and try and access funding from a variety of sources. A more preferable arrangement, in his/her view, was for funding to be centrally allocated through the LEA, thus ensuring adequate resourcing for the provision. At AEI 3, funds were allocated on a project basis, rather than per head and this was perceived as a disadvantage – a project with 14 referrals would receive the same funding as one with six.

The longevity of some alternative provision was also thought to be undermined by a lack of permanent, central funding. One provision operated as a pilot, another was reliant on annual funding and at a third provision, a number of staff worked under temporary contracts. The negative consequences for staff retention were noted and a

project manager emphasised that temporary funding would simply result in a ‘*piecemeal approach to social inclusion*’ which ultimately ‘*won’t work*’. Raising a similar issue, another interviewee at AEI 4 criticised the funding of ‘*one-off, flavour of the month*’ initiatives. S/he felt frustrated that there was money available, but it was not necessarily being directed towards existing projects, which had demonstrated their success.

7.2 Perceptions of cost-effectiveness

Interviewees were asked: ‘*From your perspective, do you feel that the provision is cost-effective?*’ All answered affirmatively, although different justifications for this belief were stated. As noted elsewhere (Kinder *et al* 2000), some respondents calculated cost-effectiveness in **extrinsic** terms, citing the benefits and long-term economies beyond the actual provision. Others cited **intrinsic** factors as the basis for cost effectiveness, highlighting the outcomes for young people themselves and the AEIs’ inherent value for money.

More specifically, interviewees rated the provisions as cost effective for the following reasons:

- the intervention reduced costs in the future (to the criminal system, Social Services, etc.)
- resources were being put to their maximum use
- the provisions were more economical than residential care
- staff were underpaid
- young people left the AEIs with positive outcomes.

Three interviewees believed that the intervention of AEIs minimised costs to other agencies further down the line. In particular, they noted that young people, having passed through an AEI were less likely to offend, thus easing the economic burden to the criminal justice system in future years. Similarly, the likelihood of homelessness and unemployment were thought to be reduced, which again would impact positively on agencies such as Social Services:

In terms of the money that isn’t going to be laid out post-16 on policing, burglary, being on benefits, health services for kids that aren’t taking good care of themselves, road accidents, it represents a really huge saving (project staff, AEI 3).

Although some of the young people were already presenting various welfare problems and offending behaviours, interviewees believed that intervention now, could prevent further deterioration and higher costs later:

How do you put a cost on keeping someone out of corrective services, out of young offenders’ institution? And I mean this is dealing with the problem before it manifests itself into more severe crime, unemployment, so as far as cost goes, immediate cost and long-term cost particularly, it’s very valuable (project staff, AEI 4).

In four AEIs, cost-effective provision was also said to have arisen from the creative and optimal use of resources. Interviewees described how they used the funding available to its full potential, and where possible, took advantage of free resources:

I think for the money that we get, the job we do is amazing really ... I think it's largely down to staff ingenuity and not turning anything down that's potential ... if it's free it's good and they will turn it into something quality (project staff, AEI 2).

In the case of AEI 1 and AEI 6, which catered for a number of EBD referrals, the projects' work was compared favourably with the only other alternative, residential provision. One interviewee made the point that they dealt with young people who other agencies simply would not.

For some interviewees, aspects of the AEI staffing contributed towards overall cost-effectiveness. Already, the ingenuity of staff in using resources has been noted. Secondly, costs of the provision were said to be minimised because in some provisions, staff salaries were described as 'low' and staff supported the AEIs with unpaid overtime. Two project managers felt particularly their staff were underpaid, for example:

The support assistants that work in these kinds of units are dealing with much more challenging kids, they are carrying heavier responsibilities and ... they are doing a lot of teaching, and that's not really reflected in the pay packet (project staff, AEI 3).

The last indicator of cost-effectiveness was simply that young people went away from the AEIs with positive outcomes, something which no one could place a 'price tag on'. One interviewee asserted that if they got just 'one of these kids back on track then it's cost-effective' (project staff, AEI 6) and sometimes the outcomes, although seemingly small, indicated significant progress for the individuals concerned:

When the kids ring up themselves and ask to speak to me, that's value for money, regardless of the exact outcome. I know that these kids know that they can approach me and ask me things, whereas previously they have probably, just wouldn't have even opened their mouths to anybody (careers provider, AEI 6).

Finally, at AEI 5, although considered cost-effective because of the ultimate outcomes, the actual costs were described as expensive. This was due to a significant amount of externally commissioned provision. The current arrangements had arisen following a service re-organisation and a rise in the number of referrals. It was not possible to cater for all young people centrally and placements were therefore arranged with external providers.

7.3 Economic evaluation

The aim of this section of the chapter is to provide an economic analysis and comparison of the six AEI projects that were part of the evaluation. More detailed analyses for each individual AEI are available at: www.dfes.gov.uk/research/. The analysis in this summary concerns the academic year September 2000 to July 2001. Due to the inherent differences between the six projects, comparisons in terms of cost-effectiveness should be made with caution. Differences in the local context of each project may result in a significant variation in costs, and cost-effectiveness. Costs are included using the perspective of the AEI.

In this section, the modelled costs of the different projects are compared, using on-going costs only. This is because the time period over which pre-evaluation costs

have been collected varies between projects (no pre-evaluation costs are included at one AEI, while four have a full year of pre-evaluation costs included). For most projects, the proportion of pre-evaluation to on-going costs is very low, and hence this method of analysis should provide a fairly accurate representation of the costs of the six projects.

7.3.1 The projects

Table 7.1 provides an introduction to the six projects in terms of young person numbers (total enrolment during the year; including joiners and leavers) and the number and types of intervention undertaken at each AEI. Some projects have aggregated interventions (particularly educational interventions), so Table 7.1 simply indicates whether the AEI provides a particular type of intervention (as determined by the National Intervention categories). Abbreviations have been used for the intervention types: these are defined in the list of abbreviations below.

Table 7.1 The six projects

AEI	No. young people	No. ints. (total)	Type of intervention								
			Educ	PSE	Car	Leis	Comm Work	Work Exp	Coll	Couns	Voc Train
1	22	15	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
2	23	11	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
3	15	9	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓
4	33	13	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
5	39	11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
6	30	12	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
TOTAL	162	71	6	5	6	6	1	5	2	2	4

Source: MHA database

Key:

Educ – Education; PSE - Personal and Social Education; Car – Careers Education; Leis – Leisure based activities; Comm Work – Work in the community; Work exp – Work experience; Coll – College placements; Couns – Counselling; Voc train – Vocational training.

Table 7.1 summarises how the six projects vary in terms of young person numbers (the mean number of young people across the six projects is 27, with a standard deviation of nine young people). There is less variation in terms of the types of intervention provided: all six provide Education, Careers Education and Leisure-based Activities; and five out of the six provide Personal and Social Education and Work Experience. College Placements are included at all six AEIs, but are only listed on the templates (and costed) for two AEIs. AEI 3 provides Counselling, but this is incorporated within other activities undertaken at the AEI.

7.3.2 Crude input costs

Table 7.2 shows how inputs are allocated across the six projects, in terms of the distribution of total resource use (including pre-evaluation costs) across the seven

input categories to which costs have been apportioned. Values are shown as percentages of the total resource use, as this varies between projects. The last row provides an arithmetic average of all six projects for each input type. This has not been weighted by the size of each project.

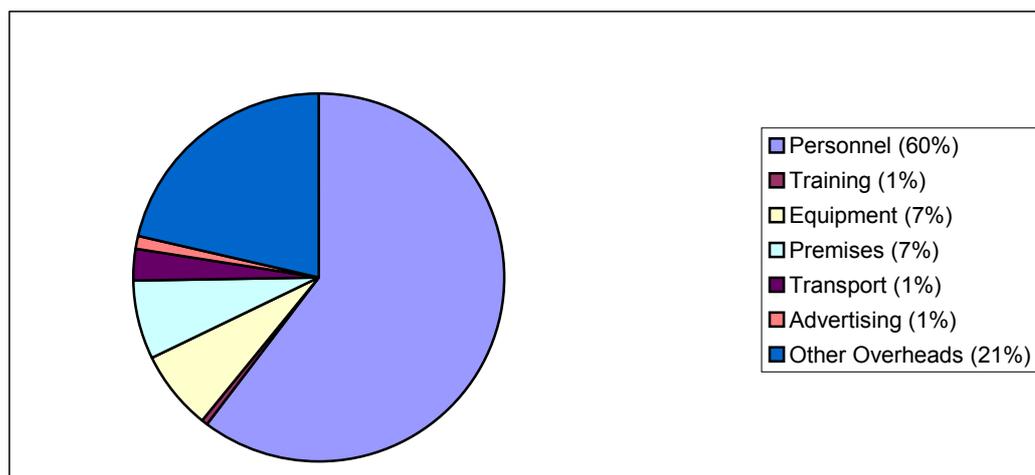
Table 7.2 Crude input costs, by type and project (%)

AEI	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Advertising	Other overheads
1	52	0.5	10	15	1.5	0	21
2	65	1	4	19	4	2	5
3	76	1	3	3	8	0	9
4	82	1	7	0	0	1	9
5	17	0	1	0	1	2	79
6	72	0	16	5	2	0	5
MEAN	60	1	7	7	3	1	21

Source: MHA database

Table 7.2 suggests that the primary input for five out of the six AEIs is Personnel. The exception is AEI 5, which acts as a ‘brokering’ service and provides its young people with access to a number of other training providers. The costs of these providers are reflected in the ‘Other Overheads’ category. Very little expenditure occurs on Training, Transport and Advertising, although some AEIs have access to a number of free training courses. Equipment and Premises costs vary between the six AEIs. Figure 7.1 shows the average resource breakdown in the form of a pie chart.

Figure 7.1 Average crude input costs, by type



7.3.3 Capital and revenue costs

All six AEIs purchased some capital equipment, although the amount of capital expenditure was fairly small compared with the total resource use. Table 7.3 provides a comparison of the percentage of the total crude input cost devoted to capital, rather

than revenue, expenditure. The table shows capital expenditure percentages for the total period (including pre-evaluation and on-going expenditures) and secondly percentages for the on-going period only (September 2000 to July 2001). The mean values shown in the last row are arithmetic means of the six individual percentages.

Table 7.3 Percentage of capital expenditure

AEI	Total %	On-going %
1	10	2
2	3	1
3	2	0.5
4	7	6
5	0	1
6	16	6
MEAN	6	3

Source: *MHA database*

AEIs 1 and 6 have the highest proportion of capital expenditure, although the table shows that most capital equipment was purchased during the pre-evaluation period. AEI 1 has a relatively high level of capital expenditure as this AEI had only been running for one year prior to the intervention year. Hence a significant amount of capital equipment would have been purchased at the start of the project – other AEIs are likely to have had access to equipment purchased a number of years previously. In general, capital costs are fairly low and this accords with the general philosophy across all six AEIs of keeping costs down by seeking free or second hand equipment where possible. The nature of the costs data collected mean that it has not been possible to value all of these levered-in inputs.

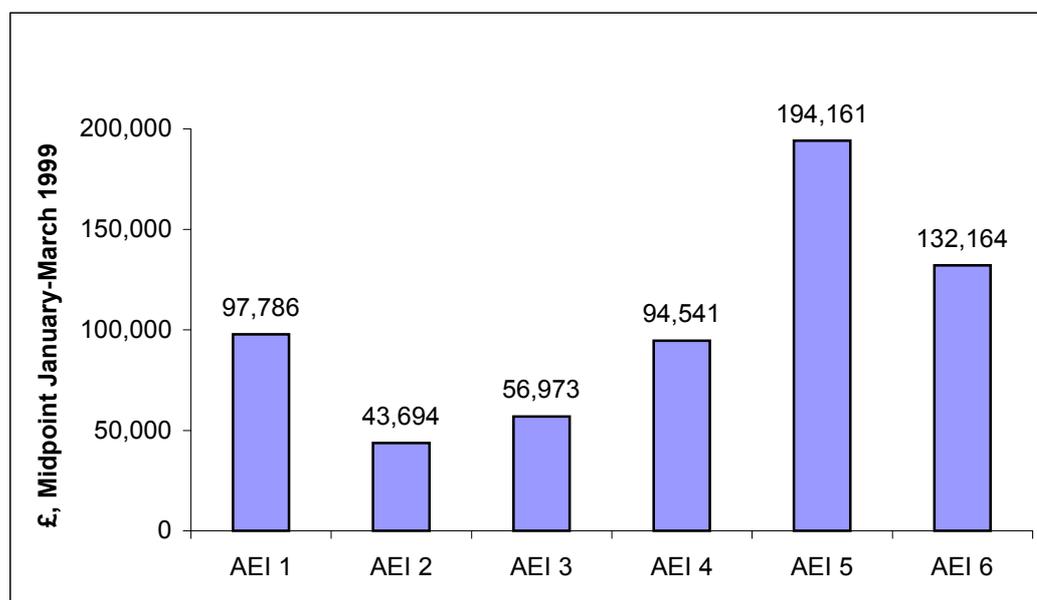
Almost all costs incurred during the pre-evaluation phase were capital costs. Although there is no data on expenditure during the pre-evaluation period for AEI 5, it is unlikely that any major purchases of capital equipment would have occurred, given the nature of this AEI (as a ‘brokering’ service, rather than a provider). Where capital equipment was purchased, the main items were computers and associated hardware. While such items are not ‘once-off’ purchases, they are unlikely to be made frequently.

7.3.4 Modelled input costs

Input costs for each AEI are modelled to enable standardisation of resource use between the six projects. The modelling process allows the crude input costs for each AEI to be converted into midpoint January to March 1999 prices, and capital equipment costs to be amortised over the useful life of the asset. This process takes into account the effects of inflation and impatience on costs occurring at different points in the intervention year. The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report. The values used in this summary are those reflecting ‘corrected’ data for the on-going period only. Corrected data allow for expenditure to be correctly apportioned over the life of the project, rather than using the method applied by the database. On-going costs include depreciation costs of

capital equipment acquired in the pre-evaluation period and hence are an accurate representation of the cost of running the AEI provision for one academic year (2000/01). Modelled costs for each project are shown in Figure 7.2. Care should be taken in direct comparison, due to differences in young person numbers.

Figure 7.2 Modelled costs, by AEI



Source: *MHA database*

There is a significant variation in the modelled on-going costs between the six projects. The average modelled cost is approximately £100,000, and the standard deviation across the projects is approximately £55,000. AEI 5 appears to be the most expensive provision using this basic comparison. This AEI acknowledges that their approach to provision is costly: at present there is not enough space for the AEI to run on-site provision and must therefore buy-in provision from external agencies, thus making AEI 5 the most expensive service. However, the AEI intends to expand its premises and provide more on-site activities in the future, and it is anticipated that this will reduce costs.

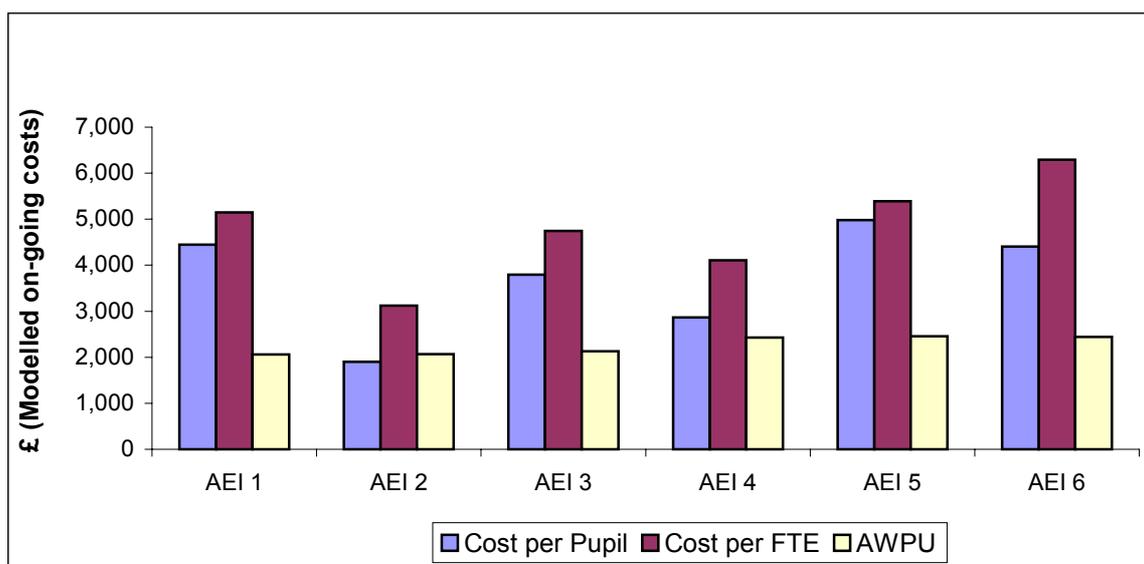
Comparisons between the six AEIs cannot be made on the basis of costs alone; and the following summary of cost-effectiveness must be interpreted with extreme caution. The six AEIs offer six quite different types of provision, designed to suit their local communities, and enrolment varies across the six projects. Decisions regarding the continuing of funding, or the type of provision to offer elsewhere, should not be made in the light of this report.

7.3.5 Cost-effectiveness – average per-young person costs and retention

One way of comparing the cost-effectiveness of the six AEIs is to calculate the average per-young person cost. This is done using the modelled on-going costs of each project. Two types of comparison are made. The first shows total young person

numbers in terms of enrolments during the intervention year (at any point), and not adjusting for leavers. The second adjusts these young person numbers for joiners and leavers during the year and shows young person numbers in terms of Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). Average costs per young person using these two approaches are shown in Figure 7.3. The third bar shows the average AWPU (Average-Weighted Pupil Unit) for each LEA as a means of comparing the costs of AEI provision with mainstream education provision.

Figure 7.3 Average per-person cost, by AEI



Source: *MHA database*

Figure 7.3 shows that AEI 2 appears to have the lowest per-young person costs; with AEIs 1, 5 and 6 the highest costs. The mean costs over the six AEIs (using the sum of costs and young person numbers) are approximately £3,800 for total young people numbers and £5,000 per FTE. These calculations do not consider the attendance of each young person and how attendance rates vary between the AEIs.

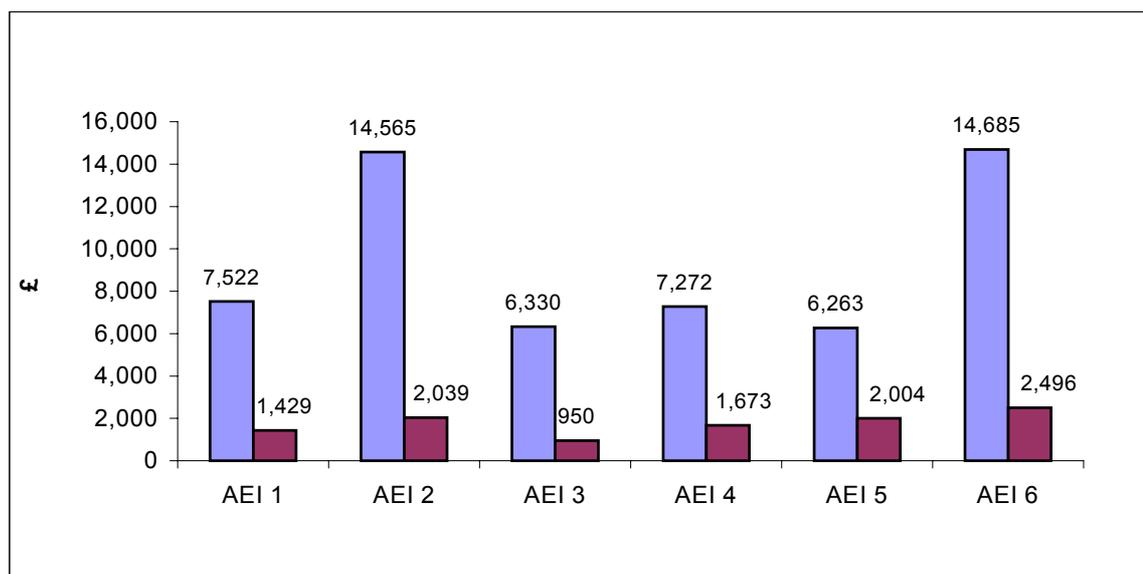
The average cost per young person is higher than the LEA AWPU figure for all AEIs, with the exception of AEI 2, which spends slightly less per person than the AWPU allocation. AEIs 1 and 5 spend over twice the AWPU figure per person.

There is no evidence that per-young person costs fall as the number of young people increases, when comparing the six AEIs. We might expect the per-young person cost to fall as the AEIs would benefit from various economies of scale, for example in terms of premises and administration costs. However this result is not surprising, given that the primary input category is Personnel: most AEIs will retain a low young person:teacher ratio, and hence average costs will remain fairly constant as enrolment changes.

An alternative measure of cost-effectiveness is the ability of each project to retain their students for the full academic year. The cost per young person retained has therefore been calculated for each AEI. This takes into consideration the number of

young people leaving before the end of the year (except Year 11 students who left in June), but excludes any young people who joined part-way through the academic year (whether they were retained for the remainder of the year or not). The average modelled on-going cost per young person retained is shown in Figure 7.4. In this analysis, it is important to consider that some young people may be leaving the AEI early for positive reasons (e.g. reintegration into mainstream schooling). Hence the retention rate alone may not be a true indicator of the ‘success’ or otherwise of the AEI (destinations should also be considered).

Figure 7.4 Average cost per person retained



Source: MHA database

Figure 7.4 tells a different story to Figure 7.3 for some AEIs. AEI 2, with the lowest per-person costs, now has the second highest cost per young person retained for the full academic year, and the second highest cost per one per-cent of people retained. AEI 6, with high per person costs, also has a high cost per person and per one per-cent retained. Overall, there does appear to be a positive relationship between per-young person expenditure (all young people enrolled) and the retention rate (the percentage of young people retained for the full academic year, of those starting in September 2000). This relationship is positive and is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

Cost-effectiveness – young person attainments

The second measure of cost-effectiveness uses the attainments of the young people while at the AEI. All certificated attainments are recorded for each AEI. The total (on-going, modelled) cost is compared to the total number of certificates attained by young people at each AEI. The results are shown in Table 7.4. Three measures of cost-effectiveness are used - average cost: per young person awarded a certificate, per one per-cent of young people awarded a certificate, and per certificate (as each young person might be awarded more than one certificate). Shown in the last row are totals for the first three columns and means of the six AEIs for the last three columns.

Table 7.4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

AEI	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of all young people	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated, £	Cost per percent, £	Cost per certificate, £
1	19	86%	69	5,147	1,137	1,417
2	11	48%	41	3,972	910	1,066
3	11	73%	56	5,179	780	1,017
4*	16	48%	16	5,909	1,970	5,909
5	9	23%	16	21,573	8,442	12,135
6*	4	18%	9	33,041	6,608	14,685
TOTAL/ MEAN	70	43%	207	12,470	3,308	6,038

Source: MHA database

* The results for AEI 4 only show attainments in the first term, as data on attainments in subsequent terms are not available. The majority of certificates would have been awarded in the summer term following college exams. The results for AEI 6 exclude the attainments of young people based at college, as the costs of this intervention are not included in the analysis. These young people are excluded in the percentage calculation.

Overall, less than half of all the young people enrolled achieved a certificate. The percentage of young people achieving certificates ranged from 18 per cent at AEI 6 to 86 per cent at AEI 1. Table 7.4 also suggests that AEIs 1, 2, 3 and 4 have lower attainment costs than AEIs 5 and 6. The young people at AEI 6 have a wide age-range: the younger enrollees may be less likely to be awarded certificates than those in other AEIs. Average costs vary considerably between AEIs, and so means are provided for illustration only. The results shown in Table 7.4 suggest that some AEIs make certificates more attainable, or easily available, than others do.

It is important to consider that every type of certificate is given equal weighting in this analysis, although it may be the case that certain types of certificates are of higher ‘worth’ to the young people than others. A whole range of certificates are included in this analysis, from first aid certificates (where attendance may have been sufficient to have been awarded a certificate), to a full GCSE.

Cost-effectiveness – destinations

The third measure of cost-effectiveness is in terms of the destinations (or reasons for leaving) of young people at the earliest of when they left the AEI, or the end of the 2000/01 academic year. Where the young people have both a known intermediate, and a known final destination, the final destination is used here. Destinations can be divided into ‘desirable’ destinations (e.g. work, further training) and ‘undesirable’ destinations (e.g. unemployment, custodial sentences). The analysis in this section uses a conservative approach, classing unknown destinations as undesirable. Table 7.5 shows for each AEI the average cost per desirable destination (using on-going modelled costs) and the average cost per desirable percent (i.e. the percentage of all young people going on to a desirable destination). The means are the arithmetic means of the six AEIs and are not weighted by young person numbers at each AEI.

Table 7.5 Cost-effectiveness: 'desirable' destinations

AEI	No. young people to 'desirable' destinations	Percentage of all young people with 'desirable' destinations	Cost per 'desirable' destination £	Cost per 'desirable' percent £
1	17	77%	5,752	1,270
2	13	57%	3,361	767
3	11	73%	5,179	780
4	23	70%	4,110	1,351
5	29	74%	6,695	2,621
6	22	73%	6,007	1,810
MEAN		71%	5,184	1,433

Source: MHA database

Table 7.5 shows that 71 per cent of young people at the 'average' AEI went on to 'desirable' first destinations. This ranges from 57 per cent at AEI 2 to 77 per cent at AEI 1. The low result for AEI 2 may be due to staffing problems at the AEI, with instability as the project leader changed twice during the year. Also, the area suffers from high unemployment: five of the 23 young people are recorded as being unemployed, the highest of all six AEIs. There is no real evidence of a positive relationship between per-young person costs and the percentage of young people moving on to a 'desirable' destination.

The cost per 'desirable' destination varies between the AEIs. AEI 2 has the lowest cost per 'desirable' destination, and thus at this AEI there appears to be some sort of trade-off between cost and effectiveness, given the low percentage moving to desirable destinations. The cost per 'desirable' destination is highest at AEI 5; although AEI 5 also had exceptionally high total costs, due to the nature of this AEI as a brokering provision. AEI 5 also had the highest cost per person certificated, although it is not known whether these two results are linked in any way. (The hypothesis would be that young people with certificates find it easier to move into training or employment than those without certificates.)

The average cost over the six AEIs per desirable destination is 2.3 times the average AWPU and 1.4 times the average per-person expenditure at the AEIs. This finding may suggest that the AEIs are underfunded.

It is also interesting to provide a breakdown of the 'desirable' destinations of AEI leavers. This is shown by AEI in Table 7.6. The sixth column shows both the number of young people going to 'undesirable' destinations, and the percentage of total students going to an undesirable destination, excluding those students whose destinations are unknown.

Table 7.6 'Desirable' destinations breakdown by AEI

Number of young people to:							
AEI	Remain at AEI/ reintegrated*	FE	Other training	Employment	Undesirable (% 'known' undesirable)	Total	% to FE/ training
1	5	0	4	8	5 (15%)	22	24%
2	4	4	4	1	10 (35%)	23	42%
3	1	4	2	4	4 (0%)	15	43%
4	15	6	1	1	10 (12%)	33	39%
5	14	4	4	7	10 (3%)	39	28%
6	11	3	6	2	8 (19%)	30	47%
TOTAL	50	21	21	23	47	162	34%

Source: *MHA database*

* *Young people in this category are excluded from the percentage calculations.*

Table 7.6 shows that a total of 21 young people went on to Further Education (FE) following their time at the AEI (including those who remained at college), and 21 undertook other forms of training. Excluding those young people who remained at the AEI for a further year or who were re-integrated into mainstream schooling, 34 per cent of all AEI young people went on to FE or training. This varies between 24 per cent for AEI 1 and 47 per cent for AEI 6. Hence no individual AEI manages to send 50 per cent of their leavers to FE or other training. Whether the young people who did pursue FE or training would have done so prior to their time at the AEI is investigated elsewhere in this report.

The relatively low percentages of young people moving on to FE/training for AEIs 1 and 5 may be because of employment opportunities in the local areas. Hence the probability that a young person will move into FE/training may depend on the socio-economic status of the area. Also, the type of young people engaged by AEI 1 may consider that FE/training is beyond their reach and are satisfied with finding a job at 16.

Looking in more detail at undesirable destinations, Table 7.6 shows another approach which excludes young people whose destinations are unknown. Using this approach, the percentage of young people (with known destinations) reported as having an undesirable destination ranges from 0 per cent at AEI 3 to 35 per cent at AEI 2. AEI 2 is of particular interest here: a high proportion went onto FE/training, while another group ended up in undesirable destinations. This may be indicative of the range of young people included in the target group, some of whom could not be 'reached' by the AEI provision. What is important is that the more ambitious young people are not 'led astray' by others. To help prevent this, some AEIs structure the day to keep different types of young people separate.

Cost-effectiveness – crime outcomes

The data in this section are based on *recorded* crime figures obtained from the PNC. Crime outcomes are assessed at the level of the individual young person, rather than at the level of the AEI.

Number of offenders and individual offences

The first measure of effectiveness in terms of crime reduction is in the number of young people at each AEI committing offences. This measure does not weight offences by their severity, as no weighting scales are available. Detail of the number of young people committing offences (and being caught for these) is shown in Table 7.7 for each AEI. The academic year 1999/00 is used as the baseline, and 2000/01 used as the intervention year for all analyses in this section. Included are those young people enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND who committed one or more offences in the baseline and/or intervention years.

Table 7.7 Number of offenders by AEI and year

AEI	Number of young people offending in year: n (%)		No. committing more offences*	No. committing less offences*
	1999/00	2000/01		
1	9 (41%)	7 (32%)	3	5
2	9 (39%)	6 (26%)	5	3
3	7 (47%)	8 (53%)	7	3
4	6 (18%)	3 (9%)	3	6
5	15 (38%)	14 (36%)	10	11
6	8 (27%)	9 (30%)	8	4
TOTAL	54 (33%)	47 (29%)	36	32

Source: *MHA database*

* *Between 1999/00 and 2000/01*

The proportion of young people committing offences in the intervention year ranged from 9 per cent at AEI 4 to 53 per cent at AEI 3. Attendance at four of the six AEIs appears to have reduced the likelihood that young people will offend. Overall there were less offenders in the intervention year than in the baseline year.

Also of interest is whether the young people committed more or less offences in the intervention period. As noted earlier in Chapter 4, here the results are less positive overall, with more young people increasing their offending behaviour (or becoming new offenders) rather than reducing their offending behaviour. Looking at the offending behaviour of these young people, it appears that some commit more offences of the same type, and some more offences of different types (and are therefore 'trying out' new types of crime).

Table 7.8 shows the proportion of offenders leaving early and the proportion of crime in the intervention year committed by those leaving early, by AEI. Overall, there does not seem to be a link between young people leaving the AEI early and their propensity to offend (exceptions are AEIs 2 and 6). In total, 33 per cent of all young

people left early, while 34 per cent of offenders left early. In general, early leavers commit more crime than those who didn't leave the AEI before the end of the academic year (although AEI 4 is an exception to this rule). The 34 per cent of offenders who left early committed 44 per cent of the total number of crimes.

Table 7.8 Early leaving and propensity to offend

AEI	Proportion of early leavers	Proportion of crime committed by early leavers
1	0.29	0.54
2	0.67	0.73
3	0.50	0.75
4	0.33	0.20
5	0.00	0.00
6	0.67	0.68
TOTAL	0.34	0.44

Source: MHA database

The relationship between a young person's destination and their propensity to offend is shown by AEI in Table 7.9. The two columns show the proportion of offenders with undesirable destinations and the proportion of crime committed by those going to undesirable destinations.

Table 7.9 Undesirable destinations and propensity to offend

AEI	Proportion of offenders with undesirable destinations	Proportion of crime committed by those with undesirable destinations
1	0.29	0.32
2	0.50	0.45
3	0.38	0.73
4	0.20	0.20
5	0.23	0.42
6	0.56	0.56
TOTAL	0.37	0.49

Source: MHA database

Table 7.9 suggests that compared with the 29 per cent of young people going to undesirable destinations overall, young people with undesirable destinations are more likely to offend than those with desirable destinations (37 per cent of offenders have undesirable destinations). The ratio is highest at AEIs 2 and 6: for AEI 2 this may be due to the relatively high number of young people unemployed following their time at the AEI. Unemployment may well be a trigger for criminal activity. The second column suggests that those with undesirable destinations commit more crime than those with desirable destinations: the 37 per cent with undesirable destinations commit 49 per cent of the crimes.

A note on causality is warranted here, for it is not always known whether the young people have undesirable destinations because they are offenders (e.g. custodial sentences); or whether they offend because they have undesirable destinations (e.g. unemployment). Nevertheless, the correlation between lack of success at an AEI and criminal activity seems clear.

Summary

- There were concerns over the allocation of funding - in particular, that AEIs sometimes 'missed out' on additional funding and that money that was attached to a young person did not automatically follow them to their AEI placement.
- Temporary funding threatened the permanence and security of some projects, with implications for staff retention.
- AEIs were rated as cost-effective in the long-term because staff believed they diverted young people away from lifestyles that could potentially drain the resources of other agencies in the future. In the short-term, the cost of AEIs was justified on the basis of the positive outcomes experienced by young people.
- In the short term, the cost of AEIs was justified on the basis of the positive outcomes experienced by the young people.
- The primary expenditure for five out of the six AEIs is on personnel.
- There is a positive relationship between average per-person expenditure and the retention rate, when comparing the six AEIs.
- The average cost over the six AEIs per desirable destination is 2.3 times the average AWPU and 1.4 times the average per-person expenditure at the AEIs. This finding may suggest that the AEIs are underfunded.
- Early leavers commit on average 29 per cent more crime than those staying for the full academic year (but are not significantly more likely to offend).

Concluding comments

This research has provided an enormous quantity of data on provision for young people who will not or cannot attend our mainstream schools. Overall, the picture is of a number of dedicated professionals offering a distinctive holistic package of sustained pastoral support and alternative curriculum opportunities to which the majority of their students respond positively.

Nevertheless, the findings do indicate that the pupil clientele of AEs also includes a number of young people who do not succeed. The evidence on the numbers of AE clients who are not retained, do not achieve or continue to offend may be a concern, (although it is important to stress once more that there is no formal remit to address criminality within these programmes). The variety of types of damaged youngsters being allocated to such provision (and sometimes the severity of their problems), combined with the limited resources available, may largely account for this lack of success.

In addition, the data collection exercise underpinning this evaluation has shown the lack of information and incompleteness of records that can accompany young people when they leave mainstream education. For this reason, some of the quantitative and economic conclusions reached do require a certain degree of caution.

Nevertheless, the findings from this study suggest the need for more and sustained funding in order to deliver the intensive and specialist support such young people clearly require. The direct correlation between resources and positive outcomes is a powerful message, and is all the more significant in the light of statutory requirements for full-time provision for excluded pupils.

However, the achievements of so many of the young people, and the staff who work with them, that have been depicted in this research surely also require a higher profile and greater acclaim.

Conclusions

It should be noted that the sample of AEIs used in this study was small (six) and therefore cannot be viewed as being representative of all AEIs.

Staffing and funding

- The research highlighted a need for specialist training for AEI staff working with young people referred to the projects who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or psychological problems. The opportunity for staff to have access to supervision, counselling and/or support in order to respond to and manage the often complex needs, e.g. drugs' misuse, violence, pregnancy and homelessness, of the young people attending the AEIs was also noted.
- The time-limited nature of much AEI funding undermined job security and was viewed as having a detrimental impact on staff retention. The lack of, and often short-term, tenuous nature of funding for AEIs was a huge issue and placed a great deal of pressure on staff. Long-term funding and security of tenure may be a way of further enhancing the skill base of AEI provision.

Full-time provision

- Only one of the AEIs was offering full-time provision which was seen as a particular strength of that intervention. Staff from the other AEIs were concerned whether government requirements for full-time provision would be supported by additional funding.
- A number of AEI staff highlighted concerns about the suitability of full-time provision for some of their students with serious behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The requirement for a full-time programme was in some cases believed to pose a safety threat to both staff and other students. Others highlighted fears that demands for full-time provision might compromise the quality of the programmes on offer. The staffing implications for small AEI teams were a further concern, in particular the additional pressures placed on staff and the logistical difficulties of providing staffing cover for the whole day.
- Thus, whilst full-time provision is now a requirement for AEIs, some of the issues raised by this research and highlighted by AEI staff regarding its viability and suitability may be very worthy of note.

The target group

- Staff at the AEIs were concerned by the paucity of information on the youngsters that followed the young people to the provision. Data sharing and monitoring of the termly educational progress of all young people in the LEA including both mainstream and alternative provisions, easily accessible from service to service, might be one way to address this.

- Some of the youngsters' educational histories demonstrated a lack of alternative provision available to them once school became no longer viable. Some had to wait significant periods of time until they could/would access suitable provision. This not only has implications for educational standards, but also has possible wider societal significance. Interviewees linked time out of school, to social isolation and association with criminal activity. Further efforts therefore may be required in order to limit this period of 'limbo' in between accessing educational opportunity.

Retention

- The majority of youngsters who left the AEIs over the course of the year were non-attenders. There is a need to ensure that these students are effectively monitored to ensure that they do not become 'lost' from the educational system. The numbers of young people leaving the projects, whilst not high overall, was still significant. Furthermore, the movement of looked after youngsters' between areas did appear an area for particular concern.
- Possible areas for development in the retention of young people at AEIs might include a coordinated approach to stabilise educational provision for looked after youngsters and the availability of provision to meet the needs of young parents. Childcare commitments meant that a small number of young women were unable to continue accessing the AEIs.
- Project staff felt that they were most successful where young people's behaviours had not become entrenched, highlighting the benefits of early intervention.

Aspirations, expectations and transition

- There appeared to be an increasing realism in many young people's aspirations and expectations as a result of attending the AEIs. They also noted a significant change in confidence in relation to themselves and their futures as a result of attending the projects. In addition, youngsters noted positive changes in their attitudes to employment, college and training.
- AEI staff noted the importance of post-programme support. Staff continued to support youngsters after they had finished their time at the projects. They were providing crucial support at times when AEI youngsters might be in danger of becoming 'lost', for example, during the summer holidays between finishing at the project and starting at college. The employment of transitional workers might fulfil this role.
- Training tasters offered at the AEIs had resulted in a number of young people accessing training provision when they left the projects. In addition, training agencies were successfully working with some of the most disengaged youngsters. A continuation and/or extension of links between training agencies and LEA providers can be seen as a valuable way forward in AEI provision.

Impact

- The research highlighted a wide array of positive outcomes accruing from attendance at an AEI, expanded on in great detail elsewhere in the report and its various summaries. Without doubt, for many of the young people, AEIs provided significant opportunities to successfully re-engage socially and educationally. As such, perhaps greater national acclaim and publicity could be awarded to these successes as evidence of the government's commitment to inclusion.
- Nevertheless, the research does point to continued vulnerability: particularly it seems, for a minority of youngsters engaged in offending behaviour (though it is important to reiterate that reducing offending is not a primary aim of AEIs).
- The police national computer (PNC) data suggested that more crimes were recorded, albeit by fewer young people, during the year of AEI attendance. While the self-reported offending levels showed an overall reduction, (with variation in the degree to which different offending behaviours declined), about one in eight admitted to more offending.
- Staff at AEIs felt that there was some correlation between offending and overall drop-out from the project. Hence, the study questioned the appropriateness of some placements for those young people whose high levels of offending meant that it was extremely difficult to successfully engage them in the interventions. Greater involvement in AEI programmes by those specialist agencies with a remit to tackle youth crime may be another area to develop.

Effective practice in alternative provision

- Young people responded well to certain features of the AEIs, in particular the staff approach (based on respect and equivalence); high staff to pupil ratios that allowed for more time and attention; and a less constrained physical environment. These qualities are, to an extent, being replicated in certain current initiatives within mainstream e.g. learning support units, learning mentors and personal advisors. Hence the strategies and approaches of AEI staff perhaps deserve greater recognition for their success in re-engaging young people, and such a higher profile may be a useful training resource for mainstream colleagues.
- From a curriculum perspective, the common approach of AEIs was to ensure variety and flexibility, tailoring programmes to the specific needs and interests of their intake. Again, this model is becoming apparent in a mainstream context: recent government proposals have placed a greater emphasis on ensuring educational variety from the age of 14 and the extension of vocational opportunities. 'Parity of esteem' for these latter qualifications continues to be an issue.
- Overall, the key challenge for AEIs remains how to provide an educational programme that often needs to cater for a very diverse clientele. Intakes at AEIs included young people with considerable learning difficulties, students capable of

GCSE attainment and young people with complex social problems, such as drug use and high levels of offending. There is perhaps a question mark over the capacity of a single intervention to cater for such a myriad of needs, and hence specialisation may be an area to explore further.

Funding

- Funding levels would appear to be a significant factor in the success of AEIs. Cost effective analysis revealed quite some variation in funding between the six AEIs, with a positive correlation between average per person expenditure and retention rates. Equally, the research found that the young people who left the provision early committed on average 29 per cent more crime than those who stayed until the end of the academic year. Additional resources and a particular policy commitment to retaining young people at AEIs (or a suitable alternative) may thus be required.
- Despite the benefits to be gained from a well-funded provision, in general, AEIs were felt to be underfunded and this may be well corroborated by cost-benefit analysis. The average cost per young person enrolled at the AEIs was £3,800 – 165 per cent of the average Age-Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) for the LEAs. However, cost-effectiveness analysis further suggested the considerable resource implications of ‘desirable destinations’ for AEI pupils (i.e. training, attendance at college or employment). Here, the average cost over the six AEIs per desirable destination was £5,200, two and a quarter times the average AWPU and 137 per cent of the average per-person expenditure at the AEIs. Given the incidences of drop-out, undesirable destinations, continued offending and non-achievement identified in the report, further investment would again seem to be required for AEIs to offer a truly comprehensive and effective education programme to all the young people enrolled there.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

AEI 1	
PROGRAMME SUMMARY	
<p>Every young person received two and a half days of provision based activities. Year 10s and Year 11s followed the same timetable, with Year 10s attending Wednesday/Thursday and Year 11s Monday/Tuesday. In addition, for young people not on work placement there was a Friday morning session of arts and crafts/other leisure-based activities/preparation for work placement. The timetable included a significant performing arts component covering music, drama and media education. Through these activities it was hoped that young people could develop their self-esteem and confidence. When individuals were ready, work experience placements could be arranged for two days of the week. In addition to the programme of activities, staff offered a high level of pastoral support, addressing the social and emotional needs of their young people. On entry to the AEI, an initial assessment of each child was conducted using the Basic Skills Agency national standard test. This helped formulate a development profile. Every month students had a formal review with a member of staff and looked at what they had achieved and if all the action points had been covered.</p>	
PROGRAMME COMPONENTS	
Education Programmes	Young people followed a core curriculum of numeracy, literacy, music performance, art and design, drama, media studies, basic nutrition and IT. Young people could achieve NPTC qualifications which were basic pre-NVQ qualifications and AQA certificates of achievement.
Work experience	Where appropriate, work experience placements could be arranged for two days a week. During placements young people recorded daily activities in a logbook and were asked questions which encouraged them to reflect upon their work experience. This logbook then fed into the National Records of Achievement.
Vocational training	One young person attended a car mechanic course for one day a week.
Careers education	Careers education was delivered under the guise of 'progression training', which sought to familiarise students with the various elements required to secure employment on leaving the AEI. In addition, young people were taken to the local careers service for interviews and to discuss various careers options.
Personal and social education	<p>During their time at the AEI, young people received talks from a number of outside speakers e.g. the family planning service, the Youth Information Service and Youth Offending Team. The programme also included a visit to a local prison to hear inmates talk about their experiences.</p> <p>WESTON SPIRIT This course enabled young people to gain awareness about themselves, their actions and the consequences of these actions on work and relationships.</p>
Leisure-based activities	<p>SPORTS RELATED The programme included a number of opportunities to participate in sports activities. Each week trainees attended an activity centre offering pursuits such as water sports and archery, interspersed with problem solving exercises. The AEI also had a football team, played rounders and took the young people bowling and swimming.</p> <p>OTHER The core programme was supplemented by various trips, such as meals out and theatre visits. In the Autumn half-term, young people went away on a week's outward bound residential.</p>
OTHER INFORMATION	
Contact time	A part-time programme of two and a half days a week, with the option of almost full-time when young people go on work experience.
Ave group size	Ten young people with a 1:5 staff to pupil ratio.
Distinctive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme utilised the performing arts to develop confidence, self-esteem and self expression. ▪ A work/vocationally orientated provision with support from training advisors. ▪ High levels of pastoral care.

AEI 2

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The project offered each young person up to 25 hours a week full-time provision. This was gradually built up from 8 to 10 hours, depending on each young person's needs. Staff came from a youth work background, so offered an holistic education package, formulating a programme based on young people's individual needs. Staff delivered many parts of the programme and also offered support to the young people through a key worker system. The activities provided included a substantial amount of personal and social education covering drugs, budgeting, team building, sex education, health, hygiene and safety and a first aid course. Young people reviewed their progress every four weeks with their key workers and staff also recorded progress daily in case records.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

Education Programmes	Literacy and numeracy were an intrinsic part of all young people's Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Young people could achieve certification in numeracy skills from the OCR. The education programme also offered the bronze and in some cases, silver award for ASDAN. An adult trainer based at the project offered a CLAIT computer course and young people also had access to an internet suite at a local community centre.
Work experience	In preparation for future employment, work experience placements could be included in the programme either for a solid block of one to two weeks or for one day a week.
Vocational training	A child-care course was offered at another provision site. Two young people attended the course during the autumn term.
Careers education	As well as various in-house careers resources, a careers officer visited the provision offering group sessions and one-to-one advice.
Personal and social education	The AEI programme had a substantial PSE content, with coverage of life skills, sex education, team building, drugs' education and budgeting. Issue-based work was tabled into the provision. Although largely delivered by AEI staff, outside speakers were invited to give talks on relevant issues e.g. health visitors, ex-drug users, and a prison outreach team. A sexual health advisor from the local Health Promotion unit also held one to one interviews with young people. Formally, the young people could achieve an AEB in life skills and complete courses in first aid and health, hygiene and safety.
Counselling	Access to a MIND counsellor was available if a young person's needs were deemed to be serious enough. One young person received counselling during the evaluation period.
Leisure-based activities	A number of leisure-based activities were available including a driving course, which covered the theory of driving, road safety and car maintenance. Regular sessions of football, badminton and pool were scheduled into the programme. Some outdoor pursuits, such as climbing, canoeing, walking and biking were available in the summer holidays. The programme also included arts-based projects which also had an educational focus, and visits to theatres and museums. There were opportunities to be involved in cooking at a local community centre.
Environmental activities	Young people were involved in a community based gardening project.
OTHER INFORMATION	
Contact time	A part-time programme with possible progression to full-time – anywhere from six to 25 hours a week. The AEI required a minimum of three sessions of two hours each per week.
Average group size	Eight to ten young people, with a 1:5 staff to pupil ratio.
Distinctive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant PSE content ▪ Limited access to professional counsellor ▪ Youth worker approach ▪ Individual packages of education ▪ Gardening project.

AEI 3

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Three to four days of provision were available at this vocationally-focused AEI. The programme typically included two sessions of education (e.g. ASDAN, OCR national skills profile) and two sessions of forestry activities. The AEI offered a programme with an environmental slant and various vocational/work experience opportunities e.g. involvement in a national enterprise scheme. In addition, two young people were on full-time college courses but remained under the umbrella of the AEI. Teaching groups were small, typically two to three young people at a time.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

Education Programmes	Educational input was provided through the ASDAN Youth Award Scheme, and the OCR national skills profile. This allowed achievement in various areas including horticulture, communication, literacy, numeracy, IT, leisure and tourism, retail and motor vehicles.
Work experience	Work experience placements could be arranged for one day a week for six weeks. In addition the AEI facilitated youngster's involvement in a national enterprise scheme, whereby young people operated a business manufacturing bird boxes. Project staff offered advice and guidance.
Vocational training	Prior to their involvement in the enterprise scheme, young people contributed to the building of a medieval resource centre, again through the AEI's association with the forestry organisation. Young people also undertook a tractor driving course at a local college. One young person took a REMIT test which was required for progression on to a mechanics apprenticeship.
Careers education	On joining the AEI, a careers interview was arranged with a nominated advisor at the local careers service. Young people also completed the KUDOS careers package. The information garnered from this exercise helped direct future learning and work experience placements. Follow-up visits to the careers service were arranged throughout the year. More intensive careers input was received during the final weeks at the AEI, covering interviews, tasters and CVs.
College placements	Three young people attended full-time college courses, studying hairdressing, GCSEs and IT. The AEI monitored their attendance and a member of staff undertook home visits once a term.
Environmental activities	A member of staff seconded from a forestry organisation coordinated environmental activities. Young people could work towards a Certificate in Forestry which included tree planting/felling, site construction, conservation, woodland crafts etc., along with other activities, such as fishing, science projects and carpentry. In addition to achieving a Certificate in Forestry, the environmental activities fed into other parts of the programme, providing evidence of learning for ASDAN and OCR. Each young person typically attended two forestry sessions a week (half a day each).
Personal and social education	The programme also offered a St John's Ambulance first aid course. PSE was an ongoing part of the programme offered by all staff throughout the day.
Leisure-based activities	Three young people were members of a local gym and participated in aerobics, weight-training, badminton and squash. The gym was also used for the purposes of ASDAN. Some young people wanted to join the army and therefore needed to improve their fitness, whilst others were considering careers in the leisure industry.

OTHER INFORMATION

Contact time	A part-time programme of three days a week (college placements were full-time).
Average group size	Five young people attended the AEI each day with a teacher pupil ratio of 1:2 in the forest and 1:3 at the project.
Distinctive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A vocationally-orientated AEI, which sought to replicate the working environment and its codes of conduct ▪ The programmes harnessed environmental activities to engage young people and develop their vocational skills ▪ The enterprise scheme ▪ Very small teaching groups.

AEI 4

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Young people participated in a full-time programme of activities. For Year 10s the majority of activities were offered on site at the AEI. There was an emphasis on improving basic skills, alongside personal and social education. Although young people followed a generic timetable the curriculum was differentiated to cater for a range of abilities. All components of the programme complemented the Youth Award Scheme and also aimed to support the students' personal and social development. An extensive tutorial support and enrichment activity programme underpinned the provision. By Year 11 young people accessed external provision, namely college and work experience placements. Each young person had an individual education plan, with personal goals and targets. Students worked closely with staff to evaluate their progress and identify areas for improvement. Weekly personal tutorials provided opportunities to discuss and review these targets.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

Education programmes	Year 10s were educated on site at the AEI and followed a programme of maths, science, English, geography, history, ASDAN Youth Award Scheme. An external tutor ran art sessions at the AEI for all Year 10s on a Thursday afternoon. Accreditation included City and Guilds, AEB and GCSE.
Work experience	The Year 11 programme included two day work placements e.g. nursery, garage, retail. Those not on placement, attended the AEI for educational input e.g. ASDAN and maths tuition.
Careers education	Year 11 had a timetabled careers session every Tuesday and interviews with the local Careers Service.
College placements	Young people spent two days at college in Year 11 sampling various vocational taster courses e.g. textiles, in addition to science and IT, maths, a health, hygiene and safety course, and a communications course. Although provided externally, AEI staff accompanied Year 11s to college and offered support during lessons.
Personal and social education	COOKING Both Year 10 and Year 11s attended the AEI on Fridays for personal tutorials. Young people took it in turns to cook for their peers and were required to plan the menu, work to a set budget, prepare and serve the finished meal. This session acted as a social time for young people, improved their interpersonal skills and occasionally outside visitors were invited to talk on relevant topics.
Leisure-based activities	ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES Year 10s undertook various enrichment activities every Wednesday afternoon e.g. ice skating, bowling and cinema trips. SCHOOL JOURNEY Every year a four day school journey was organised for the end of the summer term.

OTHER INFORMATION

Contact time	A full-time programme from 9.30am – 3.00pm.
Average group size	Eight to nine young people, although sometimes up to 15 with a 2:15 staff to pupil ratio.
Distinctive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full-time programme. ▪ Mini-school identity, offering a nuclear style of provision, particularly for Year 10s ▪ Young people accompanied and supported on various college courses.

AEI 5

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This AEI operated a dispersal model of provision, whereby various educational, training and vocational activities were commissioned from outside providers. Packages included placements at college, a pupil support team, work experience, vocational training, a life skills group and a Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. Each young person who was referred to the service was allocated a social worker, whose task was to engage and develop positive relationships with him or her and then support them to access alternative provision. Whilst provision was 'dispersed', providers liaised to ensure the provision of a cohesive package of activities, relaying consistent messages to each young person regarding the value of education and training. The progress of young people was formally reviewed on a half-termly basis, and termly reviews were held with young people and their parents/carers.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

Education programmes	<p>PUPIL SUPPORT TEAM</p> <p>Ten places were available for key stage 4 referrals at the Pupil Support Team, which was jointly funded by Social Services and the Education Department. Young people attended the service for two half days a week and four teachers delivered the National Curriculum, covering English, maths, science, IT, art history, PSE and food technology. Accreditation included the AQA certificate of achievement in English, Maths and IT and OCR qualifications.</p> <p>HOME TUITION</p> <p>In the second term there were a number of young people for whom home tuition was arranged.</p>
Work experience	<p>RATHBONE CHOICES</p> <p>Through a Rathbone 'Choices' programme, young people undertook work experience for one day a week over a 12 week period. Prior to placement, they attended Rathbone for an induction which addressed health and safety issues in the work place.</p>
Vocational training	<p>Young people could attend a vocational training centre where they received training in joinery, painting and decoration, building work, bricklaying, etc.</p>
Careers education	<p>A careers advisor was designated to work with young people on the key stage 4 programme and careers interviews were arranged for new referrals.</p>
College placements	<p>A number of young people had been referred to an inclusion programme at a local college, where they followed courses in child care, health and beauty and GCSEs in English, maths and business studies. Young people were formally inducted into the college and were given additional support.</p>
Personal and social education	<p>DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD</p> <p>Ten young people participated in a Duke of Edinburgh scheme, run by two youth workers at the provision. The scheme was based on the bronze award, but modified to incorporate more life skills work. Activities included art work, trips out (approx. ten a year), two residentials and community work.</p> <p>LIFE SKILLS GROUP</p> <p>For new referrals or young people who were difficult to engage there was a life skills group, led by social workers at the AEI. The course encompassed communication, first aid, employment issues and health. The programme endeavoured to improve young peoples' relationships with peers and adults and also made the connection between education and employment.</p>
Leisure-based activities	<p>FAIRBRIDGE</p> <p>This programme shared similarities with the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and offered outdoor pursuits, social skills and community work.</p> <p>OUTDOOR LEARNING</p> <p>Although targeted at key stage 3 pupils this programme could be accessed by key stage 4 referrals who were proving difficult to engage. A sessional youth worker led the activities which included water sports, walking and mountain leadership.</p>
Work in the community	<p>PRINCES TRUST 'SPRING BOARD' PROJECT</p> <p>A project targeted at young offenders this scheme entailed a six to ten week block of community related activities.</p>

AEI 5 cont....

OTHER INFORMATION	
Contact time	Full- and part-time programmes. Typically young people would attend no more than three of the activities at any one time.
Average group size	Group size varied according to each activity.
Distinctive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A brokerage service which commissioned provision from a number of organisations▪ Large pupil roll▪ Parents of key stage 4 children could also attend a weekly parents' support group at the AEI▪ Social worker support for each young person who was referred to the service▪ AEI included home tuition where required.

AEI 6

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Individual programmes were devised for young people dependent on their age and areas of interest. Every young person was mentored individually by a member of staff. Educational activities included maths, English, ICT, cookery and electronics/science sessions. Pupils who attended regularly and demonstrated their commitment to learning, could benefit from a programme, which allocated more time for IT, arts and craft, leisure and outdoor activities. During Year 10 pupils were encouraged to consider full-time courses at the local community college. The AEI programme tapped into external providers including, college, specialist music provision, work experience, training providers and leisure activities with a personal and social educational focus. Staff and young people reviewed individual programmes together and evidence of pupils work was kept in a portfolio.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

Education programmes	The education programme was delivered on site and consisted of maths, English, electronics, ICT, art and craft, music and dance and cookery.
Work experience	Work experience placements were organised for Year 11s through the careers service.
Vocational training	Young people could also undertake vocational training such as a childcare course, a specialised music course and a CLAIT course with a local training provider.
Careers education	Careers guidance was available in the form of one-to-one interviews and access to KUDOS, a careers database. A careers advisor was allocated 15 days per academic year to work with AEI referrals, although contact was on a regular basis.
College placements	Current Year 11s were on full-time college placements but the AEI maintained a monitoring role. Courses included GCSEs, but more often students undertook vocational study e.g. catering, motor vehicle maintenance and engineering. As well as personal tutors, a youth worker based in the college was available for additional support and mentoring.
Personal and social education	Although not specifically timetabled into the AEI programme, any member of staff provided PSE when an issue arose.
Counselling	On average, each young person received a minimum of half an hours counselling a week provided by AEI staff.
Leisure-based activities	<p>The programme included an outdoor education component with sessions of sailing, climbing, canoeing and hill walking. On a Friday a member of staff would take a couple of young people to play squash.</p> <p>FAIRBRIDGE A charitable trust offered a five to six week course of two to three days a week comprising leisure activities (canoeing, gorge walking) alongside personal development sessions.</p>
Environmental activities	During the Autumn term, eight young people participated in environmental trips e.g. nature trails.
OTHER INFORMATION	
Contact time	Full-time programmes for college placements and part-time programmes for other young people.
Average group size	One or two young people, with a 3:1 often 2:1 or 1:1 staff to pupil ratio.
Distinctive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A focus on emotional support and counselling ▪ An enhanced Year 10 programme for those able to cope with an expanded timetable ▪ High staff/young person ratio with individualised programmes.

Appendix 2

Description of derived variables

The following provides a description of how the disaffection and crime sub-samples were formulated from the questionnaire responses. The first questionnaire question explored respondents' attitudes to learning, confidence/self-esteem and relationships. Young people were asked whether they: 'strongly agreed', 'agreed', 'were not sure', 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with a number of statements relating to these areas. These statements were both positive e.g. 'I enjoy learning' and negative e.g. 'I never felt good at anything'.

Disaffection score

The twelve responses to the first question in the questionnaire were scored so that 'not sure' was counted as score 0, 'strongly agree' and 'agree' were 2 and 1 respectively, while 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' were -2 and -1. Disaffection score was computed as the sum of the negative questions ('gave up when learning was hard', 'lost interest if new topics were difficult', 'never felt good at anything' and 'found it hard to make new friends') minus the sum of the positive questions ('enjoy learning', 'things I learnt were important to me', 'wanted to stay in education', 'felt confident', 'got on well with most adults', 'teachers', 'family' and 'felt positive about my future'). The frequency distribution of disaffection score is given below.

Disaffection score	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
-1.75	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
-1.67	1	1.0	1.0	2.1
-1.42	3	3.1	3.1	5.2
-1.33	2	2.1	2.1	7.2
-1.25	3	3.1	3.1	10.3
-1.17	1	1.0	1.0	11.3
-1.08	2	2.1	2.1	13.4
-1.00	1	1.0	1.0	14.4
-0.92	2	2.1	2.1	16.5
-0.83	9	9.3	9.3	25.8
-0.75	4	4.1	4.1	29.9
-0.67	7	7.2	7.2	37.1
-0.58	7	7.2	7.2	44.3
-0.50	5	5.2	5.2	49.5
-0.42	3	3.1	3.1	52.6
-0.33	4	4.1	4.1	56.7
-0.25	4	4.1	4.1	60.8
-0.17	5	5.2	5.2	66.0
-0.08	2	2.1	2.1	68.0

0.00	8	8.2	8.2	76.3
0.08	3	3.1	3.1	79.4
0.17	5	5.2	5.2	84.5
0.33	3	3.1	3.1	87.6
0.42	4	4.1	4.1	91.8
0.50	4	4.1	4.1	95.9
0.67	1	1.0	1.0	96.9
0.75	1	1.0	1.0	97.9
0.92	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
1.00	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	97	100.0	100.0	

These scores were recoded into groups: 'low' (scores up to -6), 'medium' (from -6 to -0.01) and 'high' (above -0.01). Of the 97 cases, the 'low', 'medium' and 'high' groups represented 37.1, 30.9 and 32 per cent.

Respondents were also asked questions about their offending behaviour, for example whether they had 'stolen a car or motorbike' in a given time period. The responses to these questions were used to derive a criminality score. If they had committed an offence they were also asked how many times ('once', '2-5 times' or 'more than 5 times') and whether they had done it alone. If an offence was admitted but not its frequency a frequency of 'once' was assumed. To allow an approximate computation of the number of crimes committed (a criminality score) the categories of '2-5 times' and 'more than 5 times' were assumed to be frequencies of 3.5 and 6. The criminality score had the following distribution.

Criminality score	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
0	11	11.3	11.3	11.3
1	2	2.1	2.1	13.4
2	5	5.2	5.2	18.6
3	1	1.0	1.0	19.6
3.5	2	2.1	2.1	21.6
4.5	1	1.0	1.0	22.7
6	1	1.0	1.0	23.7
6.5	1	1.0	1.0	24.7
7	1	1.0	1.0	25.8
7.5	1	1.0	1.0	26.8
8	1	1.0	1.0	27.8
8.5	1	1.0	1.0	28.9
9.5	1	1.0	1.0	29.9
10	2	2.1	2.1	32.0
11	1	1.0	1.0	33.0
11.5	1	1.0	1.0	34.0
12	1	1.0	1.0	35.1
12.5	2	2.1	2.1	37.1
13	2	2.1	2.1	39.2
13.5	1	1.0	1.0	40.2
14	1	1.0	1.0	41.2
14.5	1	1.0	1.0	42.3
15	3	3.1	3.1	45.4
16.5	1	1.0	1.0	46.4
17	2	2.1	2.1	48.5

17.5	2	2.1	2.1	50.5
18	2	2.1	2.1	52.6
19.5	1	1.0	1.0	53.6
21	2	2.1	2.1	55.7
21.5	1	1.0	1.0	56.7
22	1	1.0	1.0	57.7
24	2	2.1	2.1	59.8
26	1	1.0	1.0	60.8
26.5	1	1.0	1.0	61.9
27	1	1.0	1.0	62.9
27.5	1	1.0	1.0	63.9
29.5	2	2.1	2.1	66.0
32	1	1.0	1.0	67.0
33	1	1.0	1.0	68.0
34	2	2.1	2.1	70.1
36	2	2.1	2.1	72.2
38	1	1.0	1.0	73.2
38.5	1	1.0	1.0	74.2
39	1	1.0	1.0	75.3
39.5	3	3.1	3.1	78.4
42	1	1.0	1.0	79.4
43	1	1.0	1.0	80.4
44	1	1.0	1.0	81.4
44.5	2	2.1	2.1	83.5
45.5	1	1.0	1.0	84.5
46.5	1	1.0	1.0	85.6
48.5	1	1.0	1.0	86.6
50	1	1.0	1.0	87.6
50.5	1	1.0	1.0	88.7
51.5	1	1.0	1.0	89.7
55.5	2	2.1	2.1	91.8
56	1	1.0	1.0	92.8
56.5	1	1.0	1.0	93.8
62.5	1	1.0	1.0	94.8
63.5	1	1.0	1.0	95.9
64.5	1	1.0	1.0	96.9
72.5	1	1.0	1.0	97.9
73	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
76.5	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	97	100.0	100.0	

These scores were recoded into groups: 'low' (scores up to 12), 'medium' (from 12.5 to 33) and 'high' (above 33). Of the 97 cases, the 'low', 'medium' and 'high' groups represented 35.1, 33.0 and 32 per cent.

Appendix 3

Table 5.11 Future aspirations and actual destinations

	Aspiration 1	Aspiration 3	Destination
AEI 1			
1	Employment		Moved away
2	Employment (army, working with exotic animals, or architect)		Training
3		Pop star or college (music)	Training
4	Employment (department store)	Employment (shop)	Training
5	Employment: touring car driver or super bike rider. Realistic expectation: army		Permanently excluded for drug use
6	Employment (children)		Employment (kitchen work)
AEI 2			
1	College (childcare)	College (childcare, GCSEs & GNVQs)	Employment
2	Employment (wildlife preservation)	Employment (shop)	Other course at AEI
3		Employment (army)	College (GCSEs, ASDAN & First Aid)
4	College (childcare)		Unemployed
5	Unknown	College	College (horticulture)
6	Employment		Unknown
7	Employment (kennels)		Unemployed
9	College (childcare)	Employment (children) or college	Continuing at project
10	College (mechanic)		College (computing)
11	Employment (RSPCA inspector)	Employment (salesman/manager)	Continuing at project
AEI 3			
1	College (mechanics)		Moved away
2	Employment (accounts)	Training (mechanics)	Training
3	Employment (mechanics)	College (bricklaying)	Employment (window cleaner)
4	Employment (drugs counsellor)		College (forestry & conservation)
5	Employment (swimming instructor)	Employment (mechanics)	Continuing at project
6		Employment (factory/bakers)	Employment (warehouse telephonist)
7	Employment or college unsure		Employment (roofing company)

Future aspirations and actual destinations cont...

	Aspiration 1	Aspiration 3	Destination
AEI 4			
1	Employment or college (child development & art)	College (childcare & tourism)	College
2	College (GCSEs & part-time job)		Permanently excluded
3	College (GCSEs)		College
4		College (leisure & tourism & part-time job)	College
5		College (beautician)	Continuing at project
6		Employment (building & painting & decorating)	Continuing at project
7		College (travel & tourism)	College
8	College (GCSEs)	Employment (office) & college	Continuing at project
9	Employment (dancer)	College	Continuing at project
10		College or employment (designer), unsure	Continuing at project
11	College (GCSEs & apprenticeship)		College
12		College (electrician)	Employment
13		Employment (family business)	Continuing at project
AEI 5			
1	Employment (family contacts)	Training (fencing and bricklaying)	Training
2	College		College
3	Employment (cats and dogs)	Employment (animals/mechanic)	Training
4		Employment (computing)	Continuing at project
5	Employment		Employment
6	Employment (DJ/sound technician)		Continuing at project
7		Employment	Employment
8	Employment (lorry driver)		Employment
9		Training	Employment
10		Mechanic	Continuing at project
11		College (PE)	Continuing at project
AEI 6			
1	Employment or college, unsure		Employment (security guard on building site)
2	Employment (childcare assistant)		Employment (café)
3	Employment or college, unsure		Reintegrated to school
4	Continuing at project	Unsure	Continuing at project
5		Employment (fire/police service)	Reintegrated to school
6	College (mechanic)		College
7	Employment (painter & decorator)	Employment (car mechanic) or college	Reintegrated to school
8		School, then college, then employment (fire service)	Reintegrated to school

Cost-effectiveness Appendices

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

individual AEI report: AEI 1

Introduction

AEI 1 is run by a registered charity and voluntary agency with LEA funding.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999–August 2000
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local Intervention	National Intervention
Art and Design	Education
Basic Nutrition	Personal and Social Education
Careers Education	Careers Education
Drama	Education
Independent Studies	Education
IT and DTP	Education
Literacy and Numeracy	Education
Media Studies	Education
Modular Studies	Personal and Social Education
Music Performance	Education
Personal and Social Education	Personal and Social Education
Sport	Leisure based Activities
Trips Out	Leisure based Activities
Wheel Right Course	Vocational Training
Work Experience	Work Experience

Assumptions used for AEI 1 (in addition to general assumptions):

- Although the project began in September 1999, any records prior to September 2000 have been marked as pre-evaluation, to coincide with the period of analysis.
- Other Overheads have been split across the whole period as specific acquisition dates were not provided.
- Individual Transport records, rather than the budgeted figure, have been used.
- Specific dates were not provided for equipment or training apart from the academic year in which they were purchased. Costs have therefore been apportioned across all quarters within the academic year.

- All costs associated with administration/liaison/managerial tasks have been apportioned across all of the interventions rather than being entered as separate interventions.
- The premises conversion, undertaken in the period January-April 2001 has been recorded as a revenue cost, given the low cost of the conversion (£1000).

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project year, using pre-evaluation and on-going costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £128,723. This has been apportioned over six categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Advertising is excluded from the analysis as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Personnel and Other Overheads are the primary inputs, accounting for 52 per cent and 21 per cent of the total resource use respectively. Very little Training and Transport expenditure was incurred at AEI 1 (with a number of training courses provided free of charge).

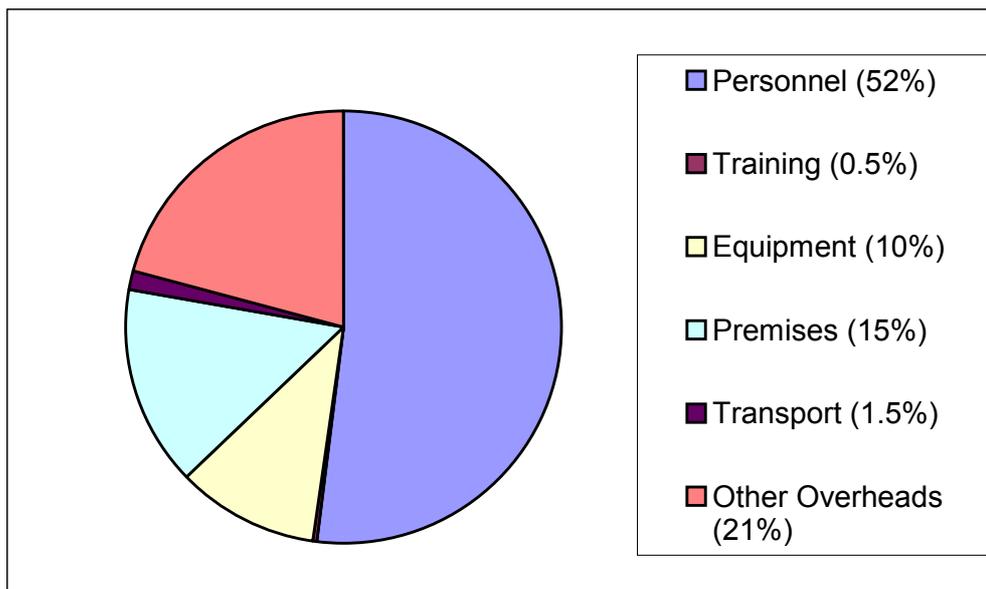


Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the fifteen interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again Advertising has been excluded as an input category in Table 1. Most interventions show a similar pattern of resource use to that for the project as a whole (Figure 1). Exceptions are Literacy and Numeracy with higher Personnel costs (than the average intervention); Wheel Right with lower Personnel costs; Basic Nutrition and Work Experience, both with higher Equipment expenditure; and Personal and Social Education, Sport and Wheel Right, all with higher expenditure in the ‘Other Overheads’ category.

Table1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Other Overheads	TOTAL
Art and Design	4,588	24	821	1,358	131	1,282	8,204
Basic Nutrition	4,394	26	1,062	1,358	131	1,303	8,274
Careers Education	5,029	27	921	1,358	113	1,307	8,755
Drama	3,591	26	807	1,358	131	1,307	7,220
Independent Studies*	2,631	27	918	1,358	131	1,248	6,313
IT and DTP	4,780	24	916	1,358	131	1,185	8,394
Literacy and Numeracy	8,348	23	903	1,358	112	1,159	11,903
Media Studies*	3,272	27	921	1,358	131	1,307	7,016
Modular Studies*	2,997	27	905	1,358	113	1,286	6,686
Music Performance	4,224	24	880	1,358	131	1,200	7,817
Personal and Social Education	5,529	27	903	1,164	113	3,474	11,210
Sport	7,606	24	904	1,164	113	4,623	14,434
Trips out	2,552	26	796	1,164	131	1,682	6,351
Wheel Right Course	2,682	26	795	1,164	131	3,080	7,878
Work Experience	4,676	26	1,027	1,164	131	1,244	8,268
TOTAL	66,899	384	13,479	19,400	1,874	26,687	128,723

* These three interventions were modified over the course of the year – costs are based on planned activities.

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the Art and Design intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention clearly stands out from Figure 2 as being particularly resource intensive. One intervention, Sport, accounts for more than 10 per cent of the total resource use.

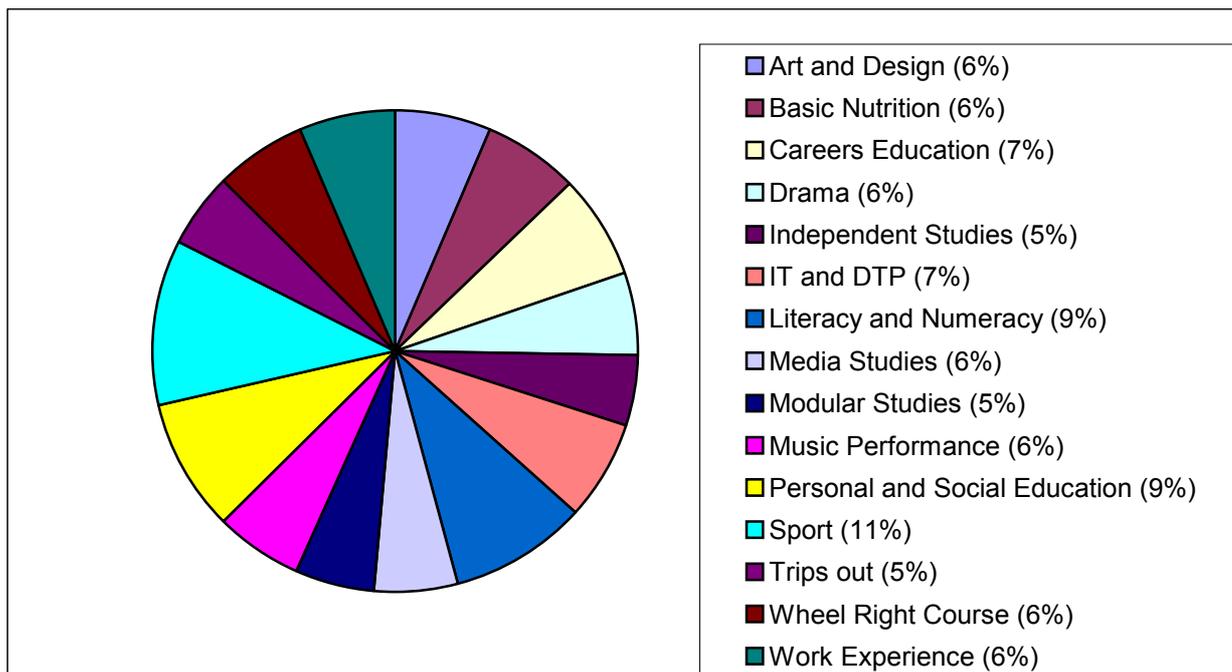


Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

Figure 3 shows how inputs have been incorporated into the project over the nine quarters for which data have been collected. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits total costs into pre-evaluation and on-going costs (with the transition from the pre-evaluation to the on-going period in Quarter 3 2000).

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter

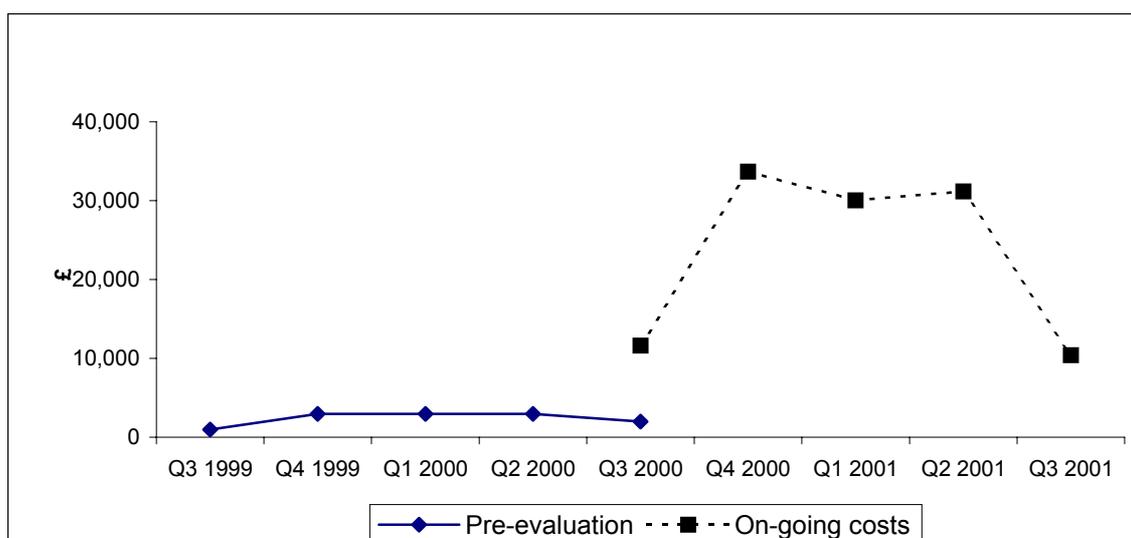


Figure 3 shows that on-going costs in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) are low as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). This pattern is visible due to the correction of the data highlighted above. Pre-evaluation costs are low compared to on-going costs (accounting for 9 per cent of the total resource use). Pre-evaluation costs were incurred for Training and the purchase of Equipment only. For the three full intervention quarters (quarter 4 2000 to quarter 2 2001), on-going costs appear to be around £31,500 per quarter.

Inputs by resource type

All items of equipment acquired by AEI 1 are capital costs, with a total value of £13,500. This represents 10 per cent of the total resource use. Of this total, the majority (£13,200) is electrical and IT based, with an expected life of five years (and no re-sale value). The remainder (£300) is furniture with an expected life of ten years (again with no re-sale value). Most items of equipment have been allocated equally across all interventions. Most equipment was acquired in the pre-evaluation period: in the intervention period equipment accounts for only 2 per cent of expenditure.

Levered-in inputs

Two inputs are included in the database at zero cost: both are training courses. Both training courses were free to the AEI and the opportunity cost of these interventions is unknown. Given that the economic analysis is being undertaken from the perspective of the AEI, these costs are excluded. However, one of the training courses was undertaken in December 1999, in the pre-evaluation period. No Personnel costs are included in the pre-evaluation period, although there is an opportunity cost of the personnel (their time) involved with this training course, and this should be included in the analysis. However there is insufficient information available to enable this opportunity cost of staff time to be included. It is likely that the staff cost associated with this training course would be small, particularly when compared to the total cost of the project, and hence this omission should not have a significant impact on the cost-effectiveness analysis

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. This shows the results of two modelling processes. The second column includes all costs associated with each intervention and the third only includes the costs incurred during the intervention period (September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two

approaches for the total costs is very small (at around 2 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £101,000 including the pre-evaluation costs, and £98,000 without the pre-evaluation costs.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going only
Total (corrected quarters)	101,344	97,786
Total (uncorrected)	101,378	99,792
Art and Design	6,472	6,337
Basic Nutrition	6,369	6,215
Careers Education	6,883	6,729
Drama	5,654	5,517
Independent Studies	4,819	4,664
IT and DTP	6,583	6,428
Literacy and Numeracy	9,586	9,433
Media Studies	5,419	5,264
Modular Studies	4,902	4,750
Music Performance	6,124	5,976
Personal and Social Education	9,015	8,861
Sport	11,763	11,609
Trips out	4,921	4,785
Wheel Right Course	6,223	6,086
Work Experience	6,407	6,249

The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs; or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: number of young people

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 22 young people were enrolled at AEI 1. However, six young people left before the end of the academic year and three joined after September 2000. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 or their month of joining up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 22 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 242 months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 209 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 209 months of education is equivalent to 19 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 19 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months), using total and on-going costs (both modelled to midpoint January to March 1999 values).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
22 FTE	4,607	4,445
19 FTE	5,334	5,147
242 Months	419	404
209 Months	485	468

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is between £5,147 and £5,334, depending on whether pre-evaluation costs are included. At full capacity (i.e. 22 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £4,445 to £4,607. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures could be compared to the age-weighted pupils unit (AWPU) allocation for the LEA of £2,057. Hence it appears to be over twice as expensive to educate a young person at AEI 1 than to do so in a mainstream school.

Of the nineteen young people registered at AEI 1 in September 2000, thirteen (68 per cent) were retained until the end of the academic year.

There is insufficient detail in the education templates to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention and so this analysis is not attempted here.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number of young people awarded a certificate. Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these two outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated, £	Cost per percent, £	Cost per certificate, £
Trips Out	Prices Trust Team Building	8		8			
	Princes Trust Outward Bound	2		2			
	TOTAL	9	N/A	10	532	N/A	479
Personal and Social Education	Red Cross First Aid	8		8			
	Basic Health and Safety	11		11			
	NPTC – Independent Living (Level B)	10		10			
	TOTAL	16	N/A	29	554	N/A	328
Basic Nutrition Literacy and Numeracy	Basic Food Hygiene	5	N/A	5	1,243	N/A	1,243
	NOCN Pre-foundation Progression Award	3		3			
	NPTC – Numeracy and Literacy (Level B)	11		11			
	TOTAL	13	N/A	14	726	N/A	674
IT and DTP	NPTC – IT (Level B)	11	N/A	11	584	N/A	584
TOTAL		19	86%	69	5,147	1,137	1,417

NB. Young person numbers in each intervention are not available.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £479 for Trips Out to £1,243 for Basic Nutrition. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative ‘value’ of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis. Overall, nineteen young people (86 per cent) were awarded one or more certificates.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 22 young people at AEI 1, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 Destinations/reason for leaving

First Destination	Number of Young people
Employment	8
Remain at AEI	5
Training	4
Unknown	2
Pregnancy/childcare	1
Referred to LEA	1
Excluded (drug use)	1
TOTAL	22

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 22 young people registered at the AEI, 17 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including employment and further training. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 1, 77 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the first destinations of two young people are unknown.

Using the on-going modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £6,519. The cost per desirable percent was £1,438 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across the six AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 22 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September

1999 to August 2000 provides a 'baseline' offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the 'intervention' offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrolees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	9	7	-2
Total number of offences, by these young people	29	28	-1

Table 6 suggests a slight reduction in the number of offenders and offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were 11 different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Five out of the nine 'baseline' offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period, while there were two 'new' offenders in the intervention period, and a further young person increased their number of offences. Of the 22 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 32 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was four, and this ranged from one to nine.

There was also a change in the type of offences recorded. The main changes in the types of crime committed were a reduction in Assault (from eight crimes to zero) and an increase in Criminal Damage and Road traffic/Motoring offences (both from zero to four crimes). An increase in Road traffic crime may be expected as young people near the age of 17 and start thinking about driving.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 2

Introduction

AEI 2 is run by a charity with a young offenders focus. The AEI receives ‘on-roll’ payments from the LEA (£51.50 per week for 38 weeks) and the balance is funded by the charity.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000-July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999-August 2001
On-going costs data:	September 2000-July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999-August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Art/craft	Education
Careers education	Careers education
Counselling	Counselling
ICT/CLAIT	Education
Literacy	Education
Numeracy	Education
NVQ training	Vocational training
Personal and social education	Personal and social education
Project work	Education
Sport/recreation	Leisure-based activities
Work experience	Work experience
Youth Achievement Award (ASDAN)	Education

Assumptions used for AEI 2 (in addition to general assumptions):

- There are a number of ‘external’ interventions undertaken at AEI 2 that have not been costed and included in the database. This may be because no direct costs are incurred for these interventions by the AEI. Hence it is important to note that this economic analysis is undertaken from the perspective of the AEI.
- All costs associated with administration/liason/managerial tasks have been apportioned equally over all of the interventions rather than being listed as separate interventions.
- Any inputs recorded for post-July 2001 have not been included in this analysis.
- Some equipment costs have been assumed to occur in September 1999 rather than being set to a previous period.

- Refurbishment of the premises has been accounted for as a revenue cost – the renovation was undertaken in the period April 2000 to June 2001. One quarter of the total refurbishment cost has been allocated to AEI 2.
- Attainments other than those clearly attributable to one intervention have been allocated to Personal and Social Education.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using all costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £54,700. This has been apportioned over seven categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input category, accounting for 65 per cent of the total resource use.

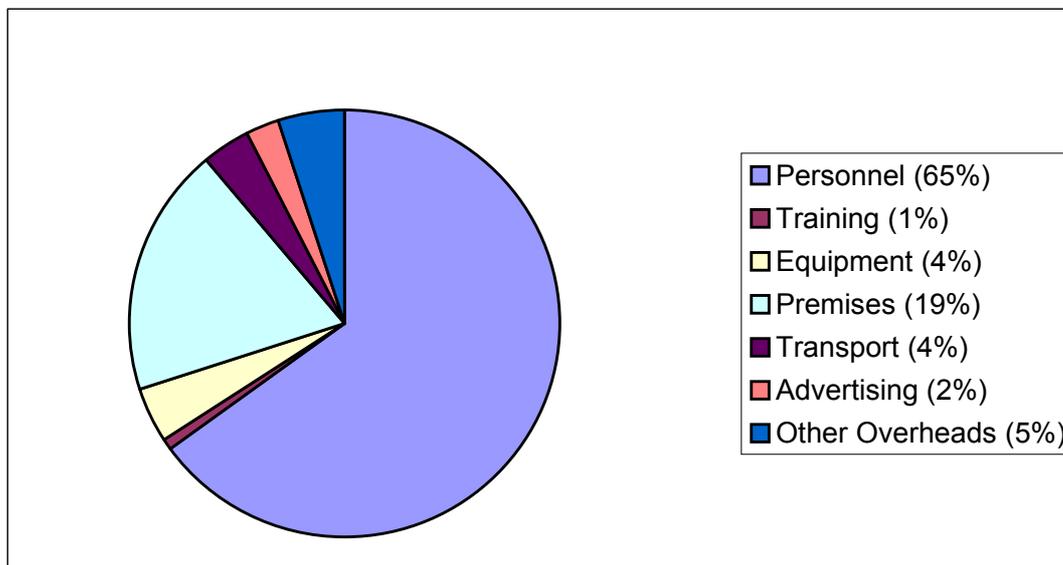


Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the twelve interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Abbreviations for the cost types have been used. The cost distribution of most interventions follows that shown in Figure 1 for the project as a whole. One exception is Sport/Recreation with a high ‘Other Overheads’ cost. This reflects the cost of summer activities, such as paintballing. In addition, Counselling and Personal and Social Education have relatively high Personnel costs; and Work Experience relatively low Personnel costs – these results may well be expected given the nature of the three interventions concerned.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Adver	Other	TOTAL
Art/Craft	2,982	105	153	831	154	107	151	4,483
Careers	1,818	19	238	839	170	107	158	3,349
Counselling	5,165	19	153	831	154	107	151	6,580
ICT/CLAIT	2,206	19	153	831	154	107	151	3,621
Literacy	3,273	22	158	927	154	120	163	4,817
Numeracy	3,206	22	158	927	154	120	163	4,750
NVQ Training	1,859	19	168	839	170	107	158	3,320
Personal and Social Education	4,906	19	153	831	154	107	151	6,321
Project Work	1,813	19	168	839	154	107	158	3,258
Sport/Recreation	4,217	22	158	927	176	120	1,043	6,663
Work Experience	1,441	19	170	831	176	107	151	2,895
Youth Achievement Award (ASDAN)	2,711	129	423	935	154	120	170	4,642
TOTAL	32,886	304	1,830	9,453	1,770	1,216	2,598	54,699

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the Art/Craft intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention stands out as being particularly resource intensive. Three interventions account for over 10 per cent of the total resource use: Counselling, Personal and Social Education and Sport/Recreation.

Figure 2 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

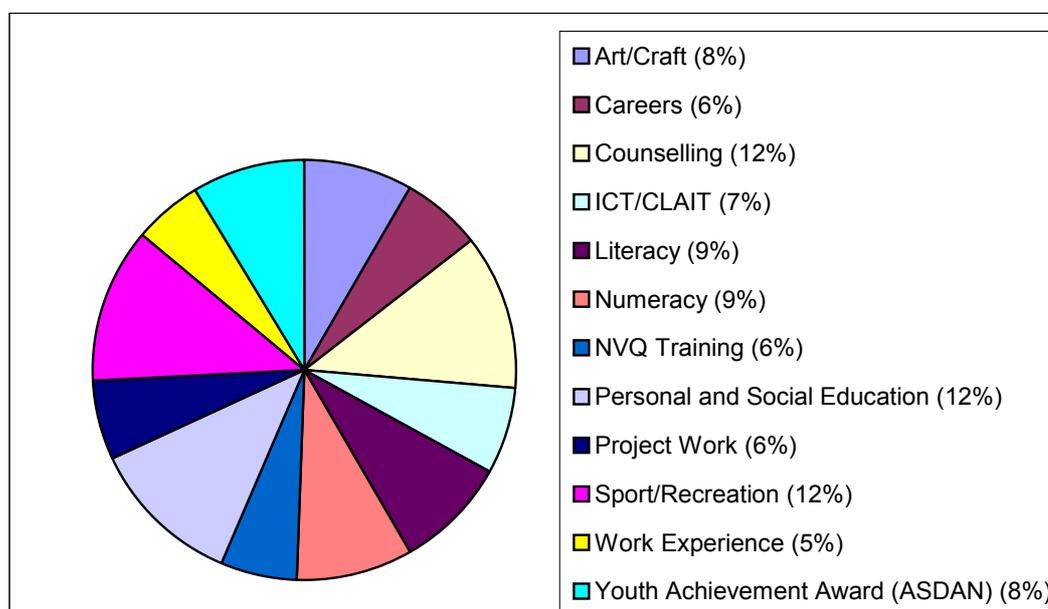


Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the nine quarters for which data have been collected. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs (September 1999 to August 2000) and on-

going costs (September 2000 to July 2001). Pre-evaluation costs include Advertising and Equipment costs. Costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). Costs are also low in quarter 1 2001. This is due to staff changes, with four fewer Youth/Community/Welfare workers than in quarter 4 2000. One new recruit and one returnee led to increased costs in quarter 2 2001, although another worker left in May 2001.

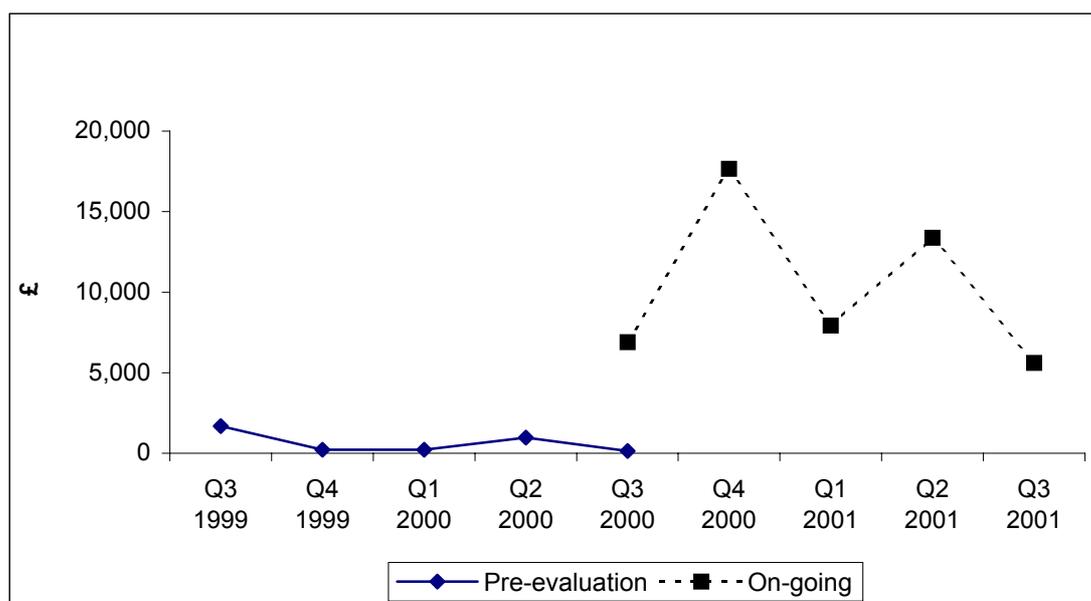


Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter

Inputs by resource type

All of the equipment purchased for AEI 2 is capital equipment, with the exception of a rented photocopier. Capital expenditure totalled £2,060, with the majority (£1,810) being depreciated over five years. The remaining £250 for Youth Achievement Awards, is to be depreciated over ten years. All capital equipment is assumed to have a zero re-sale value. The main item of capital equipment purchased was a set of computers and printers in September 1999.

Levered-in inputs

Several 'external' interventions have been excluded from this analysis, as noted in the assumptions at the beginning of this individual AEI report. In addition, AEI 2 benefited from ten free training courses, and a newsletter, brief and induction packs in the pre-evaluation period. In a full opportunity cost assessment, these items would have to be costed and included in the economic analysis. This would also have to include Personnel costs for free training courses attended during the pre-evaluation year. Given the amount of levered-in resources, it is likely that the total cost of the intervention at AEI 2 has been underestimated.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. The table shows the results of two modelling processes. Column two show the total costs, including the pre-evaluation costs, and column three includes the on-going costs only (incurred in the period September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (at around 4 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 **Modelled input costs, by intervention**

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going
Total (corrected quarters)	45,541	43,694
Total (uncorrected)	47,227	45,377
Art/craft	3,787	3,637
Careers	2,747	2,593
Counselling	5,561	5,413
ICT/CLAIT	3,023	2,875
Literacy	4,037	3,874
Numeracy	3,981	3,818
NVQ training	2,769	2,617
Personal and Social Education	5,323	5,175
Project work	2,702	2,551
Sport/recreation	5,572	5,409
Work experience	2,409	2,257
Youth Achievement Award (ASDAN)	3,677	3,626

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £45,000. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs; or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: young person numbers

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 23 young people were enrolled at AEI 2. However, nine young people were enrolled after September 2000 and fifteen left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 (or the month in which they joined) up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 23 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 253 months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people joined and/or left the AEI, 156 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 156 months of education is equivalent to 14 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 14 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
23 FTE	1,980	1,900
14 FTE	3,253	3,121
253 Months	180	173
156 Months	292	280

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £3,100 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £3,250 including these costs. At full capacity (i.e. 23 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £1,900 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £1,980 including these costs. In some respects the latter cost (full capacity) is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures can be compared with the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,056 for Year 10 pupils and £2,073 for Year 11 pupils. At full capacity (23 FTE) AEI 2 therefore appears cheaper than the LEA per-pupil allocation.

Of the fourteen young people who were enrolled at the AEI in September 2000, three (21 per cent) were retained until the end of the academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers

would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. counselling) and are not recorded against young people who would have received them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject (intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £272 for the Personal and Social Education to £969 for Literacy. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative 'value' of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis. Overall eleven young people (48 per cent) were awarded one or more certificates.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness - attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
ICT/CLAIT	CLAIT	2	40%	3	1,438	72	958
Literacy	AEB Literacy	4	22%	4	969	176	969
Numeracy	AEB Numeracy	5	26%	5	764	147	764
Personal and Social Education	Driving ambitions	2	33%	2			
	Getting Connected	1	13%	1			
	AEB World of Work	3	38%	3			
	AEB Life Skills	6	75%	6			
	AEB Health, Hygiene and Safety	3	38%	3			
	First Aid	3	38%	3			
	Vehicle Maintenance	2	25%	2			
	TOTAL		8	100%	19	647	52
Youth Achievement Award	Youth Achievement Award	10	59%	10	363	61	363
TOTAL		11	48%	41	3,972	910	1,066

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 23 young people at AEI 2, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 Destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Unemployment	5
College	4
Remain at AEI	4
Training	4
Not known	3
Supervision	1
Employment	1
Referred to LEA/PRU	1
TOTAL	23

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 23 young people registered at some point during the year, 13 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 2, 52 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of four young people are unknown.

Using the modelled on-going cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £3,361. The cost per desirable percent was £747 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 23 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year and committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	9	6	-3
Total number of offences, by these young people	19	66	47

Table 6 suggests a one-third reduction in the number of offenders but a 247 per cent increase in the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were nine different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Three out of the nine ‘baseline’ offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period, and while there were no ‘new’ offenders in the intervention period, five young people increased their number of offences. Of the 23 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 26 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was seven, and this ranged from two to nineteen.

There was also a change in the offending pattern. The major increases were in the number of Assaults (3 to 10); Criminal Damage (6 to 22); Road traffic/motoring crime (0 to 10); and Other crimes recorded (1 to 10). The numbers in brackets represent the number of offences recorded in the baseline and intervention years. An increase in Road traffic crime may be expected as young people near 17 and start to think about driving.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 3

Introduction

AEI 3 is funded through the LEA Standards Fund.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999–August 2001
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
ASDAN	Education
Careers	Careers Education
Certificate in Forestry	Vocational training
Food Hygiene Cert/First Aid Cert	Vocational training
OCR	Education
Sport/recreation	Leisure-based activities
Team enterprise	Work experience
Vocational training	Vocational training
Work experience	Work experience

Assumptions used for AEI 3 (in addition to general assumptions):

- Books are assumed to have been purchased equally over the whole time period.
- ICT has been removed as an intervention from the database and the costs apportioned equally to ASDAN and OCR.
- The intervention ‘Medieval Building Techniques’ is assumed to be part of the Certificate in Forestry intervention.
- The input costs associated with the REMIT test (1 young person) are unknown and therefore not included in this analysis.
- All costs associated with administration/liaison/managerial tasks have been apportioned equally over all of the interventions rather than being listed as separate interventions.
- The costs of the Food Hygiene Certificate and First Aid Certificate cannot be separated from each other in the input analysis.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using all costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £68,987. This has been apportioned over six categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Advertising is excluded as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input category, accounting for 76 per cent of the total resource use.

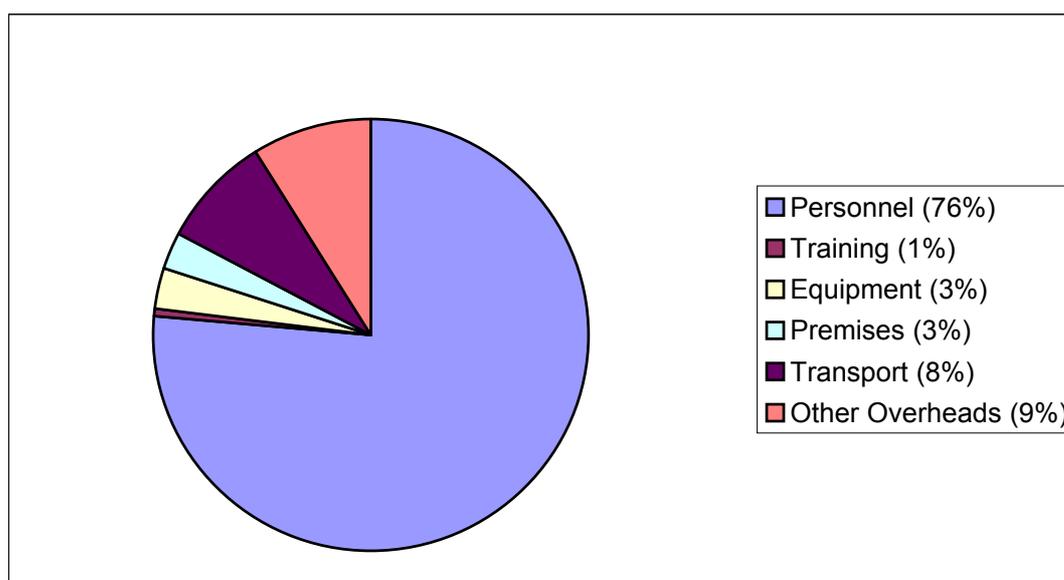


Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the nine interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Advertising has again been excluded from Table 1. The cost distribution of most interventions follows that shown in Figure 1 for the project as a whole. Three interventions are relatively Personnel-intensive: ASDAN, OCR and Team Enterprise. Two have a relatively low Personnel cost: Food Hygiene/First Aid and Work Experience. The Certificate in Forestry intervention has relatively high Premises and Other Overheads costs.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Other overheads	TOTAL
ASDAN	10,570	70	230	193	633	488	12,184
Careers	2,248	35	227	188	647	410	3,755
Certificate in Forestry	14,446	35	226	562	633	2,169	18,071
Food Hygiene Cert/ First Aid Cert	1,773	35	231	188	633	512	3,372
OCR	9,471	35	224	188	660	575	11,153
Sport/recreation	2,599	35	224	188	647	435	4,128
Team Enterprise	6,880	38	224	201	633	410	8,386
Vocational training	2,941	35	225	188	633	640	4,662
Work experience	1,784	35	224	188	635	410	3,276
TOTAL	52,712	353	2,035	2,084	5,754	6,049	68,987

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the ASDAN intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. Four interventions together account for 72 per cent of the total resource use: ASDAN, Certificate in Forestry, OCR and Team Enterprise.

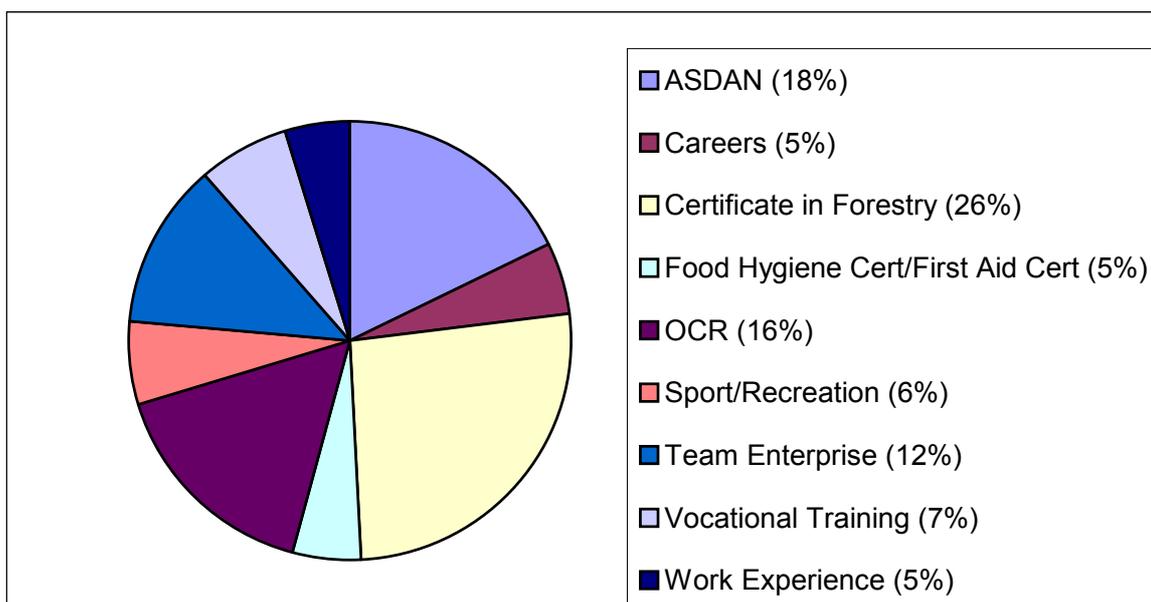


Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the nine quarters for which data have been allocated. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs (September 1999 to August 2000) and on-going costs (September 2000 to July 2001). Pre-evaluation costs include Equipment costs only, although these account for just 2 per cent of the total expenditure. Costs

are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). For the three ‘full’ intervention quarters, the average quarterly cost for AEI 3 is around £18,500.

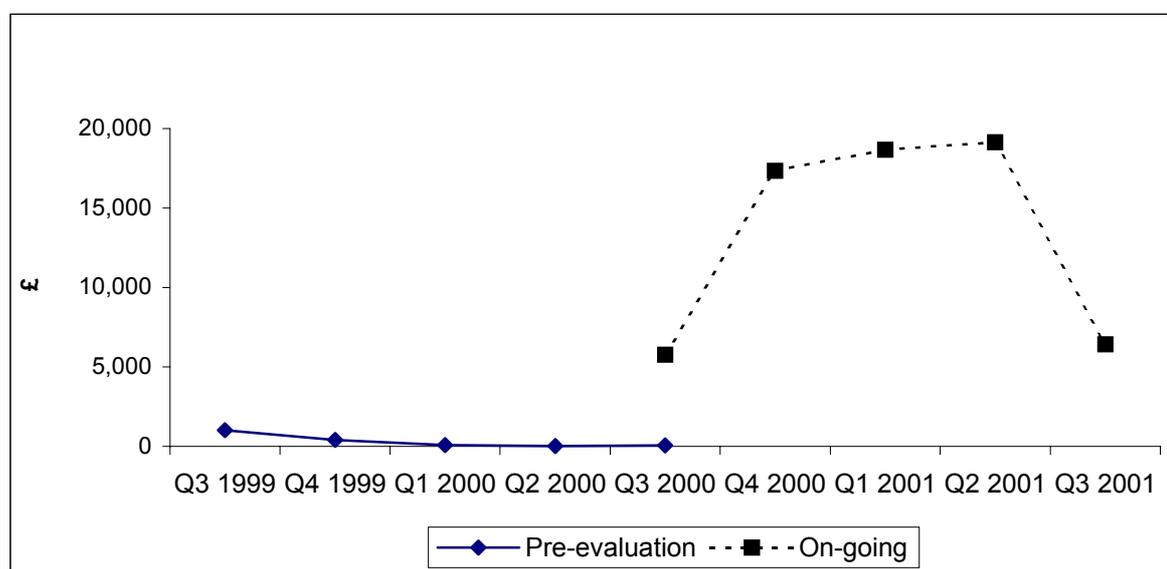


Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter

Inputs by resource type

All of the equipment purchased for AEI 3 is capital equipment. Capital expenditure totalled £2,035, with most items (total value £1,325) being depreciated over ten years. The remaining £710 for computers and printers, is to be depreciated over five years. All capital equipment is assumed to have a zero re-sale value. All items of capital equipment are used equally across each intervention in the project.

Levered-in inputs

The ‘external’ REMIT test intervention has been excluded from this analysis, as noted in the assumptions at the beginning of this AEI report. In addition, AEI 3 benefited from a number of free training courses, and a bookcase and lounge suite. In a full opportunity cost assessment, these items would have to be costed and included in the economic analysis. This would also have to include Personnel costs for free training courses attended during the pre-evaluation year (i.e. opportunity costs in terms of personnel time). Given the amount of levered-in resources, it is unlikely that the total cost of the intervention at AEI 3 has been underestimated to a significant extent.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled

costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. The table shows the results of two modelling processes. Column two show the total costs, including the pre-evaluation costs, and column three includes the on-going costs only (incurred in the period September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (less than 1 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going
Total (corrected quarters)	57,232	56,973
Total (uncorrected)	57,087	56,824
ASDAN	10,277	10,248
Careers	2,959	2,929
Certificate in Forestry	15,142	15,112
Food Hygiene Cert/First Aid Cert	2,707	2,677
OCR	9,178	9,149
Sport/recreation	3,365	3,335
Team Enterprise	6,964	6,935
Vocational training	3,529	3,499
Work experience	2,639	3,609

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £57,000, with very little difference between the ‘total’ and ‘on-going’ models. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs; or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: number of young people

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI’s roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 15 young people were enrolled at AEI 3. However, six young people left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 up to (and

including) the month in which they left. Had all 15 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 165 months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 127 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 127 months of education is equivalent to 12 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 12 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

Cost-effectiveness, £		
	Total costs	On-going costs
15 FTE	3,815	3,798
12 FTE	4,769	4,748
165 months	347	345
127 months	451	449

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £4,750 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £4,770 including these costs. At full capacity (i.e. 15 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £3,800 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £3,815 including these costs. In some respects the latter cost (full capacity) is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These results can be compared to the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,033 for Year 10 pupils and £2,223 for Year 11 pupils. At full capacity, the cost of educating a young person at AEI 3 appears to be just under twice the cost of doing so in mainstream education.

Nine out of the fifteen young people (60 per cent) who started at the AEI in September 2000 were retained for the full academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. careers education) and are not recorded against young people who would have received them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject (intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £435 for Team Enterprise to £1,511 for Certificate of Forestry. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative 'value' of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis. Overall, eleven young people (73 per cent) were awarded one or more certificates.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness - attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
ASDAN	Bronze	9		9			
	Bronze/Silver	8		8			
	TOTAL	9	69%	17	1,139	149	603
Certificate of Forestry	50% Certificate of Competency	4		4			
	Full Certificate of Competency	6		6			
	TOTAL	6	46%	10	2,519	329	1,511
Team Enterprise	Special Award	8		8			
	Area Finalist Award	8		8			
	TOTAL	8	67%	16	871	104	435
OCR	CLAIT 1	1		1			
	Learn Direct – Computing	1		1			
	OCR National Skills	5		5			
	TOTAL	6	67%	7	1,525	137	1,307
Vocational Training	Tractor Driving Stages 1 and 2	2		2			
	NVQ Level 1 in Hair	1		1			
	TOTAL	3	100%	3	1,166	35	1,166
Food Hygiene/First Aid	First Aid	2		2			
	Basic Food and Hygiene	1		1			
	TOTAL	3	75%	3	892	36	892
TOTAL		11	73%	56	5,179	780	1,017

* One young person passed the REMIT Test. As noted earlier, this intervention has been excluded from the analysis.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 15 young people at AEI 3, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Not known	4
College	4
Employment/self-employed	4
Other training	2
Remain at AEI	1
TOTAL	15

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 15 young people registered at some point during the year, 11 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 3, 73 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of four young people are unknown.

Using the modelled on-going cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £5,179. The cost per desirable percent was £780 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 15 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrolees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 **Offending behaviour**

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	7	8	1
Total number of offences, by these young people	22	52	30

Table 6 suggests a slight increase in the number of offenders and a 160 per cent increase in the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were ten different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Three out of the seven ‘baseline’ offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period. There were three ‘new’ offenders in the intervention period, and four young people increased their number of offences. Of the 15 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 53 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was 6.5, and this ranged from one to 21.

There was also a change in the offending pattern. The major increases were in the number of Criminal Damage crimes (8 to 15); Road traffic/motoring crime (0 to 9); and Arson recorded (0 to 6). The numbers in brackets represent the number of offences recorded in the baseline and intervention years. An increase in Road traffic crime may be expected as young people near 17 and start to think about driving.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 4

Introduction

AEI 4 is a voluntary organisation with charitable and company status. The LEA funds 15 places and provides two teachers. Other funding sources include trusts, the Youth Service, direct school payments and Education Business Partnerships.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999–August 2000
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Art/craft	Education
Careers Education	Careers Education
Cookery	Personal and Social Education
English	Education
Geography/history	Education
IT	Education
Leisure activities	Leisure based activities
Maths	Education
Personal and Social Education	Personal and Social Education
Science	Education
Supporting young people at college	College placements
Work experience	Work experience
Youth Award Scheme	Education

Assumptions used for AEI 4 (in addition to general assumptions):

- Personnel standard values have been used as local costs are not available.
- All costs of administration/liaison/managerial tasks have been apportioned across all of the interventions rather than entered as separate interventions.
- Advertising expenditure is deemed to have occurred in September of each year, rather than being spent pro-rata over the year.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using pre-evaluation and on-going costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £118,250. This has been apportioned over six input categories, as shown in Figure 1. The category Premises is excluded from the analysis for AEI 4 as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input for AEI 4, accounting for 82 per cent of the total costs.

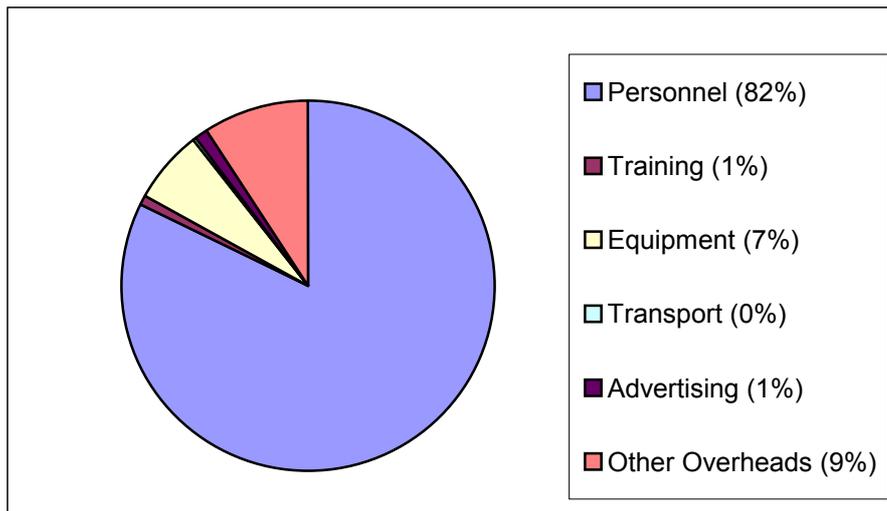


Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the thirteen interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again Premises has been excluded as an input category from Table 1. In general, the expenditure pattern for each intervention follows that for the project as a whole.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Transport	Advertising	Other overheads	TOTAL
Art/craft	3,753	140	556	4	128	724	5,305
Careers Education	3,602	0	551	4	118	717	4,992
Cookery	5,875	0	604	4	128	1,901	8,512
English	8,025	150	616	4	122	724	9,641
Geography/history	4,181	140	612	4	128	651	5,716
IT	3,422	140	556	4	128	714	4,964
Leisure activities	5,498	0	608	4	118	1,097	7,325
Maths	8,454	150	611	4	122	696	10,037
Personal and Social Education	14,397	0	616	4	118	717	15,852
Science	6,756	140	607	4	128	684	8,319
Supporting young people at college	13,874	0	552	4	122	684	15,236
Work experience	5,310	0	603	4	112	669	6,698
Youth Award Scheme	14,051	140	608	4	128	724	15,655
TOTAL	97,198	1,000	7,700	52	1,600	10,702	118,252

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across the thirteen interventions at AEI 4. The pie starts at the top with the Art/Craft intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention stands out as being particularly resource intensive. Three interventions each account for greater than 10 per cent of the total cost: Personal and Social Education, Supporting young people at College and Youth Award Scheme.

Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

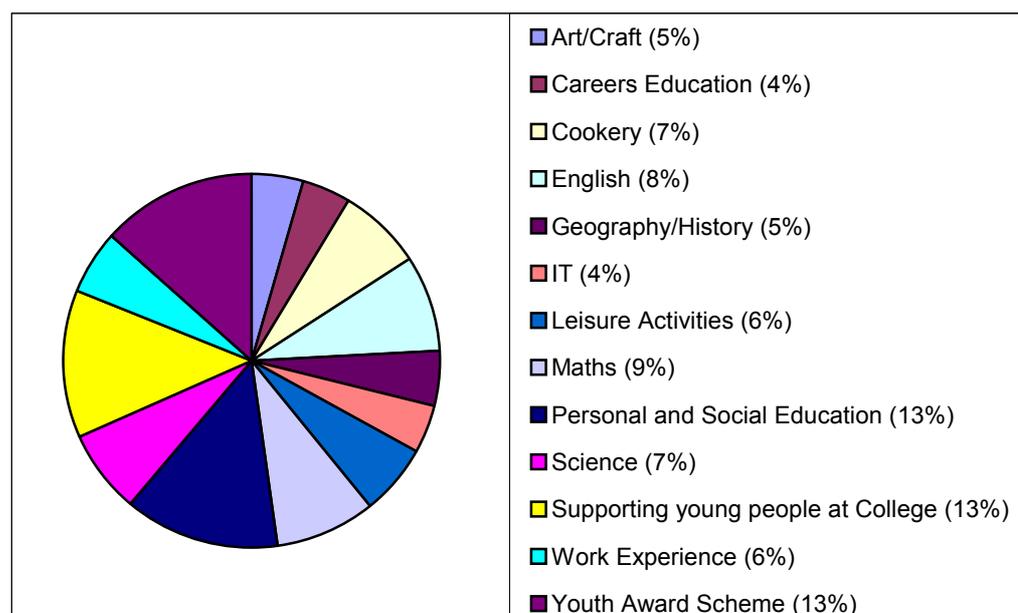


Figure 3 shows how inputs have been incorporated into the project over the nine quarters to which data have been collected. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs and on-going costs. Pre-evaluation costs are very low, accounting for just 2 per cent of the total expenditure. On-going costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was only undertaken in one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). Although some staff changes occurred, the typical quarterly on-going cost for AEI 4 appears to be about £30,000.

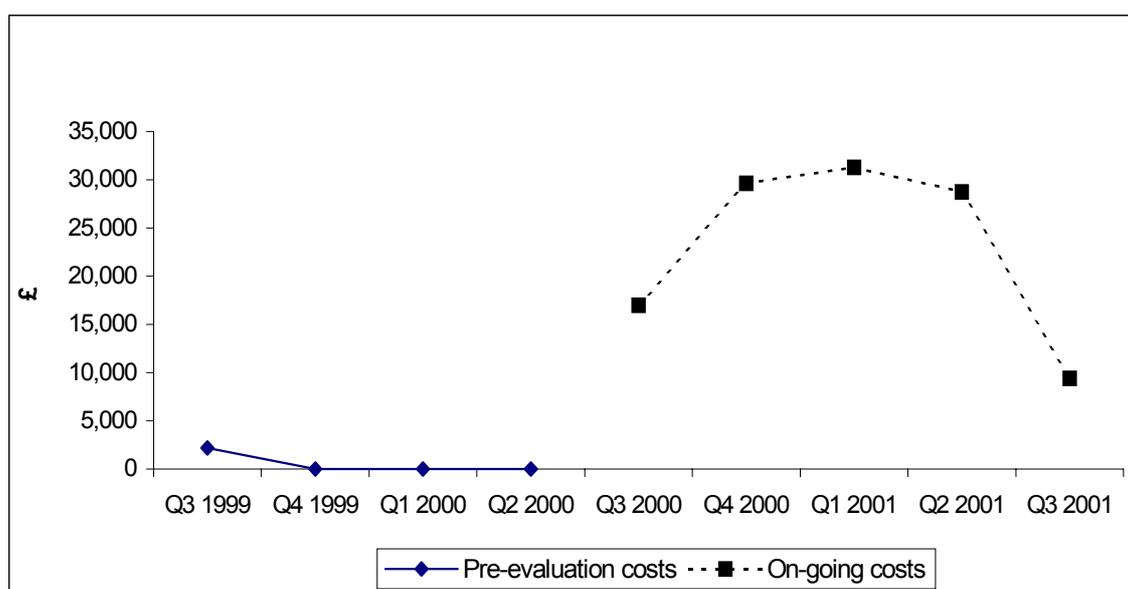


Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter

Inputs by resource type

All four items of equipment used at AEI 4 are capital costs, with a total value of £7,700. This represents 7 per cent of the total resource use. All items of equipment are used equally across all thirteen interventions. Capital expenditure in the intervention year was £6,500, and this accounts for 6 per cent of the total expenditure during the intervention period. Both sets of computers are to be depreciated over five years; and the furniture and books are to be depreciated over ten years. All items are assumed to have zero re-sale value at the end of the amortisation period.

Levered-in inputs

Three separate inputs are included in the database at zero cost: two training courses and a laptop computer (acquired second hand). The costs of these inputs are therefore met by other sources and their value is unknown. Since this economic analysis is being undertaken from the perspective of the AEI, values have not been estimated for these inputs. However in a full opportunity cost assessment these values would have to be included: and consideration should also be made of the opportunity cost of staff

time while undergoing training in the pre-evaluation period. These levered-in inputs are likely to account for a trivial proportion of the total expenditure and hence the results of the economic analysis should not be biased.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report. The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. This shows the results of two modelling processes. The second column includes all costs associated with each intervention and the third only includes the costs incurred during the intervention period (September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is small (at about 8 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going
Total (corrected quarters)	95,276	94,541
Total (uncorrected)	102,897	102,378
Art/craft	11,998	11,909
Careers Education	3,904	3,814
Cookery	6,846	6,757
English	7,783	7,694
Geography/history	4,454	4,364
IT	3,860	3,770
Leisure activities	5,800	5,711
Maths	8,093	8,003
Personal and Social Education	13,032	12,943
Science	6,662	6,575
Supporting young people at college	12,544	12,454
Work experience	5,283	5,193
Youth Award Scheme	12,867	12,778

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £95,000 including the pre-evaluation costs, and £94,000 without the pre-evaluation costs. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs, or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the

resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: young person numbers

The first and simplest measure of effectiveness using young person numbers is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 33 young people were enrolled at the AEI. However, ten of these young people were enrolled after January 2001, and 12 young people left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 (or January 2001) up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 33 young people remained for 11 months (the whole year), the AEI would have provided 363 young person months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 255 months of education were provided. This is equivalent to 23 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 23 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months), using both total and on-going costs (both modelled to midpoint January to March 1999 values).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
33 FTE	2,887	2,865
23 FTE	4,142	4,110
363 Months	262	260
255 Months	374	371

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £4,100. At full capacity (i.e. 33 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at around £2,900. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year (with the former cost being more appropriate for leavers re-integrated into mainstream education – three out of the fourteen leavers). Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

Compared to the Age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) figure for the LEA, it costs 18 per cent more to resource a place at AEI 4. The AWPU is £2,427 and this has been compared to the average cost assuming full enrolment.

Of the 23 young people who enrolled at the AEI in September 2000, 13 (57 per cent) were retained for the full academic year.

There is insufficient detail in the education templates to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention and so this analysis is not attempted here.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates, as shown below in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number of young people awarded a certificate. Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these two outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project.

Data on attainment for AEI 4 is only available for the first term, and hence the college and other achievements of young people cannot be recorded here. The majority of certificates would have been awarded in the summer term, following college exams. The college have not been able to make these data available to the project. This lack of data means that the number of attainment certificates will be under reported here. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

Almost half of the young people at AEI 4 achieved an ASDAN Youth Award, with 14 Bronze awards and two silvers. The average cost per certificate was £799, using the modelled, on-going cost of the Youth Awards intervention.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
Youth Award Scheme	ASDAN Youth Awards	16	N/A	16	799	N/A	799
TOTAL		16	48%	16	5,909	1,970	5,909

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the first destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 33 young people at AEI 4, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Remain at AEI	13
Not known	7
College	6
Pregnancy/child care	2
Reintegrated into school	2
Excluded	1
Employment	1
Training	1
TOTAL	33

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 33 young people in September 2000, 23 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 4, 70 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of seven young people are unknown.

Using the on-going modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £4,110. The cost per desirable percent was £1,351 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 33 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	6	3	-3
Total number of offences, by these young people	16	5	-11

Table 6 suggests that the number of offenders halved and the number of offences fell by almost 70 per cent between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were nine different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. All of the six 'baseline' offenders no crime in the intervention period. There were three 'new' offenders in the intervention period. Of the 33 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 9 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was 1.67, and this ranged from one to three.

There was also a change in the offending pattern, in terms of the types of crimes recorded. The major change was a reduction in the number of Thefts recorded, from 11 to two.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 5

Introduction

AEI 5 is a 'brokering' AEI, funded by the LEA and Standards Fund.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	None
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Careers	Careers Education
College placements	College placements
Duke of Edinburgh	Personal and Social Education
Fairbridge	Personal and Social Education
Home tuition	Education
Life Skills Group	Personal and Social Education
Metropolitan training	Vocational training
Outdoor learning	Leisure based activities
Princes Trust	Work in the community
Pupil Support Team	Education
Rathbone	Work experience

Assumptions used for AEI 5 (in addition to general assumptions):

- All costs associated with administration/liaison/managerial tasks, arranging key stage 4 packages and dealing with referrals have been apportioned across all of the interventions rather than being entered as separate interventions.
- On the Equipment templates there are eight items of pre-existing equipment, which have no cost attached and no date of purchase. These items have had to be excluded from the analysis.
- The Training template specifies that courses have been purchased since April 2000. As the information is not date specific, it has been assumed that all courses occurred in September 2000.
- No dates were provided on the Equipment templates, only that purchases were made in the 2000/01 academic year. The equipment expenditure has therefore been apportioned equally over the academic year.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the intervention year, using all costs incurred during the period September 2000 to July 2001 was £230,800. This has been apportioned over six categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Premises is excluded from the analysis as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Other Overheads were the primary inputs, accounting for 79 per cent of the total resource use. The main components of the Other Overheads costs (in descending order of resource use) were the Pupil Support Team, College Places, Fairbridge and Rathbone.

Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

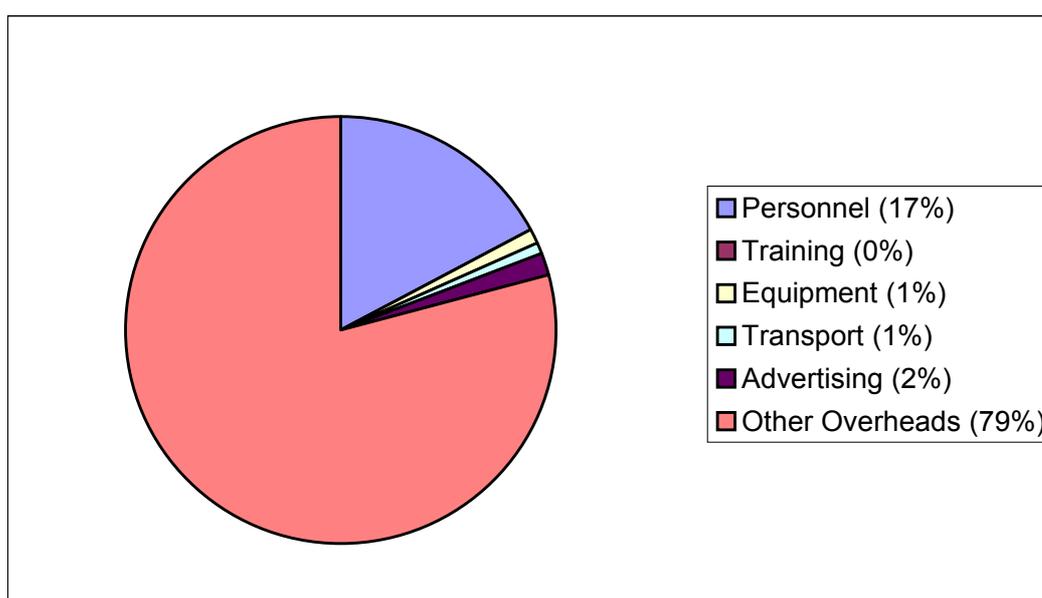


Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the eleven interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again, Premises has been excluded as an input category from Table 1. The four interventions listed above have a high proportion of Other Overheads compared to other interventions. Training, Equipment, Transport and Advertising are split equally between all eleven interventions.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Transport	Advertising	Other Overheads	TOTAL
Careers	3,354	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,554
College placements	3,456	47	185	196	374	49,098	53,356
Duke of Edinburgh	3,456	47	185	196	374	9,398	13,656
Fairbridge	3,456	47	185	196	374	37,398	41,656
Home tuition	3,456	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,656
Life Skills Group	4,850	47	185	196	374	1,398	7,050
Metropolitan Training	3,651	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,851
Outdoor Learning	3,456	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,656
Princes Trust	3,456	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,656
Pupil Support Team	3,354	47	185	196	374	51,650	55,806
Rathbone	3,548	47	185	196	374	26,553	30,903
TOTAL	39,493	517	2,035	2,156	4,114	182,485	230,800

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the Careers intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. Again four interventions are noteworthy for their high cost: College Placements, Fairbridge, Pupil Support Team and Rathbone. Apart from the Duke of Edinburgh intervention, the remaining interventions each account for around 2-3 per cent of the total resource use.

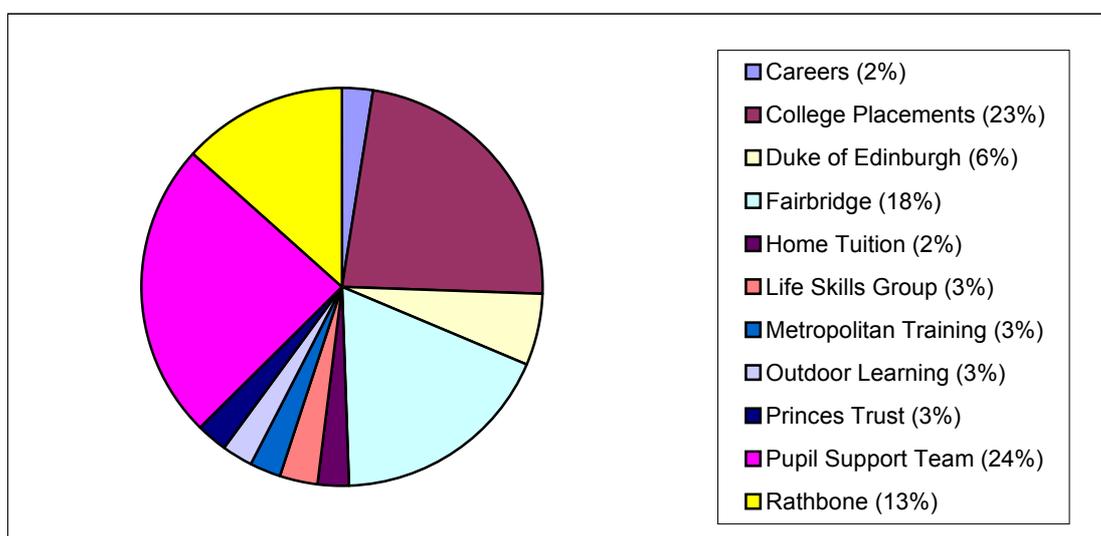
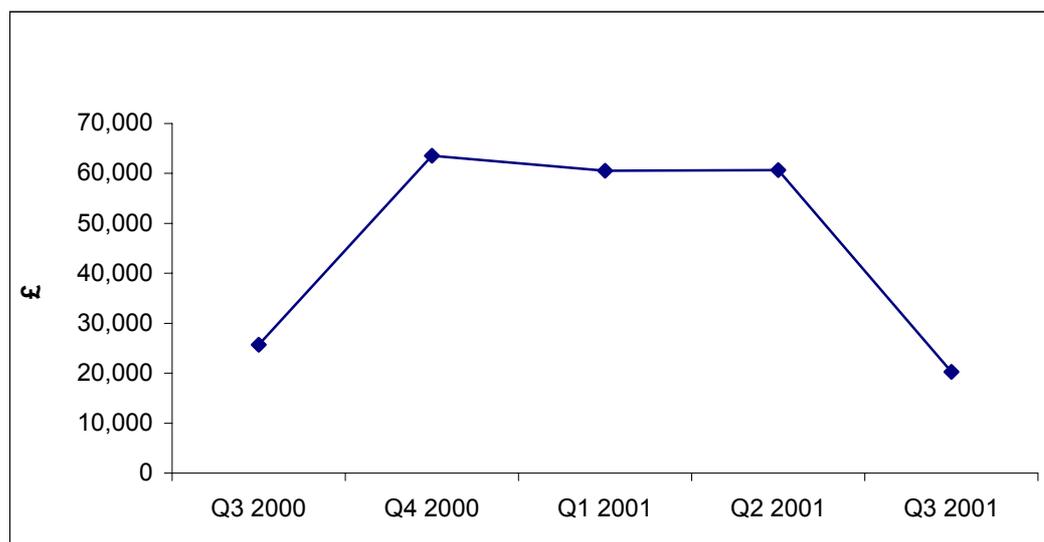


Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the five quarters for which data are available. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). There is only one line, for total costs, as no information on pre-evaluation costs

was provided by the AEI. Costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). For the three full intervention quarters, running costs appear to be around £61,000 per quarter.

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter



Inputs by resource type

All items of capital equipment used at AEI 4 are capital costs, with a total value of £2,050. This represents just 1 per cent of the total resource use at the AEI. Approximately half (the value) of the capital equipment has an expected life of five years (video camera, digital camera and playstation) and the remainder an expected life of ten years (music equipment and clothing). All items are assumed to have a zero re-sale value at the end of their useful life. All items of equipment are used equally across the eleven interventions.

Levered-in inputs

Apart from the Equipment noted at the beginning of this AEI report, two inputs are included in the database at zero cost: a staff training intervention and ‘Springboard’ (the Princes Trust intervention). Both were free to the AEI and the opportunity costs of these interventions is unknown. Given that the economic analysis is being undertaken from the perspective of the AEI, these costs are excluded. This omission may underestimate the costs of the intervention, if the ‘Springboard’ resource is comparable to similar inputs for Rathbone, Young person Support Group, Fairbridge and College Placements.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully

described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. Only total/on-going costs are shown as no data is available on pre-evaluation costs incurred prior to September 2000 (if any were incurred).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (less than 1 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost. Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £194,000.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total/on-going
Total (corrected quarters)	194,161
Total (uncorrected)	194,293
Careers	4,579
College placements	45,090
Duke of Edinburgh	11,445
Fairbridge	35,174
Home tuition	4,665
Life Skills Group	5,871
Metropolitan Training	4,839
Outdoor Learning	4,665
Princes Trust	4,665
Pupil Support Team	47,167
Rathbone	26,120

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: young person numbers

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 39 young people were enrolled at AEI 1. However, seven young people were enrolled in January or February 2001 and one left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 (or January/February 2001) up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 39 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 429 months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people joined or left the AEI, 394 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 394 months of education is equivalent to 36 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 36 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months). These, and subsequent, calculations of cost-effectiveness (using total costs) use modelled costs based on the corrected quarterly figures.

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs
39 FTE	4,978
36 FTE	5,396
429 months	453
394 months	493

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £5,400. At full capacity (i.e. 39 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £5,000. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures could be compared with the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,136 for Year 10 pupils and £2,782 for Year 11 pupils. Hence it appears to be around twice as expensive to educate a young person at AEI 5 compared to the cost of doing so in mainstream education.

Of the 32 young people who were enrolled at the AEI in September 2000, 31 (97 per cent) were retained for the full academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI joiners/leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. careers education) and are not recorded against young people who would have received them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject

(intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £5,241 for the Pupil Support Team to £9,810 for College Placements. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative 'value' of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis: it may be the case that the certificates obtained at college are of more use to the young people than other certificates, and hence their higher average cost is justified. In total, nine young people (23 per cent) were awarded at least one attainment certificate.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
College Placements	GCSE	2		4			
	NVQ Level 1 (Hair and Beauty)	1		1			
	TOTAL	3	16%	5	16,350	2,818	9,810
Duke of Edinburgh Pupil Support Team	Bronze Award	2	25%	2	5,723	458	5,723
	OCR CLAIT	4		4			
	GCSE	1		1			
	AQA (Literacy/Numeracy) Cert. of Achievement Level 3 (English/Maths/IT)	2		2			
	TOTAL	4	31%	9	11,792	1,522	5,241
TOTAL		9	23%	16	21,573	8,442	12,135

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 39 young people at AEI 6, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Remain at AEI	14
Not known	9
Employment	7
College	4
Training	4
Custody	1
TOTAL	39

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 39 young people registered at some point during the year, 29 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 5, 74 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of nine young people are unknown.

Using the modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £6,695. The cost per desirable percent was £2,624 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 39 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 **Offending behaviour**

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	15	14	-1
Total number of offences, by these young people	105	101	-4

Table 6 suggests a slight fall in the number of offenders and the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were 22 different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Eleven out of the fifteen ‘baseline’ offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period. There were seven ‘new’ offenders in the intervention period, and three young people increased their number of offences. Of the 39 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 36 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was seven, and this ranged from one to 33.

There was also a change in the offending pattern, in terms of the types of crimes recorded. The major increase was in the number of Thefts recorded, from 8 to 16. There was a reduction in the number of Deception/Fraud crimes (from 6 to 0) and Other crimes recorded (from 21 to 13).

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 6

Introduction

AEI 6 is funded by the LEA Behaviour Support Service.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	April 2000–August 2000
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Art/craft	Education
Careers Education	Careers Education
Cookery	Education
Counselling	Counselling
Electronics/science	Education
English	Education
ICT	Education
Maths	Education
Music	Education
Outdoor education	Leisure-based activities
Personal and Social Education	Personal and Social Education
Work experience	Work experience

Assumptions used for AEI 6 (in addition to general assumptions):

- No input records were provided for APL Training, Keylink, and Fairbridge, and hence these interventions are not included in this evaluation. These were externally provided activities and such AEI staff did not provide any input to them. APL Training has been recorded at zero cost as the costs are met by a sponsor.
- Administration, liaison and management costs have been apportioned (equally) across all of the interventions.
- No training costs are included as insufficient detail on training inputs was provided in the templates. All training costs are met by the LEA.
- The recruitment costs of two teaching assistants and one teacher have not been included as insufficient detail was included on the Advertising template.

- The computer system (costing £20,600) was purchased in March 1999 but is recorded here as purchased in quarter 2 2000 (in order that the cost be included in the analysis). This cost is included in the crude costs analysis as being purchased in quarter 2 2000, but is recorded as March 1999 in the modelling process. The depreciation costs in all subsequent quarters (following March 1999) are included in the total costs model. For the on-going costs model, only depreciation costs incurred in the period September 2000 to July 2001 are included (but such costs include equipment purchased prior to September 2000). This applies to all equipment costs.
- Other overheads incurred in the quarter July-September 2000 are split 2/3 pre-evaluation and 1/3 on-going in the model for on-going costs. All other expenditure in this quarter commenced in September and is therefore on-going.
- No information on college placements (for eight young people) has been provided and therefore the total costs of the project are likely to be underestimated.
- Advertising costs (for recruitment) are excluded as these are unknown and met externally by the LEA. These costs would have been part of the pre-evaluation costs.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using pre-evaluation and on-going costs incurred in the period April 2000 to July 2001 was £183,612. This has been apportioned over five categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Training and Advertising are excluded from the analysis for AEI 6 as no costs were incurred to the AEI. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input for AEI 6, accounting for 72 per cent of the total costs.

Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

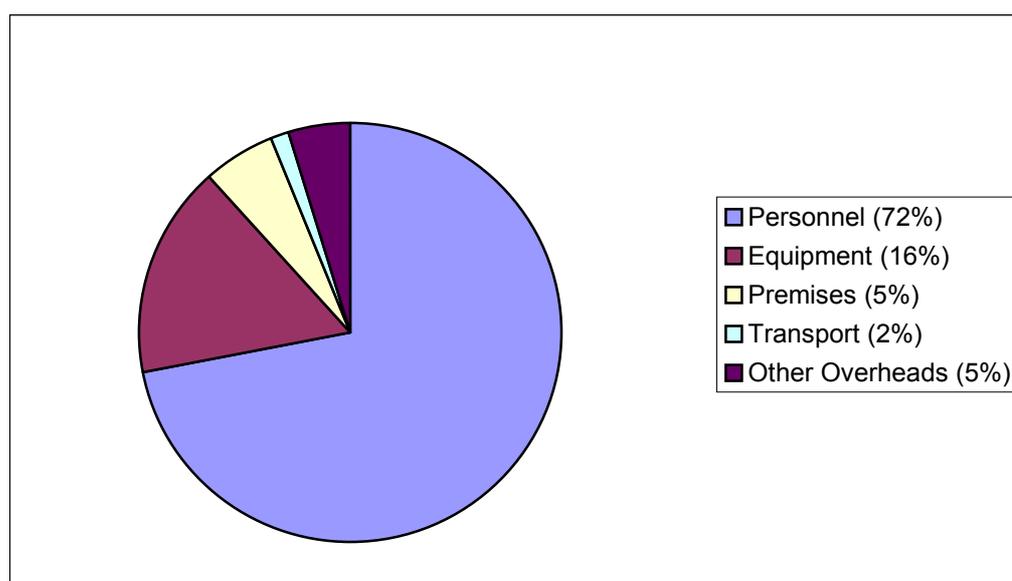


Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the twelve interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again, Training and Advertising have been excluded as input categories from Table 1. Most interventions follow a similar distribution of costs to that shown in Figure 1. One exception is the ICT intervention, with 20 per cent of the resource use on equipment.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

£	Personnel	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Other	Total
Art/craft	19,210	2,135	795	165	665	22,970
Careers Education	7,056	2,355	795	165	1,174	11,545
Cookery	11,380	2,183	895	185	710	15,353
Counselling	12,358	2,355	795	165	704	16,377
Electronics/science	13,659	2,183	895	185	699	17,621
English	10,811	2,710	795	165	665	15,146
ICT	16,119	4,377	795	165	665	22,121
Maths	13,568	2,710	795	165	665	17,903
Music	4,387	2,135	895	165	665	8,247
Outdoor education	11,432	2,183	795	792	735	15,937
Personal and Social Education	6,993	2,355	795	165	679	10,987
Work experience	5,174	2,402	895	185	749	9,405
TOTAL	132,147	30,083	9,940	2,667	8,775	183,612

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across interventions. The pie starts at the top with the Art/Craft intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention stands out from Figure 3 as being particularly resource intensive. Two interventions account for over 10 per cent of the total resource use: Art/Craft and ICT.

Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

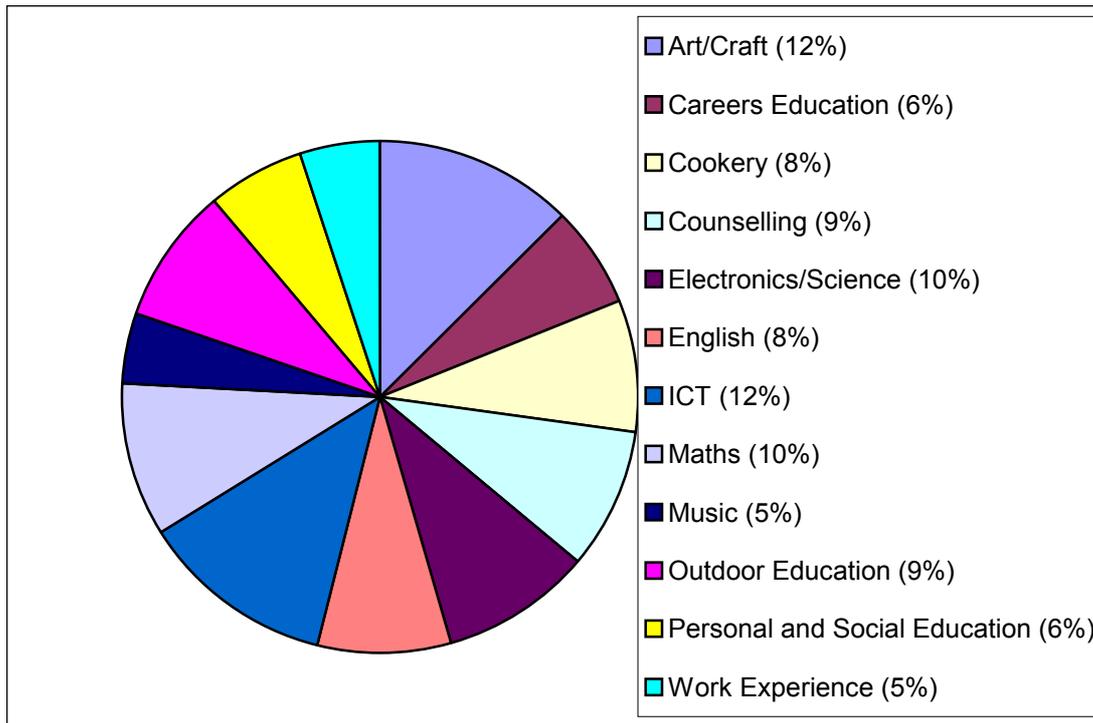
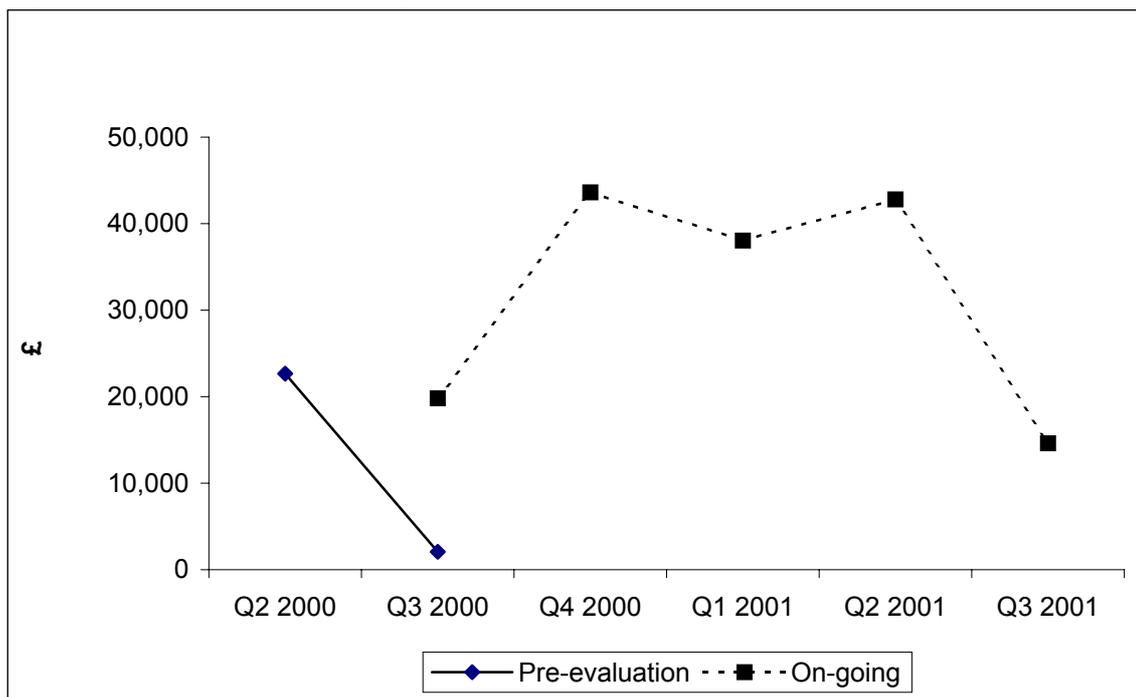


Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the six quarters for which data are available. The data have been 'corrected' in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs and on-going costs. On-going costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). For the three full intervention quarters, on-going costs appear to be around £40,000 per quarter. Pre-evaluation costs include the purchase of a large computer system in March 1999 (but recorded and analysed as purchased in quarter 2 2000).

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter



Inputs by resource type

All items of equipment used at AEI 6 are capital costs, with a total value of £30,000. This represents 16 per cent of the total resource use. Looking only at capital purchases in the intervention year, the capital expenditure of £10,000 represents 6 per cent of the resource use in the ‘on-going’ period. All items of capital equipment are to be depreciated over a five year period (with no re-sale value). Most items of capital equipment are used equally in all the interventions. Exceptions are curriculum materials for Maths, English and ICT, and the purchase of computers and warranties which are used exclusively for the ICT intervention.

Levered-in inputs

In addition to the college placements and training inputs noted in the assumptions, two inputs are included in the database at zero cost: Keylink (for the Music intervention) and APL Training (split equally across all interventions). Both inputs are sponsored and hence the costs are met externally to the AEI. The value of the Keylink input is unknown, although it is possible to estimate the value of the APL Training input at £2,250. Two young people attended the APL training from September-December 2000. The cost-effectiveness analysis has been undertaken using the perspective of the AEI, and hence this cost has not been included. However in a full opportunity cost assessment, this cost would be included. Given that the value of the APL Training accounts for only 1 per cent of the total cost of the intervention, the omission of this value will not have a significant effect on the cost-effectiveness or rate of return calculations.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. This shows the results of two modelling processes. The second column includes all costs associated with each intervention and the third only includes the costs incurred during the intervention period (September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (at around 2 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 **Modelled input costs, by intervention**

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going only
Total (corrected quarters)	142,779	132,164
Total (uncorrected)	142,465	135,133
Art/craft	18,660	17,824
Careers Education	8,920	7,946
Cookery	12,169	11,352
Counselling	12,941	12,025
Electronics/science	14,058	13,207
English	11,614	10,760
ICT	16,279	15,372
Maths	14,776	13,922
Music	6,147	5,311
Outdoor education	12,618	11,759
Personal and Social Education	8,375	7,463
Work experience	7,042	6,106

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £142,000 including the pre-evaluation costs, and £132,000 without the pre-evaluation costs. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: number of young people

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 30 young people were enrolled at the AEI. However, 13 young people left before the end of the academic year and a further 12 joined after September 2000. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 30 young people remained for 11 months (the whole year), the AEI would have provided 330 young person months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 226 months of education were provided. This is equivalent to 21 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 21 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months), using both total and on-going costs (both modelled to midpoint January to March 1999 values).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
30 FTE	4,759	4,405
21 FTE	6,799	6,294
330 months	433	400
226 months	632	585

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person (adjusted for leavers) at the AEI is between £6,300 and £6,800, depending on whether pre-evaluation costs are included. At full capacity (i.e. 30 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £4,400 to £4,750. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year (with the former cost being more appropriate for leavers re-integrated into mainstream education – about five of the 13). Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures could be compared with the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,085 for Year 10 pupils and £2,801 for Year 11 pupils. Hence it appears to be around twice as expensive to educate a young person at the AEI, compared to the costs of doing so in mainstream education.

Of the seventeen young people who started at the AEI in September 2000, nine (53 per cent) were retained for the full academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. counselling) and are not recorded against young people who would have received them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown below in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject (intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

With the exception of the Personal and Social Education intervention, the cost per young person certificated appears to be just over £5,000 (in April 1999 prices, on-going costs only). The costs per percent of young people taking the subject vary significantly due to the low class sizes for Music and Personal and Social Education. In addition, eight young people were awarded a total of 15 GNVQs and two were awarded a total of three GCSEs. However these were obtained through placements at a local college and this intervention is not included as being run by the AEI. Of non-college placed young people, four (18 per cent) were awarded at least one certificate.

Using the total cost of the intervention (modelled costs, corrected quarters, on-going costs only), the cost per certificate (of any type) is £4,894. Excluding the attainments of the college-placed young people, the cost per certificate is £14,685 and the cost per percent of young people certificated £7,342. However some certificates (e.g. GNVQ/GCSE) may be worth more than others: this figure is not weighted.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	Number of young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
English	Foundation Literacy	2	12%	2	5,380	897	5,380
ICT	Key Bytes Plus	3	19%	3	5,124	809	5,124
Music	Keylink Music	1	100%	2	5,311	53	2,656
Personal and Social Education	Foundation Lifeskills (Fairbridge)/PSE	2	100%	2	3,732	75	3,732
TOTAL		4	20%	9	33,041	6,608	14,685

NB. Attainments of young people at college are excluded from this table as the input data does not include any information on this intervention. These young people are excluded from the total percentage calculation.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the first destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 30 young people at AEI 6, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Reintegrated into school	8
Training	6
College	3
Referred to LEA/PRU	3
Remain at AEI	3
Not known	3
Employment	2
Custody	1
Unemployment	1
TOTAL	30

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 30 young people in September 2000, 22 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 6, 73 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of four young people are unknown (including the young person who emigrated).

Using the on-going modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £6,007. The cost per desirable percent was £1,810 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Two years’ worth of crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 30 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrolees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	8	9	1
Total number of offences, by these young people	33	34	1

Table 6 suggests a slight increase in the number of offenders and the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were 13 different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Four out of the eight 'baseline' offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period. There were five 'new' offenders in the intervention period, and three young people increased their number of offences. Of the 30 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 30 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was four, and this ranged from one to nine.

There was also a change in the types of crime recorded. The major increases were in the number of Vehicle crimes (0 to 5); and Other crime recorded (1 to 7). The numbers in brackets represent the number of offences recorded in the baseline and intervention years. There was a reduction in the number of Criminal Damage crimes (10 to 2) and Disorderly Behaviour crimes recorded (8 to 3).

AEI Economic evaluation: accompanying notes

Introduction

This document provides a general introduction to the economic evaluation of the AEI projects, specifying aims, methods and general assumptions applied. Other issues pertaining to the economic evaluation process are raised and any concerns relating to the interpretation of the results are highlighted.

Aims of the economic evaluation

There are two key aims of the economic evaluation of the AEI projects. These are: to analyse the crude input costs of each provision and model these into constant prices; and to calculate and compare the cost-effectiveness of each project in terms of various educational and crime outcomes. It was also intended to provide a cost-benefit analysis of the projects in terms of the value of crime averted. However, due to the lack of robust data it has been agreed with the Home Office that this cannot be undertaken at the present time. Future work may result in a cost-benefit analysis being undertaken. Economic analysis of offending behaviour is undertaken on a per-person basis.

Method of analysis

Perspective: Due to the nature of the data available, the economic evaluations are undertaken from the perspective of the AEI. Some, but not all, levered-in inputs are included in the data, and most of these have not been valued at their opportunity cost. Levered-in inputs and their valuation are described in the reports for each AEI.

Interventions: Each intervention/curriculum area undertaken by the AEI is classified by the National Intervention Category deemed most appropriate. Sub-National Intervention Categories are not available for the AEI projects.

Input Data: The input data used in these evaluations are derived from the standard input templates completed by each AEI. The templates apportion costs using an ingredients approach (Levin and McEwan, 2001) across seven input categories: Personnel, Training, Equipment, Premises, Transport, Advertising and Other Overheads. Data has been entered into the Home Office Data Collection Tool on a per-intervention basis. Input data are available for all AEIs for the intervention (on-going) period (September 2000 to July 2001). Pre-evaluation costs data, for up to one academic year preceding the intervention year, are also available for five out of the six projects.

Outcomes Data: Young person-specific outcomes (numbers/persistence, educational attainments and destinations/reasons for leaving) have been identified using the educational templates completed by each AEI.

Crime Data: Police National Computer (PNC) data for each young person at all AEIs have been obtained for the academic years 1999/00 and 2000/01. This details the offending behaviour of each young person in terms of type and number of offences. Recorded crime data (as opposed to actual crime data) are used in this evaluation. The PNC dates a crime from the day it was committed, rather than the day it was recorded. Crime data are analysed at the level of the young person; rather than at AEI level.

Analysis of Crude Input Costs: The first stage in the economic analysis involves a basic analysis of the crude input data as identified in the Data Collection Tool. The analysis primarily apportions total costs by category, intervention and quarter of expenditure.

Modelling of Crude Input Costs: The crude input costs of each project and intervention are modelled to represent all costs in midpoint January-March 1999 prices. This process allows for inflation, impatience and the amortisation of capital costs. The modelling process is described in greater detail below. All subsequent analyses use modelled costs.

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis: Educational outcomes are compared to the modelled costs of each intervention to provide measures of cost-effectiveness in terms of: young person numbers, retention rates, educational attainments, desirable destinations and offending behaviour. Cost-effectiveness is measured by the average cost per outcome. Due to the delays in obtaining the input data, it has not been possible to undertake cost-effectiveness at a per-young person level. The use of different cost types (as described below) allows for a basic sensitivity analysis.

The AEIs in the economic evaluation

Six AEIs are included in this economic evaluation, all of whom returned input and outcomes data. The comparability between the six AEIs is unclear, in terms of local context and the type of young people enrolled. Hence comparisons between AEIs in terms of resource use and cost-effectiveness should be made with caution. This caveat also has implications for the replicability of the different provisions. No comments on replicability are offered in this analysis, as it is considered that the local context has a significant role in determining the costs and outcomes of each project. Also, the six projects are spread throughout England: costs may vary considerably between different areas.

General assumptions

The following assumptions have been used in the economic evaluations of all six AEIs. Assumptions specific to each AEI are included in the individual reports.

- All data are assumed to have been validated.
- Personnel “all values” costings have been used, as designated in the Data Collection Tool.

- Salary costs have been uplifted by 10 per cent to account for offices and other personnel-related inputs.
- It is not known whether National Insurance and pension costs are included.
- Quarters are designated on a calendar year basis (Q1 – January to March; Q2 – April to June; Q3 – July to September; Q4 October to December).
- Capital costs are written off over five, ten or fifteen years. The time period used reflects the maximum possible lifetime of the asset (not just the lifetime of the AEI project). All capital assets are assumed to have a zero re-sale value.
- Crime data (from the PNC) are assumed to be correct and inclusive.

Economic modelling

The costs of each project and intervention have been modelled to represent all costs in midpoint January to March 1999 prices. The model has been constructed on a quarterly basis, with the base quarter (quarter 0) being January to March 1999. All projects have data up to quarter 10 (July to September 2001), but start at various points (not always quarter 0). The aim of the model is to take i) inflation, ii) impatience and iii) amortisation of capital costs into account.

Inflation: Prices have been ‘deflated’ using a GDP deflator, adjusted from an annual value of 2.5 per cent. This allows prices to be shown as real, rather than nominal values.

Impatience: The second adjustment is to discount the value of flows occurring after March 1999 in order to take impatience into account (impatience reflects the fact that £100 today is more highly valued than £100 in a year’s time). The discount rate is a quarterly adaptation of an annual rate of 6 per cent.

Amortisation: The third adjustment allows gradual amortisation of capital costs over the lifetime of the asset. Assets are written off over 5, 10 or 15 years on a straight line basis, assuming a zero re-sale value. The lifetime used assumes that the asset will continue to be used in alternative projects after the AEI project evaluation period is completed. A straight line approach writes off an equal proportion of the cost of the asset every quarter. Amortisation begins in the quarter following acquisition. Each quarters’ amortisation cost is inflated to reflect the relevant price level by multiplying the quarterly cost by the ratio of the current GDP deflator to the GDP deflator in the quarter of acquisition. Amortisation costs, like revenue costs, are subject to the adjustments for inflation and impatience described above.

The costs calculated by the model reflect the amount of money, in midpoint January to March 1999 prices, that would be needed to run the project for the time period covered by the costs data. Where pre-evaluation data has been recorded, the modelling process has been undertaken twice. The first model uses the total cost of each intervention (and the project as a whole), including both pre-evaluation and on-going costs. The second model uses the on-going costs data only. This is because the time period for which pre-evaluation costs data is available varies between projects.

Also, pre-evaluation costs need to be attributed to provision in more than one year, and hence the on-going cost may be a more accurate representation of the annual cost of provision. The on-going model includes the quarterly amortisation costs of capital assets acquired in the pre-evaluation phase. One-third of the quarterly amortisation cost is included for quarter 3 2000 and quarter 3 2001 in the corrected model (see below), as the intervention was only undertaken for one out of the three months in these quarters.

Cost apportionment by quarter

Before the input analysis for the AEI projects was undertaken, it was noticed that the costs database is not entirely accurate in its method of apportioning costs. This is a particular problem for the AEI projects because they are based on school years, rather than calendar years. In this case, many inputs are brought into use in September. As a result of the quarter system used in the database (January being quarter one), September is the final month in the third quarter of any year and July the first month in the third quarter (of the next year).

The quarterly allocation problem is best illustrated using an example. If a member of staff was appointed in September and left at the end of December in the same year, having worked for four months, their salary costs should be apportioned as follows:

0.25 – Quarter 3 (September)

0.75 – Quarter 4 (October, November, December)

However the database does not recognise the need to apportion costs in this way, and makes the following apportionment:

0.5 – Quarter 3

0.5 – Quarter 4

If the existing method of apportionment was used in the analysis, it would mean that the per-quarter costs analysis would not be accurate. Hence the input data for the total AEI cost has been ‘corrected’ manually to adjust for this problem prior to the per-quarter costs analysis. Hence the per-quarter analysis is a more accurate representation of actual spending patterns. The per-intervention costs (pre-modelling) are not affected by this problem, neither is the breakdown of costs by input type.

The quarterly allocation problem also impacts on the modelled costs, as quarterly values are deflated and discounted. Hence the total costs of each project have been modelled using both the ‘corrected’ quarterly data and the uncorrected data. The difference in the modelled costs using these two approaches is very small (maximum 8 per cent of the modelled cost). Given this finding, and the lack of time for analysis, the per-quarter costs of each intervention have not been corrected prior to modelling.

Crime data – time periods

Data on each young persons' offending behaviour have been collected for two academic years. The baseline period is the academic year 1999/00 and the intervention period is the academic year 2000/01. Academic years run from September to the following August. There are three points to note regarding these time periods.

First, offenders may have been enrolled at the AEI during the baseline period. However, we might expect continued enrolment to have a cumulative effect on offending behaviour.

Second, the young people may have left the AEI before the end of the intervention year: their attendance at the AEI will not therefore have affected their offending behaviour for the entire year. The relationship between offenders and early leaving is explored in the summary of the projects.

Third, the crime data have been collected up to and including August 2001, although the academic year ended in July 2001. We might expect offending behaviour to rise in the summer holiday, although the same approach is used for the baseline period and hence comparisons should be valid.

Attributing causality

Of particular concern to the Home Office is that causality between inputs and outcomes (including crime) can be established. Although some outcomes can more reliably be linked to the AEI (e.g. educational attainment), causality cannot be guaranteed for other outcomes, including crime. This is because young people are subject to a number of external influences (family, friends outside the AEI etc.) that cannot be controlled by the AEI. Most of the cost-effectiveness calculations are undertaken at AEI level, and this implies that a number of interventions would have had a role to play in achieving effectiveness. Even for educational attainment, analysis at the intervention level may not be appropriate, however, as skills gained in one intervention may help a young person gain a certificate in another.

A more powerful method of exploring causality would be to apply a randomised controlled trial design to the evaluation. Young people could be matched on various characteristics and randomly assigned to either the AEI (intervention) arm or a control arm. Young person-level outcomes could then be compared to determine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

General comments

While basic information about the funding sources for each AEI is available, it is not known how much each source contributes to the total cost of each project. As highlighted earlier, projects may also vary on the extent to which levered-in inputs are included in the input database, and whether these have been assigned an opportunity cost or not.

The AEIs have all provided costs using their own perceptions of resource use, and hence between-AEI comparisons may not be entirely accurate. Also, each AEI has their own system for monitoring costs, and these are more developed at some AEIs than others. Most AEIs have allocated some inputs equally over all quarters and interventions. Whether this is a true representation of the expenditure pattern at the AEIs is unclear. However the total cost analysis will not be affected.

Some costs arising in the year prior to the evaluation year have been included in the analysis. These costs are associated with expenditure on capital equipment, staff training and advertising. Such expenditure is assumed to have an impact on the provision for the young people attending the AEI in the evaluation year and thus needs to be accounted for in a full opportunity-cost assessment. Expenditure on other categories on input has not been included as it is assumed that this would not have had an effect on the young people enrolled in the intervention year. Had the AEI projects started in September 2000, then these costs would be 'set-up' costs. However, the AEIs themselves were up and running in the previous academic year and hence a more appropriate term, as used in the economic evaluation, is 'pre-evaluation' costs.

Where AEIs have acquired capital equipment and used this over the duration of the project, the full cost of acquisition has been charged to the quarter of acquisition in the input analysis. For some items, this has required an adjustment to the Data Collection Tool, which apportions the total cost of the asset over all the quarters for which it was used in the project (even though all the expenditure would have occurred in one quarter). This discrepancy would have affected the results of the per-quarter analysis and of the modelling process.

Training costs incurred by the AEIs have been included in this analysis as revenue costs. However the economics of education literature suggests that training, like schooling, is an investment in human capital that affects the individual trained over a period of time. Furthermore, skills learned may be used in non-AEI activities and may continue to be used after the AEI project is completed. In this vein, training could be considered more of an item of capital expenditure. However, little is known about the longevity of the benefits of training (and how such benefits depreciate over time), and hence including training costs as capital costs would be problematic.

Appendix to economic summary: recorded crime, by AEI and type

	AEI 1		AEI 2		AEI 3		AEI 4		AEI 5	
	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01
Drugs – possession	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs – supply	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Burglary	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	6	0
Vehicle crime	3	2	3	5	0	0	2	3	6	0
Assault	8	0	3	10	1	4	1	0	15	0
Theft	11	13	4	3	5	7	11	2	8	0
Criminal damage	0	4	6	22	8	15	0	0	20	0
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	0
Disorderly behaviour	1	0	2	5	1	3	0	0	15	0
Breach of court orders/bail	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Road traffic/motoring offences	0	4	0	10	0	9	0	0	6	0
Deception (incl fraud)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Other	4	3	1	10	3	5	0	0	21	0
TOTAL	29	28	19	66	22	52	16	5	105	10

Cost-effectiveness Appendices

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

individual AEI report: AEI 1

Introduction

AEI 1 is run by a registered charity and voluntary agency with LEA funding.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999–August 2000
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local Intervention	National Intervention
Art and Design	Education
Basic Nutrition	Personal and Social Education
Careers Education	Careers Education
Drama	Education
Independent Studies	Education
IT and DTP	Education
Literacy and Numeracy	Education
Media Studies	Education
Modular Studies	Personal and Social Education
Music Performance	Education
Personal and Social Education	Personal and Social Education
Sport	Leisure based Activities
Trips Out	Leisure based Activities
Wheel Right Course	Vocational Training
Work Experience	Work Experience

Assumptions used for AEI 1 (in addition to general assumptions):

- Although the project began in September 1999, any records prior to September 2000 have been marked as pre-evaluation, to coincide with the period of analysis.
- Other Overheads have been split across the whole period as specific acquisition dates were not provided.
- Individual Transport records, rather than the budgeted figure, have been used.
- Specific dates were not provided for equipment or training apart from the academic year in which they were purchased. Costs have therefore been apportioned across all quarters within the academic year.

- All costs associated with administration/liaison/managerial tasks have been apportioned across all of the interventions rather than being entered as separate interventions.
- The premises conversion, undertaken in the period January-April 2001 has been recorded as a revenue cost, given the low cost of the conversion (£1000).

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project year, using pre-evaluation and on-going costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £128,723. This has been apportioned over six categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Advertising is excluded from the analysis as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Personnel and Other Overheads are the primary inputs, accounting for 52 per cent and 21 per cent of the total resource use respectively. Very little Training and Transport expenditure was incurred at AEI 1 (with a number of training courses provided free of charge).

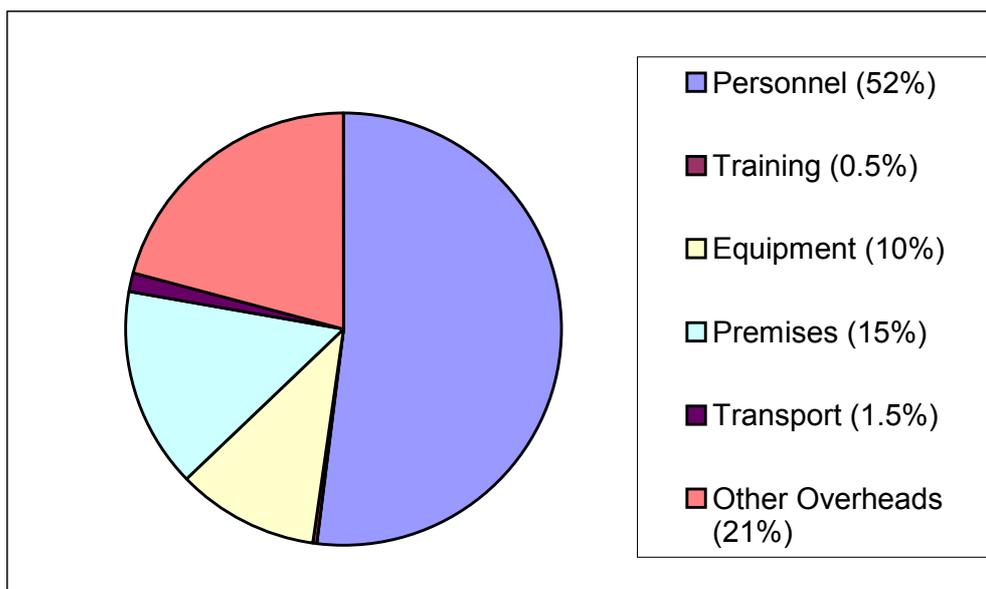


Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the fifteen interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again Advertising has been excluded as an input category in Table 1. Most interventions show a similar pattern of resource use to that for the project as a whole (Figure 1). Exceptions are Literacy and Numeracy with higher Personnel costs (than the average intervention); Wheel Right with lower Personnel costs; Basic Nutrition and Work Experience, both with higher Equipment expenditure; and Personal and Social Education, Sport and Wheel Right, all with higher expenditure in the ‘Other Overheads’ category.

Table1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Other Overheads	TOTAL
Art and Design	4,588	24	821	1,358	131	1,282	8,204
Basic Nutrition	4,394	26	1,062	1,358	131	1,303	8,274
Careers Education	5,029	27	921	1,358	113	1,307	8,755
Drama	3,591	26	807	1,358	131	1,307	7,220
Independent Studies*	2,631	27	918	1,358	131	1,248	6,313
IT and DTP	4,780	24	916	1,358	131	1,185	8,394
Literacy and Numeracy	8,348	23	903	1,358	112	1,159	11,903
Media Studies*	3,272	27	921	1,358	131	1,307	7,016
Modular Studies*	2,997	27	905	1,358	113	1,286	6,686
Music Performance	4,224	24	880	1,358	131	1,200	7,817
Personal and Social Education	5,529	27	903	1,164	113	3,474	11,210
Sport	7,606	24	904	1,164	113	4,623	14,434
Trips out	2,552	26	796	1,164	131	1,682	6,351
Wheel Right Course	2,682	26	795	1,164	131	3,080	7,878
Work Experience	4,676	26	1,027	1,164	131	1,244	8,268
TOTAL	66,899	384	13,479	19,400	1,874	26,687	128,723

* These three interventions were modified over the course of the year – costs are based on planned activities.

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the Art and Design intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention clearly stands out from Figure 2 as being particularly resource intensive. One intervention, Sport, accounts for more than 10 per cent of the total resource use.

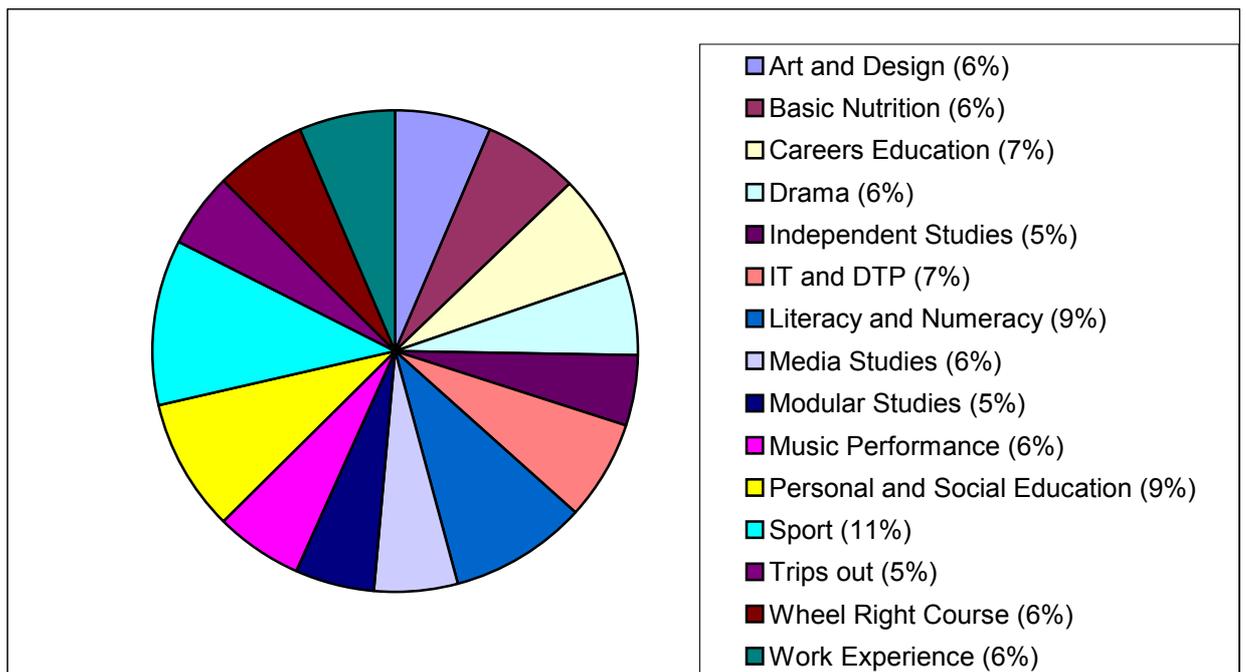


Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

Figure 3 shows how inputs have been incorporated into the project over the nine quarters for which data have been collected. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits total costs into pre-evaluation and on-going costs (with the transition from the pre-evaluation to the on-going period in Quarter 3 2000).

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter

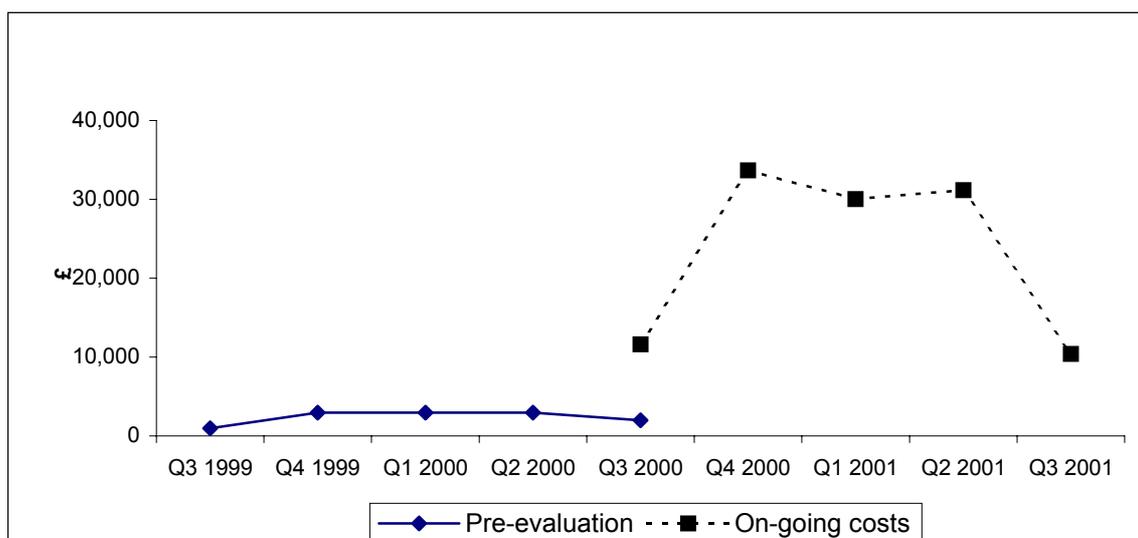


Figure 3 shows that on-going costs in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) are low as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). This pattern is visible due to the correction of the data highlighted above. Pre-evaluation costs are low compared to on-going costs (accounting for 9 per cent of the total resource use). Pre-evaluation costs were incurred for Training and the purchase of Equipment only. For the three full intervention quarters (quarter 4 2000 to quarter 2 2001), on-going costs appear to be around £31,500 per quarter.

Inputs by resource type

All items of equipment acquired by AEI 1 are capital costs, with a total value of £13,500. This represents 10 per cent of the total resource use. Of this total, the majority (£13,200) is electrical and IT based, with an expected life of five years (and no re-sale value). The remainder (£300) is furniture with an expected life of ten years (again with no re-sale value). Most items of equipment have been allocated equally across all interventions. Most equipment was acquired in the pre-evaluation period: in the intervention period equipment accounts for only 2 per cent of expenditure.

Levered-in inputs

Two inputs are included in the database at zero cost: both are training courses. Both training courses were free to the AEI and the opportunity cost of these interventions is unknown. Given that the economic analysis is being undertaken from the perspective of the AEI, these costs are excluded. However, one of the training courses was undertaken in December 1999, in the pre-evaluation period. No Personnel costs are included in the pre-evaluation period, although there is an opportunity cost of the personnel (their time) involved with this training course, and this should be included in the analysis. However there is insufficient information available to enable this opportunity cost of staff time to be included. It is likely that the staff cost associated with this training course would be small, particularly when compared to the total cost of the project, and hence this omission should not have a significant impact on the cost-effectiveness analysis

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. This shows the results of two modelling processes. The second column includes all costs associated with each intervention and the third only includes the costs incurred during the intervention period (September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two

approaches for the total costs is very small (at around 2 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £101,000 including the pre-evaluation costs, and £98,000 without the pre-evaluation costs.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going only
Total (corrected quarters)	101,344	97,786
Total (uncorrected)	101,378	99,792
Art and Design	6,472	6,337
Basic Nutrition	6,369	6,215
Careers Education	6,883	6,729
Drama	5,654	5,517
Independent Studies	4,819	4,664
IT and DTP	6,583	6,428
Literacy and Numeracy	9,586	9,433
Media Studies	5,419	5,264
Modular Studies	4,902	4,750
Music Performance	6,124	5,976
Personal and Social Education	9,015	8,861
Sport	11,763	11,609
Trips out	4,921	4,785
Wheel Right Course	6,223	6,086
Work Experience	6,407	6,249

The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs; or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: number of young people

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 22 young people were enrolled at AEI 1. However, six young people left before the end of the academic year and three joined after September 2000. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 or their month of joining up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 22 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 242 months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 209 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 209 months of education is equivalent to 19 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 19 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months), using total and on-going costs (both modelled to midpoint January to March 1999 values).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
22 FTE	4,607	4,445
19 FTE	5,334	5,147
242 Months	419	404
209 Months	485	468

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is between £5,147 and £5,334, depending on whether pre-evaluation costs are included. At full capacity (i.e. 22 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £4,445 to £4,607. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures could be compared to the age-weighted pupils unit (AWPU) allocation for the LEA of £2,057. Hence it appears to be over twice as expensive to educate a young person at AEI 1 than to do so in a mainstream school.

Of the nineteen young people registered at AEI 1 in September 2000, thirteen (68 per cent) were retained until the end of the academic year.

There is insufficient detail in the education templates to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention and so this analysis is not attempted here.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number of young people awarded a certificate. Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these two outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated, £	Cost per percent, £	Cost per certificate, £
Trips Out	Prices Trust Team Building	8		8			
	Princes Trust Outward Bound	2		2			
	TOTAL	9	N/A	10	532	N/A	479
Personal and Social Education	Red Cross First Aid	8		8			
	Basic Health and Safety	11		11			
	NPTC – Independent Living (Level B)	10		10			
	TOTAL	16	N/A	29	554	N/A	328
Basic Nutrition Literacy and Numeracy	Basic Food Hygiene	5	N/A	5	1,243	N/A	1,243
	NOCN Pre-foundation Progression Award	3		3			
	NPTC – Numeracy and Literacy (Level B)	11		11			
	TOTAL	13	N/A	14	726	N/A	674
IT and DTP	NPTC – IT (Level B)	11	N/A	11	584	N/A	584
TOTAL		19	86%	69	5,147	1,137	1,417

NB. Young person numbers in each intervention are not available.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £479 for Trips Out to £1,243 for Basic Nutrition. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative ‘value’ of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis. Overall, nineteen young people (86 per cent) were awarded one or more certificates.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 22 young people at AEI 1, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 Destinations/reason for leaving

First Destination	Number of Young people
Employment	8
Remain at AEI	5
Training	4
Unknown	2
Pregnancy/childcare	1
Referred to LEA	1
Excluded (drug use)	1
TOTAL	22

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 22 young people registered at the AEI, 17 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including employment and further training. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 1, 77 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the first destinations of two young people are unknown.

Using the on-going modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £6,519. The cost per desirable percent was £1,438 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across the six AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 22 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September

1999 to August 2000 provides a 'baseline' offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the 'intervention' offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	9	7	-2
Total number of offences, by these young people	29	28	-1

Table 6 suggests a slight reduction in the number of offenders and offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were 11 different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Five out of the nine 'baseline' offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period, while there were two 'new' offenders in the intervention period, and a further young person increased their number of offences. Of the 22 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 32 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was four, and this ranged from one to nine.

There was also a change in the type of offences recorded. The main changes in the types of crime committed were a reduction in Assault (from eight crimes to zero) and an increase in Criminal Damage and Road traffic/Motoring offences (both from zero to four crimes). An increase in Road traffic crime may be expected as young people near the age of 17 and start thinking about driving.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 2

Introduction

AEI 2 is run by a charity with a young offenders focus. The AEI receives ‘on-roll’ payments from the LEA (£51.50 per week for 38 weeks) and the balance is funded by the charity.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000-July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999-August 2001
On-going costs data:	September 2000-July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999-August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Art/craft	Education
Careers education	Careers education
Counselling	Counselling
ICT/CLAIT	Education
Literacy	Education
Numeracy	Education
NVQ training	Vocational training
Personal and social education	Personal and social education
Project work	Education
Sport/recreation	Leisure-based activities
Work experience	Work experience
Youth Achievement Award (ASDAN)	Education

Assumptions used for AEI 2 (in addition to general assumptions):

- There are a number of ‘external’ interventions undertaken at AEI 2 that have not been costed and included in the database. This may be because no direct costs are incurred for these interventions by the AEI. Hence it is important to note that this economic analysis is undertaken from the perspective of the AEI.
- All costs associated with administration/liaison/managerial tasks have been apportioned equally over all of the interventions rather than being listed as separate interventions.
- Any inputs recorded for post-July 2001 have not been included in this analysis.
- Some equipment costs have been assumed to occur in September 1999 rather than being set to a previous period.

- Refurbishment of the premises has been accounted for as a revenue cost – the renovation was undertaken in the period April 2000 to June 2001. One quarter of the total refurbishment cost has been allocated to AEI 2.
- Attainments other than those clearly attributable to one intervention have been allocated to Personal and Social Education.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using all costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £54,700. This has been apportioned over seven categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input category, accounting for 65 per cent of the total resource use.

Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

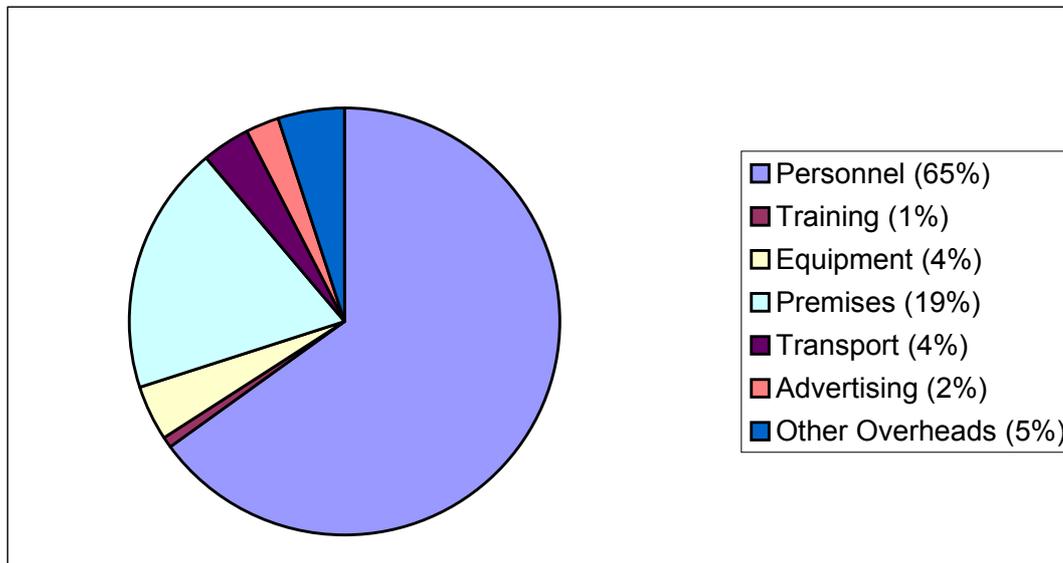


Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the twelve interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Abbreviations for the cost types have been used. The cost distribution of most interventions follows that shown in Figure 1 for the project as a whole. One exception is Sport/Recreation with a high ‘Other Overheads’ cost. This reflects the cost of summer activities, such as paintballing. In addition, Counselling and Personal and Social Education have relatively high Personnel costs; and Work Experience relatively low Personnel costs – these results may well be expected given the nature of the three interventions concerned.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Adver	Other	TOTAL
Art/Craft	2,982	105	153	831	154	107	151	4,483
Careers	1,818	19	238	839	170	107	158	3,349
Counselling	5,165	19	153	831	154	107	151	6,580
ICT/CLAIT	2,206	19	153	831	154	107	151	3,621
Literacy	3,273	22	158	927	154	120	163	4,817
Numeracy	3,206	22	158	927	154	120	163	4,750
NVQ Training	1,859	19	168	839	170	107	158	3,320
Personal and Social Education	4,906	19	153	831	154	107	151	6,321
Project Work	1,813	19	168	839	154	107	158	3,258
Sport/Recreation	4,217	22	158	927	176	120	1,043	6,663
Work Experience	1,441	19	170	831	176	107	151	2,895
Youth Achievement Award (ASDAN)	2,711	129	423	935	154	120	170	4,642
TOTAL	32,886	304	1,830	9,453	1,770	1,216	2,598	54,699

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the Art/Craft intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention stands out as being particularly resource intensive. Three interventions account for over 10 per cent of the total resource use: Counselling, Personal and Social Education and Sport/Recreation.

Figure 2 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

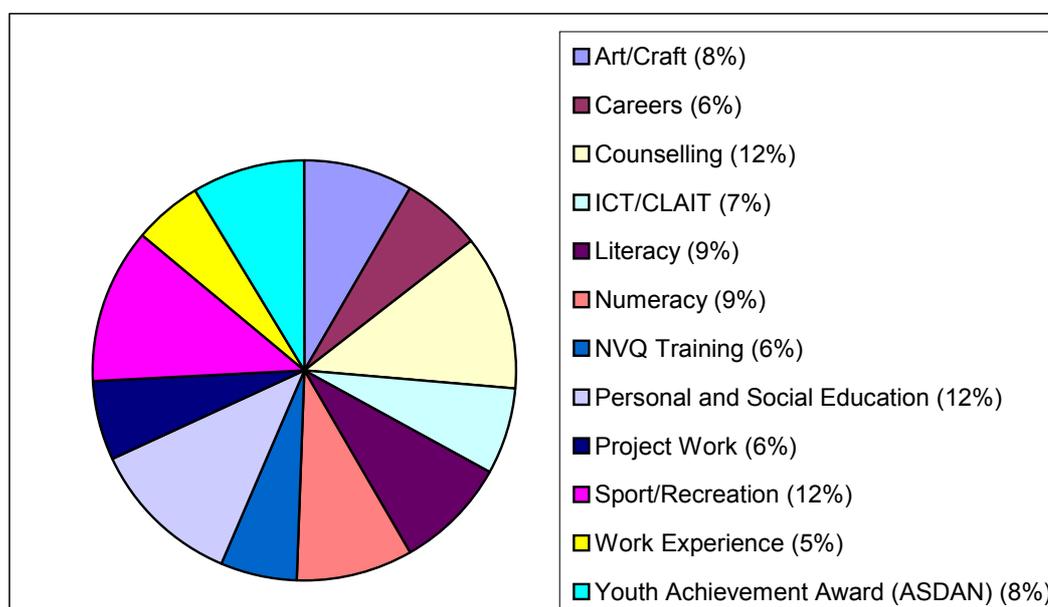
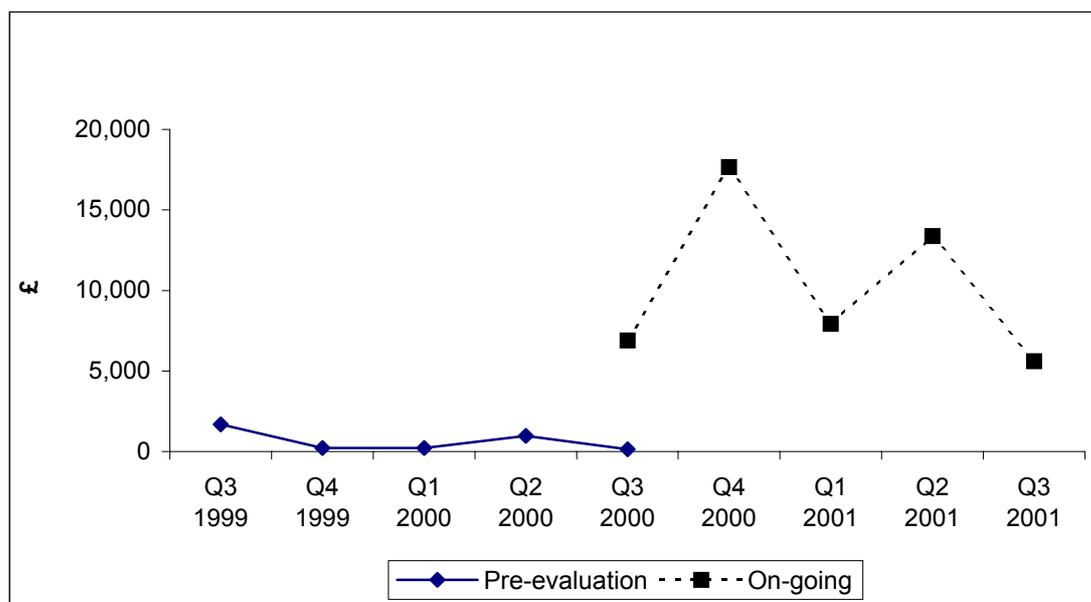


Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the nine quarters for which data have been collected. The data have been 'corrected' in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs (September 1999 to August 2000) and on-going costs (September 2000 to July 2001). Pre-evaluation costs include Advertising

and Equipment costs. Costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). Costs are also low in quarter 1 2001. This is due to staff changes, with four fewer Youth/Community/Welfare workers than in quarter 4 2000. One new recruit and one returnee led to increased costs in quarter 2 2001, although another worker left in May 2001.

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter



Inputs by resource type

All of the equipment purchased for AEI 2 is capital equipment, with the exception of a rented photocopier. Capital expenditure totalled £2,060, with the majority (£1,810) being depreciated over five years. The remaining £250 for Youth Achievement Awards, is to be depreciated over ten years. All capital equipment is assumed to have a zero re-sale value. The main item of capital equipment purchased was a set of computers and printers in September 1999.

Levered-in inputs

Several 'external' interventions have been excluded from this analysis, as noted in the assumptions at the beginning of this individual AEI report. In addition, AEI 2 benefited from ten free training courses, and a newsletter, brief and induction packs in the pre-evaluation period. In a full opportunity cost assessment, these items would have to be costed and included in the economic analysis. This would also have to include Personnel costs for free training courses attended during the pre-evaluation year. Given the amount of levered-in resources, it is likely that the total cost of the intervention at AEI 2 has been underestimated.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. The table shows the results of two modelling processes. Column two show the total costs, including the pre-evaluation costs, and column three includes the on-going costs only (incurred in the period September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (at around 4 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 **Modelled input costs, by intervention**

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going
Total (corrected quarters)	45,541	43,694
Total (uncorrected)	47,227	45,377
Art/craft	3,787	3,637
Careers	2,747	2,593
Counselling	5,561	5,413
ICT/CLAIT	3,023	2,875
Literacy	4,037	3,874
Numeracy	3,981	3,818
NVQ training	2,769	2,617
Personal and Social Education	5,323	5,175
Project work	2,702	2,551
Sport/recreation	5,572	5,409
Work experience	2,409	2,257
Youth Achievement Award (ASDAN)	3,677	3,626

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £45,000. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs; or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: young person numbers

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September

2000 to July 2001, 23 young people were enrolled at AEI 2. However, nine young people were enrolled after September 2000 and fifteen left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 (or the month in which they joined) up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 23 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 253 months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people joined and/or left the AEI, 156 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 156 months of education is equivalent to 14 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 14 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
23 FTE	1,980	1,900
14 FTE	3,253	3,121
253 Months	180	173
156 Months	292	280

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £3,100 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £3,250 including these costs. At full capacity (i.e. 23 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £1,900 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £1,980 including these costs. In some respects the latter cost (full capacity) is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures can be compared with the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,056 for Year 10 pupils and £2,073 for Year 11 pupils. At full capacity (23 FTE) AEI 2 therefore appears cheaper than the LEA per-pupil allocation.

Of the fourteen young people who were enrolled at the AEI in September 2000, three (21 per cent) were retained until the end of the academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. counselling) and are not recorded against young people who would have received

them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject (intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £272 for the Personal and Social Education to £969 for Literacy. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative 'value' of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis. Overall eleven young people (48 per cent) were awarded one or more certificates.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness - attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
ICT/CLAIT	CLAIT	2	40%	3	1,438	72	958
Literacy	AEB Literacy	4	22%	4	969	176	969
Numeracy	AEB Numeracy	5	26%	5	764	147	764
Personal and Social Education	Driving ambitions	2	33%	2			
	Getting Connected	1	13%	1			
	AEB World of Work	3	38%	3			
	AEB Life Skills	6	75%	6			
	AEB Health, Hygiene and Safety	3	38%	3			
	First Aid	3	38%	3			
	Vehicle Maintenance	2	25%	2			
	TOTAL	8	100%	19	647	52	272
Youth Achievement Award	Youth Achievement Award	10	59%	10	363	61	363
TOTAL		11	48%	41	3,972	910	1,066

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 23 young people at AEI 2, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 Destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Unemployment	5
College	4
Remain at AEI	4
Training	4
Not known	3
Supervision	1
Employment	1
Referred to LEA/PRU	1
TOTAL	23

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 23 young people registered at some point during the year, 13 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 2, 52 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of four young people are unknown.

Using the modelled on-going cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £3,361. The cost per desirable percent was £747 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 23 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrolees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year and committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	9	6	-3
Total number of offences, by these young people	19	66	47

Table 6 suggests a one-third reduction in the number of offenders but a 247 per cent increase in the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were nine different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Three out of the nine ‘baseline’ offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period, and while there were no ‘new’ offenders in the intervention period, five young people increased their number of offences. Of the 23 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 26 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was seven, and this ranged from two to nineteen.

There was also a change in the offending pattern. The major increases were in the number of Assaults (3 to 10); Criminal Damage (6 to 22); Road traffic/motoring crime (0 to 10); and Other crimes recorded (1 to 10). The numbers in brackets represent the number of offences recorded in the baseline and intervention years. An increase in Road traffic crime may be expected as young people near 17 and start to think about driving.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 3

Introduction

AEI 3 is funded through the LEA Standards Fund.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999–August 2001
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
ASDAN	Education
Careers	Careers Education
Certificate in Forestry	Vocational training
Food Hygiene Cert/First Aid Cert	Vocational training
OCR	Education
Sport/recreation	Leisure-based activities
Team enterprise	Work experience
Vocational training	Vocational training
Work experience	Work experience

Assumptions used for AEI 3 (in addition to general assumptions):

- Books are assumed to have been purchased equally over the whole time period.
- ICT has been removed as an intervention from the database and the costs apportioned equally to ASDAN and OCR.
- The intervention ‘Medieval Building Techniques’ is assumed to be part of the Certificate in Forestry intervention.
- The input costs associated with the REMIT test (1 young person) are unknown and therefore not included in this analysis.
- All costs associated with administration/liaison/managerial tasks have been apportioned equally over all of the interventions rather than being listed as separate interventions.
- The costs of the Food Hygiene Certificate and First Aid Certificate cannot be separated from each other in the input analysis.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using all costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £68,987. This has been apportioned over six categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Advertising is excluded as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input category, accounting for 76 per cent of the total resource use.

Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

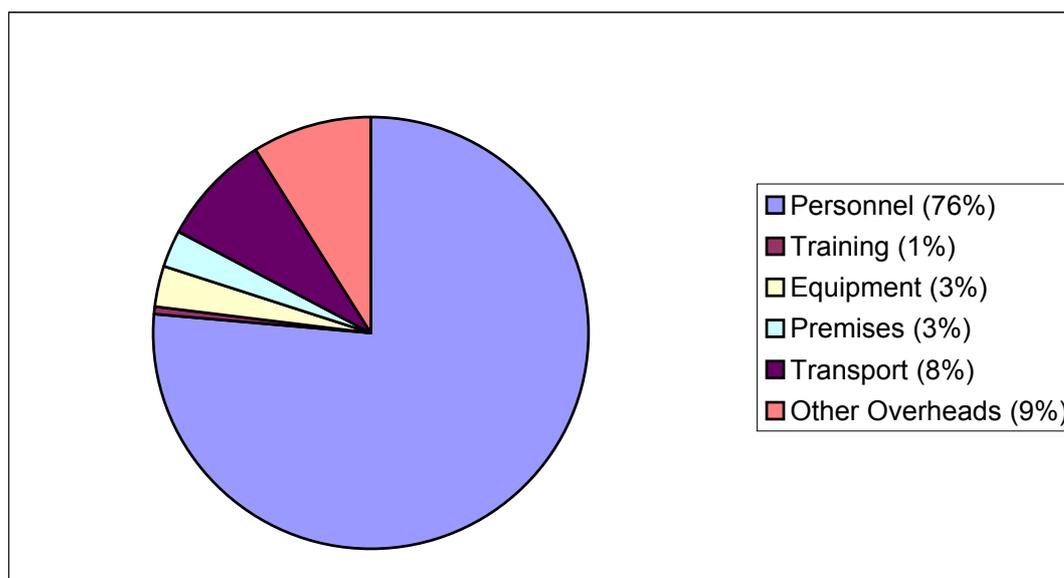


Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the nine interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Advertising has again been excluded from Table 1. The cost distribution of most interventions follows that shown in Figure 1 for the project as a whole. Three interventions are relatively Personnel-intensive: ASDAN, OCR and Team Enterprise. Two have a relatively low Personnel cost: Food Hygiene/First Aid and Work Experience. The Certificate in Forestry intervention has relatively high Premises and Other Overheads costs.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Other overheads	TOTAL
ASDAN	10,570	70	230	193	633	488	12,184
Careers	2,248	35	227	188	647	410	3,755
Certificate in Forestry	14,446	35	226	562	633	2,169	18,071
Food Hygiene Cert/ First Aid Cert	1,773	35	231	188	633	512	3,372
OCR	9,471	35	224	188	660	575	11,153
Sport/recreation	2,599	35	224	188	647	435	4,128
Team Enterprise	6,880	38	224	201	633	410	8,386
Vocational training	2,941	35	225	188	633	640	4,662
Work experience	1,784	35	224	188	635	410	3,276
TOTAL	52,712	353	2,035	2,084	5,754	6,049	68,987

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the ASDAN intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. Four interventions together account for 72 per cent of the total resource use: ASDAN, Certificate in Forestry, OCR and Team Enterprise.

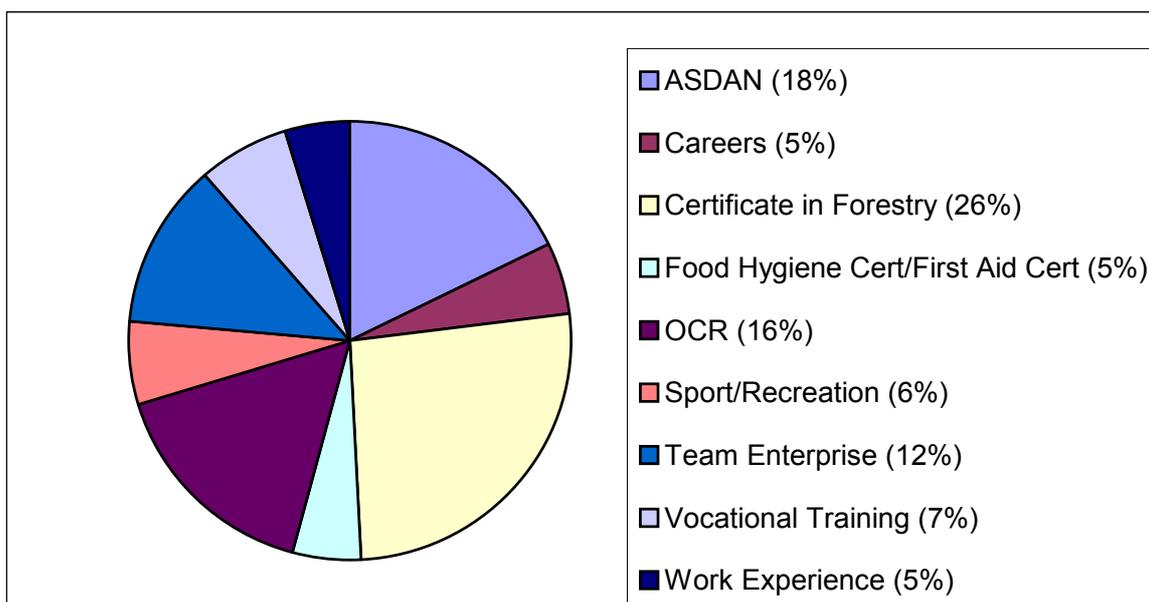
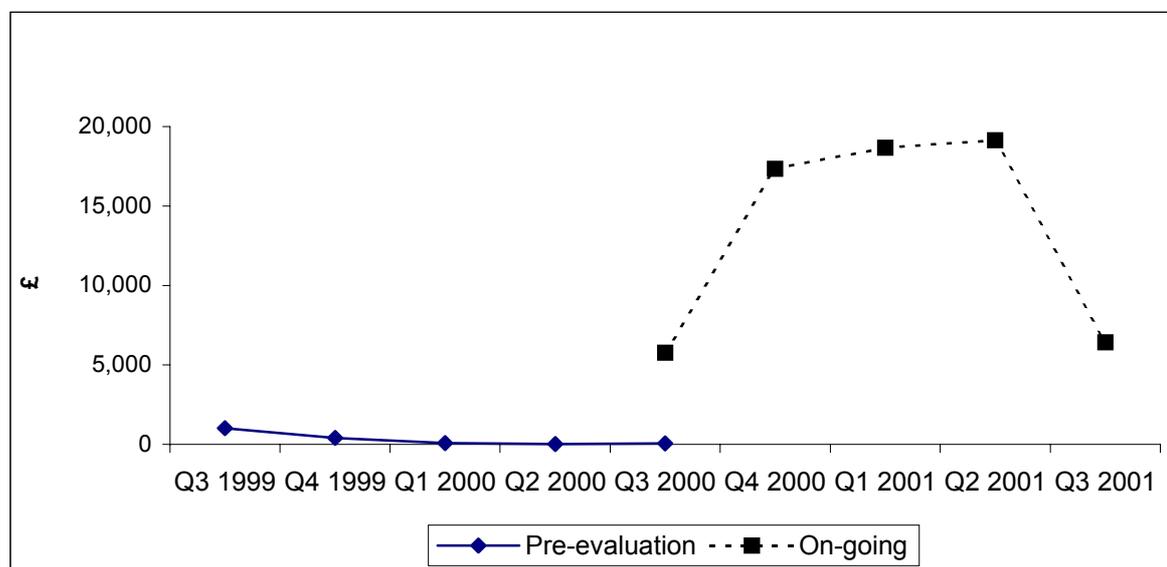


Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the nine quarters for which data have been allocated. The data have been 'corrected' in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs (September 1999 to August 2000) and on-going costs (September 2000 to July 2001). Pre-evaluation costs include Equipment costs only, although these account for just 2 per cent of the total expenditure. Costs

are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). For the three ‘full’ intervention quarters, the average quarterly cost for AEI 3 is around £18,500.

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter



Inputs by resource type

All of the equipment purchased for AEI 3 is capital equipment. Capital expenditure totalled £2,035, with most items (total value £1,325) being depreciated over ten years. The remaining £710 for computers and printers, is to be depreciated over five years. All capital equipment is assumed to have a zero re-sale value. All items of capital equipment are used equally across each intervention in the project.

Levered-in inputs

The ‘external’ REMIT test intervention has been excluded from this analysis, as noted in the assumptions at the beginning of this AEI report. In addition, AEI 3 benefited from a number of free training courses, and a bookcase and lounge suite. In a full opportunity cost assessment, these items would have to be costed and included in the economic analysis. This would also have to include Personnel costs for free training courses attended during the pre-evaluation year (i.e. opportunity costs in terms of personnel time). Given the amount of levered-in resources, it is unlikely that the total cost of the intervention at AEI 3 has been underestimated to a significant extent.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. The table shows the

results of two modelling processes. Column two show the total costs, including the pre-evaluation costs, and column three includes the on-going costs only (incurred in the period September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (less than 1 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going
Total (corrected quarters)	57,232	56,973
Total (uncorrected)	57,087	56,824
ASDAN	10,277	10,248
Careers	2,959	2,929
Certificate in Forestry	15,142	15,112
Food Hygiene Cert/First Aid Cert	2,707	2,677
OCR	9,178	9,149
Sport/recreation	3,365	3,335
Team Enterprise	6,964	6,935
Vocational training	3,529	3,499
Work experience	2,639	3,609

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £57,000, with very little difference between the ‘total’ and ‘on-going’ models. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs; or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: number of young people

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI’s roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 15 young people were enrolled at AEI 3. However, six young people left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 15 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 165 months of

education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 127 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 127 months of education is equivalent to 12 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 12 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
15 FTE	3,815	3,798
12 FTE	4,769	4,748
165 months	347	345
127 months	451	449

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £4,750 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £4,770 including these costs. At full capacity (i.e. 15 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £3,800 excluding pre-evaluation costs and £3,815 including these costs. In some respects the latter cost (full capacity) is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These results can be compared to the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,033 for Year 10 pupils and £2,223 for Year 11 pupils. At full capacity, the cost of educating a young person at AEI 3 appears to be just under twice the cost of doing so in mainstream education.

Nine out of the fifteen young people (60 per cent) who started at the AEI in September 2000 were retained for the full academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. careers education) and are not recorded against young people who would have received them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject (intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £435 for Team Enterprise to £1,511 for Certificate of Forestry. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative 'value' of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis. Overall, eleven young people (73 per cent) were awarded one or more certificates.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness - attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
ASDAN	Bronze	9		9			
	Bronze/Silver	8		8			
	TOTAL	9	69%	17	1,139	149	603
Certificate of Forestry	50% Certificate of Competency	4		4			
	Full Certificate of Competency	6		6			
	TOTAL	6	46%	10	2,519	329	1,511
Team Enterprise	Special Award	8		8			
	Area Finalist Award	8		8			
	TOTAL	8	67%	16	871	104	435
OCR	CLAIT 1	1		1			
	Learn Direct – Computing	1		1			
	OCR National Skills	5		5			
	TOTAL	6	67%	7	1,525	137	1,307
Vocational Training	Tractor Driving Stages 1 and 2	2		2			
	NVQ Level 1 in Hair	1		1			
	TOTAL	3	100%	3	1,166	35	1,166
Food Hygiene/First Aid	First Aid	2		2			
	Basic Food and Hygiene	1		1			
	TOTAL	3	75%	3	892	36	892
TOTAL		11	73%	56	5,179	780	1,017

* One young person passed the REMIT Test. As noted earlier, this intervention has been excluded from the analysis.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 15 young people at AEI 3, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Not known	4
College	4
Employment/self-employed	4
Other training	2
Remain at AEI	1
TOTAL	15

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 15 young people registered at some point during the year, 11 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 3, 73 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of four young people are unknown.

Using the modelled on-going cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £5,179. The cost per desirable percent was £780 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 15 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	7	8	1
Total number of offences, by these young people	22	52	30

Table 6 suggests a slight increase in the number of offenders and a 160 per cent increase in the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were ten different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Three out of the seven 'baseline' offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period. There were three 'new' offenders in the intervention period, and four young people increased their number of offences. Of the 15 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 53 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was 6.5, and this ranged from one to 21.

There was also a change in the offending pattern. The major increases were in the number of Criminal Damage crimes (8 to 15); Road traffic/motoring crime (0 to 9); and Arson recorded (0 to 6). The numbers in brackets represent the number of offences recorded in the baseline and intervention years. An increase in Road traffic crime may be expected as young people near 17 and start to think about driving.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 4

Introduction

AEI 4 is a voluntary organisation with charitable and company status. The LEA funds 15 places and provides two teachers. Other funding sources include trusts, the Youth Service, direct school payments and Education Business Partnerships.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	September 1999–August 2000
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Art/craft	Education
Careers Education	Careers Education
Cookery	Personal and Social Education
English	Education
Geography/history	Education
IT	Education
Leisure activities	Leisure based activities
Maths	Education
Personal and Social Education	Personal and Social Education
Science	Education
Supporting young people at college	College placements
Work experience	Work experience
Youth Award Scheme	Education

Assumptions used for AEI 4 (in addition to general assumptions):

- Personnel standard values have been used as local costs are not available.
- All costs of administration/liaison/managerial tasks have been apportioned across all of the interventions rather than entered as separate interventions.
- Advertising expenditure is deemed to have occurred in September of each year, rather than being spent pro-rata over the year.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using pre-evaluation and on-going costs incurred during the period September 1999 to July 2001 was £118,250. This has been apportioned over six input categories, as shown in Figure 1. The category Premises is excluded from the analysis for AEI 4 as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input for AEI 4, accounting for 82 per cent of the total costs.

Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

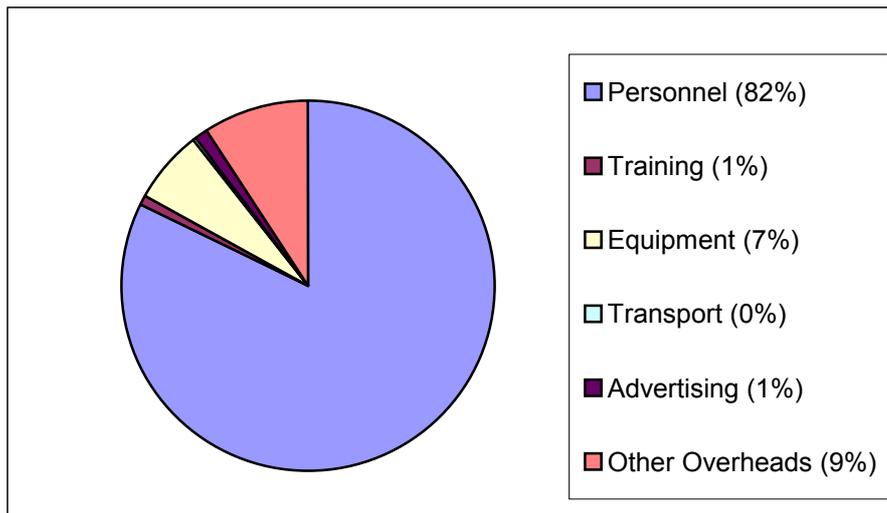


Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the thirteen interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again Premises has been excluded as an input category from Table 1. In general, the expenditure pattern for each intervention follows that for the project as a whole.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Transport	Advertising	Other overheads	TOTAL
Art/craft	3,753	140	556	4	128	724	5,305
Careers Education	3,602	0	551	4	118	717	4,992
Cookery	5,875	0	604	4	128	1,901	8,512
English	8,025	150	616	4	122	724	9,641
Geography/history	4,181	140	612	4	128	651	5,716
IT	3,422	140	556	4	128	714	4,964
Leisure activities	5,498	0	608	4	118	1,097	7,325
Maths	8,454	150	611	4	122	696	10,037
Personal and Social Education	14,397	0	616	4	118	717	15,852
Science	6,756	140	607	4	128	684	8,319
Supporting young people at college	13,874	0	552	4	122	684	15,236
Work experience	5,310	0	603	4	112	669	6,698
Youth Award Scheme	14,051	140	608	4	128	724	15,655
TOTAL	97,198	1,000	7,700	52	1,600	10,702	118,252

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across the thirteen interventions at AEI 4. The pie starts at the top with the Art/Craft intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention stands out as being particularly resource intensive. Three interventions each account for greater than 10 per cent of the total cost: Personal and Social Education, Supporting young people at College and Youth Award Scheme.

Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

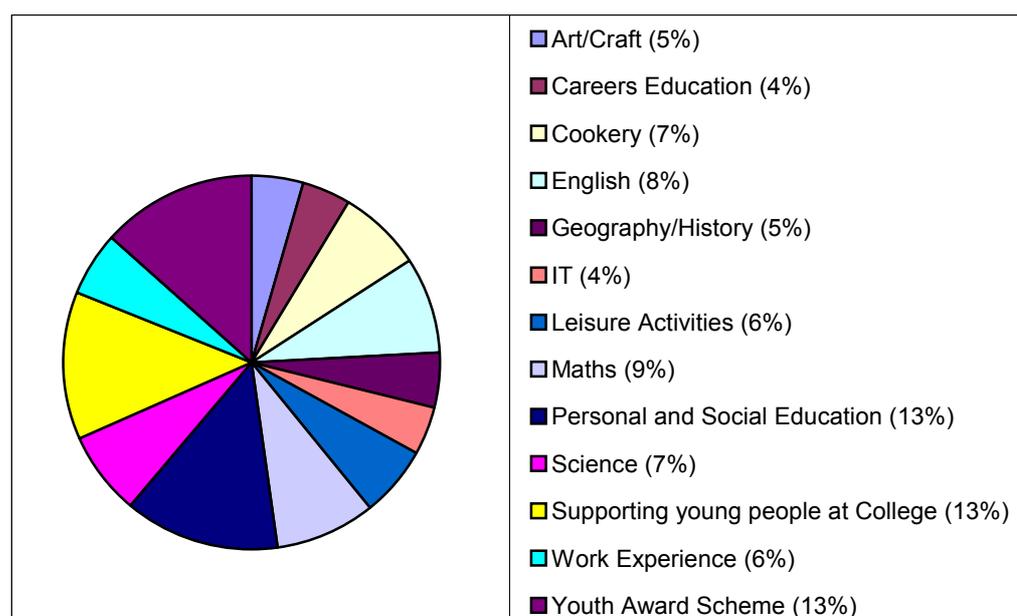
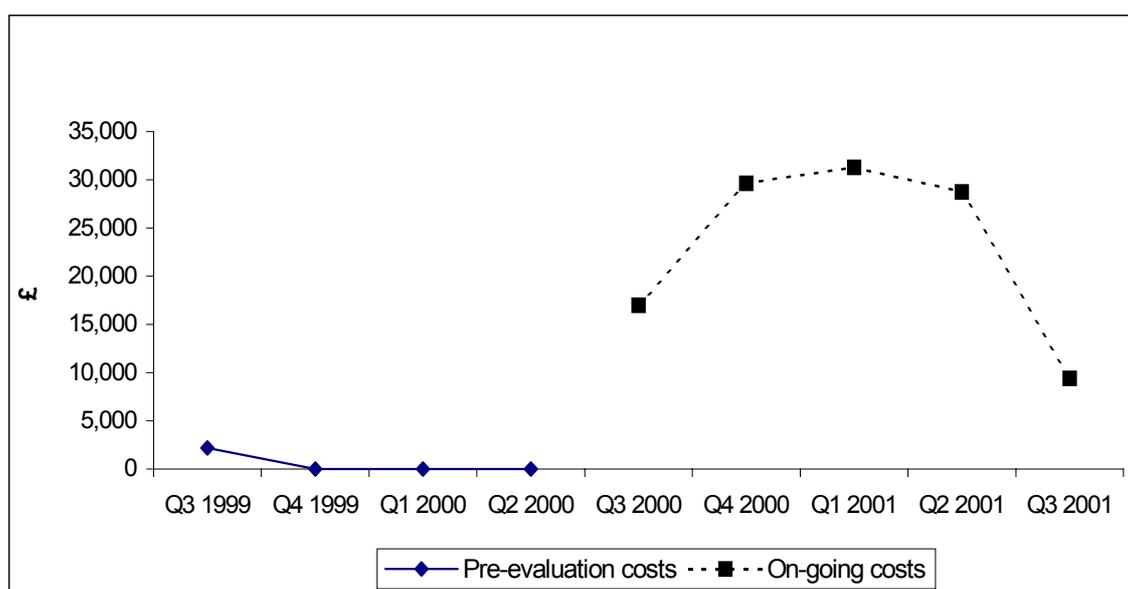


Figure 3 shows how inputs have been incorporated into the project over the nine quarters to which data have been collected. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs and on-going costs. Pre-evaluation costs are very low, accounting for just 2 per cent of the total expenditure. On-going costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was only undertaken in one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). Although some staff changes occurred, the typical quarterly on-going cost for AEI 4 appears to be about £30,000.

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter



Inputs by resource type

All four items of equipment used at AEI 4 are capital costs, with a total value of £7,700. This represents 7 per cent of the total resource use. All items of equipment are used equally across all thirteen interventions. Capital expenditure in the intervention year was £6,500, and this accounts for 6 per cent of the total expenditure during the intervention period. Both sets of computers are to be depreciated over five years; and the furniture and books are to be depreciated over ten years. All items are assumed to have zero re-sale value at the end of the amortisation period.

Levered-in inputs

Three separate inputs are included in the database at zero cost: two training courses and a laptop computer (acquired second hand). The costs of these inputs are therefore met by other sources and their value is unknown. Since this economic analysis is being undertaken from the perspective of the AEI, values have not been estimated for these inputs. However in a full opportunity cost assessment these values would have to be included: and consideration should also be made of the opportunity cost of staff time while undergoing training in the pre-evaluation period. These levered-in inputs

are likely to account for a trivial proportion of the total expenditure and hence the results of the economic analysis should not be biased.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report. The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. This shows the results of two modelling processes. The second column includes all costs associated with each intervention and the third only includes the costs incurred during the intervention period (September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is small (at about 8 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going
Total (corrected quarters)	95,276	94,541
Total (uncorrected)	102,897	102,378
Art/craft	11,998	11,909
Careers Education	3,904	3,814
Cookery	6,846	6,757
English	7,783	7,694
Geography/history	4,454	4,364
IT	3,860	3,770
Leisure activities	5,800	5,711
Maths	8,093	8,003
Personal and Social Education	13,032	12,943
Science	6,662	6,575
Supporting young people at college	12,544	12,454
Work experience	5,283	5,193
Youth Award Scheme	12,867	12,778

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £95,000 including the pre-evaluation costs, and £94,000 without the pre-evaluation costs. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs, or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: young person numbers

The first and simplest measure of effectiveness using young person numbers is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 33 young people were enrolled at the AEI. However, ten of these young people were enrolled after January 2001, and 12 young people left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 (or January 2001) up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 33 young people remained for 11 months (the whole year), the AEI would have provided 363 young person months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 255 months of education were provided. This is equivalent to 23 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 23 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months), using both total and on-going costs (both modelled to midpoint January to March 1999 values).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
33 FTE	2,887	2,865
23 FTE	4,142	4,110
363 Months	262	260
255 Months	374	371

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £4,100. At full capacity (i.e. 33 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at around £2,900. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year (with the former cost being more appropriate for leavers re-integrated into mainstream education – three out of the fourteen leavers). Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

Compared to the Age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) figure for the LEA, it costs 18 per cent more to resource a place at AEI 4. The AWPU is £2,427 and this has been compared to the average cost assuming full enrolment.

Of the 23 young people who enrolled at the AEI in September 2000, 13 (57 per cent) were retained for the full academic year.

There is insufficient detail in the education templates to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention and so this analysis is not attempted here.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates, as shown below in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number of young people awarded a certificate. Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these two outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project.

Data on attainment for AEI 4 is only available for the first term, and hence the college and other achievements of young people cannot be recorded here. The majority of certificates would have been awarded in the summer term, following college exams. The college have not been able to make these data available to the project. This lack of data means that the number of attainment certificates will be under reported here. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

Almost half of the young people at AEI 4 achieved an ASDAN Youth Award, with 14 Bronze awards and two silvers. The average cost per certificate was £799, using the modelled, on-going cost of the Youth Awards intervention.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
Youth Award Scheme	ASDAN Youth Awards	16	N/A	16	799	N/A	799
TOTAL		16	48%	16	5,909	1,970	5,909

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the first destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 33 young people at AEI 4, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Remain at AEI	13
Not known	7
College	6
Pregnancy/child care	2
Reintegrated into school	2
Excluded	1
Employment	1
Training	1
TOTAL	33

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 33 young people in September 2000, 23 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 4, 70 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of seven young people are unknown.

Using the on-going modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £4,110. The cost per desirable percent was £1,351 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 33 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	6	3	-3
Total number of offences, by these young people	16	5	-11

Table 6 suggests that the number of offenders halved and the number of offences fell by almost 70 per cent between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were nine different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. All of the six 'baseline' offenders no crime in the intervention period. There were three 'new' offenders in the intervention period. Of the 33 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 9 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was 1.67, and this ranged from one to three.

There was also a change in the offending pattern, in terms of the types of crimes recorded. The major change was a reduction in the number of Thefts recorded, from 11 to two.

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 5

Introduction

AEI 5 is a 'brokering' AEI, funded by the LEA and Standards Fund.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	None
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Careers	Careers Education
College placements	College placements
Duke of Edinburgh	Personal and Social Education
Fairbridge	Personal and Social Education
Home tuition	Education
Life Skills Group	Personal and Social Education
Metropolitan training	Vocational training
Outdoor learning	Leisure based activities
Princes Trust	Work in the community
Pupil Support Team	Education
Rathbone	Work experience

Assumptions used for AEI 5 (in addition to general assumptions):

- All costs associated with administration/liaison/managerial tasks, arranging key stage 4 packages and dealing with referrals have been apportioned across all of the interventions rather than being entered as separate interventions.
- On the Equipment templates there are eight items of pre-existing equipment, which have no cost attached and no date of purchase. These items have had to be excluded from the analysis.
- The Training template specifies that courses have been purchased since April 2000. As the information is not date specific, it has been assumed that all courses occurred in September 2000.
- No dates were provided on the Equipment templates, only that purchases were made in the 2000/01 academic year. The equipment expenditure has therefore been apportioned equally over the academic year.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the intervention year, using all costs incurred during the period September 2000 to July 2001 was £230,800. This has been apportioned over six categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Premises is excluded from the analysis as no costs were incurred. Figure 1 shows that Other Overheads were the primary inputs, accounting for 79 per cent of the total resource use. The main components of the Other Overheads costs (in descending order of resource use) were the Pupil Support Team, College Places, Fairbridge and Rathbone.

Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

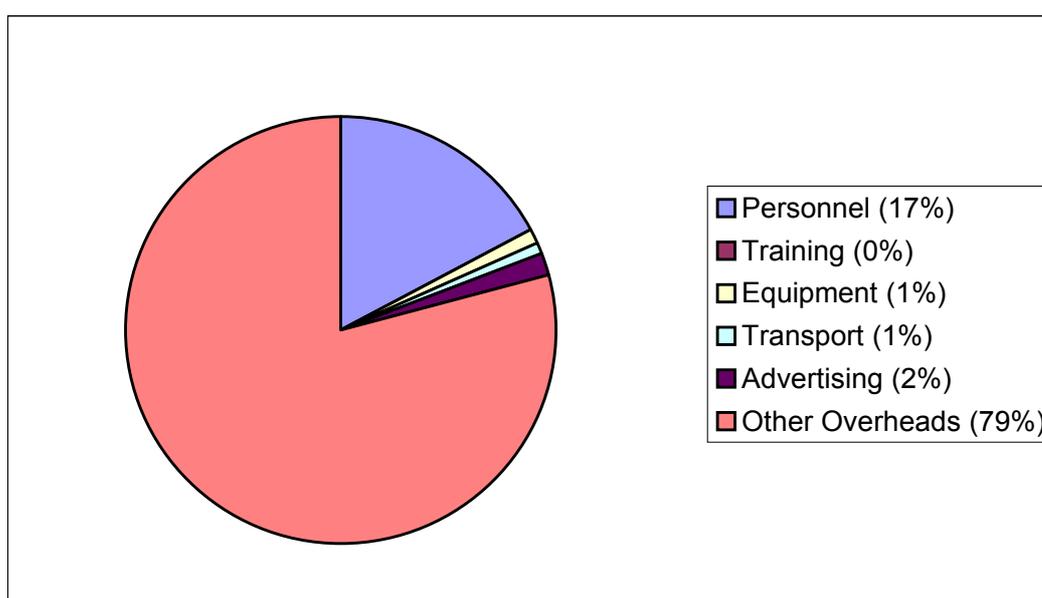


Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the eleven interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again, Premises has been excluded as an input category from Table 1. The four interventions listed above have a high proportion of Other Overheads compared to other interventions. Training, Equipment, Transport and Advertising are split equally between all eleven interventions.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

	Personnel	Training	Equipment	Transport	Advertising	Other Overheads	TOTAL
Careers	3,354	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,554
College placements	3,456	47	185	196	374	49,098	53,356
Duke of Edinburgh	3,456	47	185	196	374	9,398	13,656
Fairbridge	3,456	47	185	196	374	37,398	41,656
Home tuition	3,456	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,656
Life Skills Group	4,850	47	185	196	374	1,398	7,050
Metropolitan Training	3,651	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,851
Outdoor Learning	3,456	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,656
Princes Trust	3,456	47	185	196	374	1,398	5,656
Pupil Support Team	3,354	47	185	196	374	51,650	55,806
Rathbone	3,548	47	185	196	374	26,553	30,903
TOTAL	39,493	517	2,035	2,156	4,114	182,485	230,800

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across projects. The pie starts at the top with the Careers intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. Again four interventions are noteworthy for their high cost: College Placements, Fairbridge, Pupil Support Team and Rathbone. Apart from the Duke of Edinburgh intervention, the remaining interventions each account for around 2-3 per cent of the total resource use.

Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

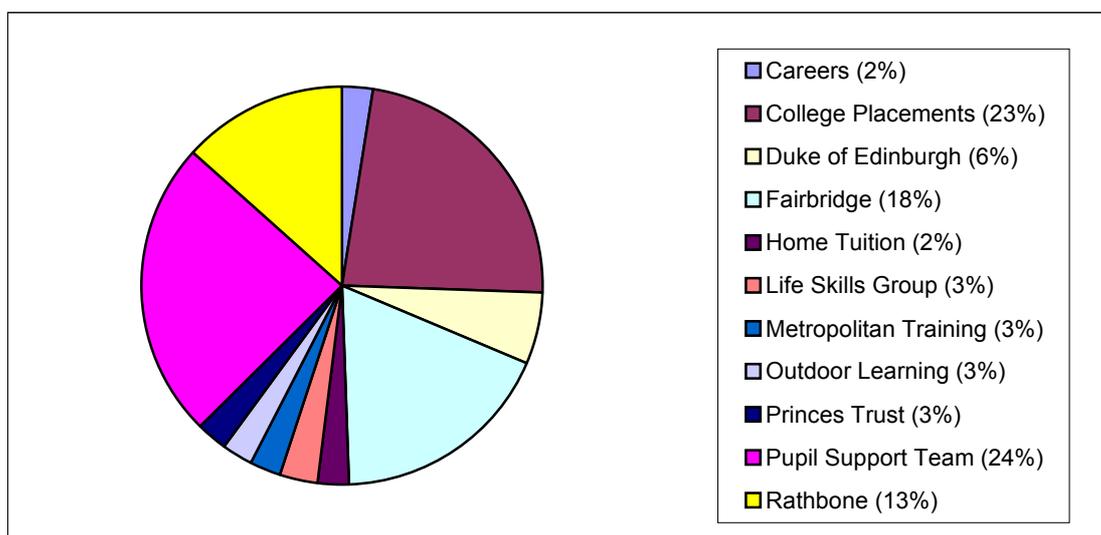
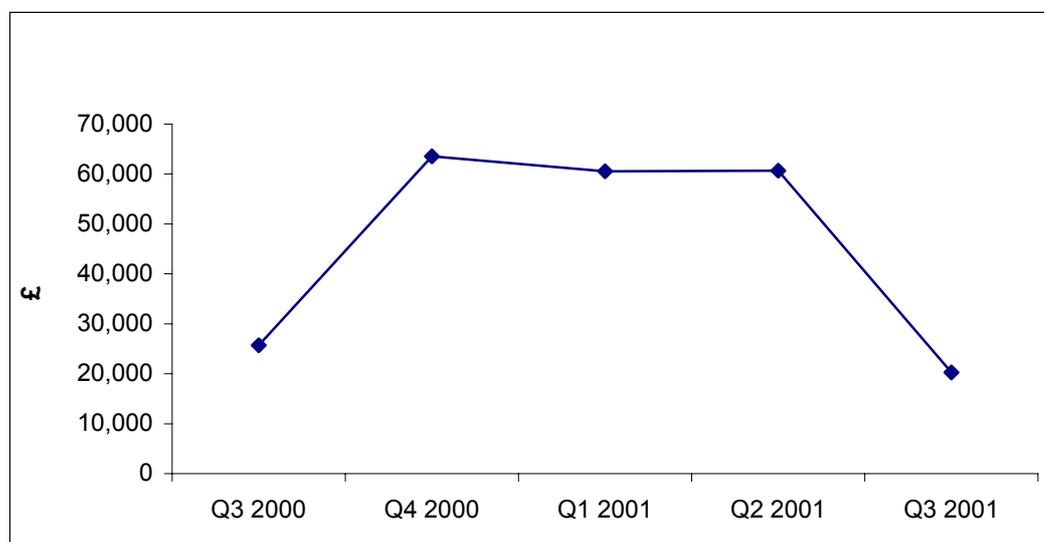


Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the five quarters for which data are available. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). There is only one line, for total costs, as no information on pre-evaluation costs was provided by the AEI. Costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and

July for 2001). For the three full intervention quarters, running costs appear to be around £61,000 per quarter.

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter



Inputs by resource type

All items of capital equipment used at AEI 4 are capital costs, with a total value of £2,050. This represents just 1 per cent of the total resource use at the AEI. Approximately half (the value) of the capital equipment has an expected life of five years (video camera, digital camera and playstation) and the remainder an expected life of ten years (music equipment and clothing). All items are assumed to have a zero re-sale value at the end of their useful life. All items of equipment are used equally across the eleven interventions.

Levered-in inputs

Apart from the Equipment noted at the beginning of this AEI report, two inputs are included in the database at zero cost: a staff training intervention and 'Springboard' (the Princes Trust intervention). Both were free to the AEI and the opportunity costs of these interventions is unknown. Given that the economic analysis is being undertaken from the perspective of the AEI, these costs are excluded. This omission may underestimate the costs of the intervention, if the 'Springboard' resource is comparable to similar inputs for Rathbone, Young person Support Group, Fairbridge and College Placements.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January-March 1999 prices. Table

2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. Only total/on-going costs are shown as no data is available on pre-evaluation costs incurred prior to September 2000 (if any were incurred).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data for analysis, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (less than 1 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost. Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £194,000.

Table 2 Modelled input costs, by intervention

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total/on-going
Total (corrected quarters)	194,161
Total (uncorrected)	194,293
Careers	4,579
College placements	45,090
Duke of Edinburgh	11,445
Fairbridge	35,174
Home tuition	4,665
Life Skills Group	5,871
Metropolitan Training	4,839
Outdoor Learning	4,665
Princes Trust	4,665
Pupil Support Team	47,167
Rathbone	26,120

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: young person numbers

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 39 young people were enrolled at AEI 1. However, seven young people were enrolled in January or February 2001 and one left before the end of the academic year. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 (or January/February 2001) up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 39 young people remained for 11 months (the whole academic year), the AEI would have provided 429 months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people joined or left the AEI, 394 months of education were provided. Year 11 leavers are assumed to stay for the full year, even though they left in June, rather than July, 2001. The 394 months of education is equivalent to 36 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 36 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of

young person months). These, and subsequent, calculations of cost-effectiveness (using total costs) use modelled costs based on the corrected quarterly figures.

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £
	Total costs
39 FTE	4,978
36 FTE	5,396
429 months	453
394 months	493

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person at the AEI is around £5,400. At full capacity (i.e. 39 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £5,000. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year. Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures could be compared with the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,136 for Year 10 pupils and £2,782 for Year 11 pupils. Hence it appears to be around twice as expensive to educate a young person at AEI 5 compared to the cost of doing so in mainstream education.

Of the 32 young people who were enrolled at the AEI in September 2000, 31 (97 per cent) were retained for the full academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI joiners/leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. careers education) and are not recorded against young people who would have received them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject (intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going

modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

The average cost per certificate ranges from £5,241 for the Pupil Support Team to £9,810 for College Placements. However this comparison fails to take into consideration the relative 'value' of different certificates to the young people. Outcomes in terms of attainment certificates are not weighted in this analysis: it may be the case that the certificates obtained at college are of more use to the young people than other certificates, and hence their higher average cost is justified. In total, nine young people (23 per cent) were awarded at least one attainment certificate.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	No. young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
College Placements	GCSE	2		4			
	NVQ Level 1 (Hair and Beauty)	1		1			
	TOTAL	3	16%	5	16,350	2,818	9,810
Duke of Edinburgh Pupil Support Team	Bronze Award	2	25%	2	5,723	458	5,723
	OCR CLAIT	4		4			
	GCSE	1		1			
	AQA (Literacy/Numeracy)	2		2			
	Cert. of Achievement Level 3 (English/Maths/IT)	2		2			
	TOTAL	4	31%	9	11,792	1,522	5,241
TOTAL		9	23%	16	21,573	8,442	12,135

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 39 young people at AEI 6, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Remain at AEI	14
Not known	9
Employment	7
College	4
Training	4
Custody	1
TOTAL	39

While it is not possible to ‘rank’ destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between ‘desirable’ and ‘undesirable’ destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 39 young people registered at some point during the year, 29 went on to ‘desirable’ destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the ‘success rate’ in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 5, 74 per cent of young people left for a ‘desirable’ first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of nine young people are unknown.

Using the modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £6,695. The cost per desirable percent was £2,624 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 39 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a ‘baseline’ offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the ‘intervention’ offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	15	14	-1
Total number of offences, by these young people	105	101	-4

Table 6 suggests a slight fall in the number of offenders and the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were 22 different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Eleven out of the fifteen 'baseline' offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period. There were seven 'new' offenders in the intervention period, and three young people increased their number of offences. Of the 39 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 36 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was seven, and this ranged from one to 33.

There was also a change in the offending pattern, in terms of the types of crimes recorded. The major increase was in the number of Thefts recorded, from 8 to 16. There was a reduction in the number of Deception/Fraud crimes (from 6 to 0) and Other crimes recorded (from 21 to 13).

AEI cost-effectiveness analysis

Individual AEI report: AEI 6

Introduction

AEI 6 is funded by the LEA Behaviour Support Service.

Timing

Intervention year:	September 2000–July 2001
Pre-evaluation costs data:	April 2000–August 2000
On-going costs data:	September 2000–July 2001
Outcomes data (crime):	September 1999–August 2001

Interventions

Local intervention	National intervention
Art/craft	Education
Careers Education	Careers Education
Cookery	Education
Counselling	Counselling
Electronics/science	Education
English	Education
ICT	Education
Maths	Education
Music	Education
Outdoor education	Leisure-based activities
Personal and Social Education	Personal and Social Education
Work experience	Work experience

Assumptions used for AEI 6 (in addition to general assumptions):

- No input records were provided for APL Training, Keylink, and Fairbridge, and hence these interventions are not included in this evaluation. These were externally provided activities and such AEI staff did not provide any input to them. APL Training has been recorded at zero cost as the costs are met by a sponsor.
- Administration, liaison and management costs have been apportioned (equally) across all of the interventions.
- No training costs are included as insufficient detail on training inputs was provided in the templates. All training costs are met by the LEA.
- The recruitment costs of two teaching assistants and one teacher have not been included as insufficient detail was included on the Advertising template.

- The computer system (costing £20,600) was purchased in March 1999 but is recorded here as purchased in quarter 2 2000 (in order that the cost be included in the analysis). This cost is included in the crude costs analysis as being purchased in quarter 2 2000, but is recorded as March 1999 in the modelling process. The depreciation costs in all subsequent quarters (following March 1999) are included in the total costs model. For the on-going costs model, only depreciation costs incurred in the period September 2000 to July 2001 are included (but such costs include equipment purchased prior to September 2000). This applies to all equipment costs.
- Other overheads incurred in the quarter July-September 2000 are split 2/3 pre-evaluation and 1/3 on-going in the model for on-going costs. All other expenditure in this quarter commenced in September and is therefore on-going.
- No information on college placements (for eight young people) has been provided and therefore the total costs of the project are likely to be underestimated.
- Advertising costs (for recruitment) are excluded as these are unknown and met externally by the LEA. These costs would have been part of the pre-evaluation costs.

Crude input costs

The total crude cost of the project, using pre-evaluation and on-going costs incurred in the period April 2000 to July 2001 was £183,612. This has been apportioned over five categories of input, as shown in Figure 1. Training and Advertising are excluded from the analysis for AEI 6 as no costs were incurred to the AEI. Figure 1 shows that Personnel is the primary input for AEI 6, accounting for 72 per cent of the total costs.

Figure 1 Crude input costs, by type

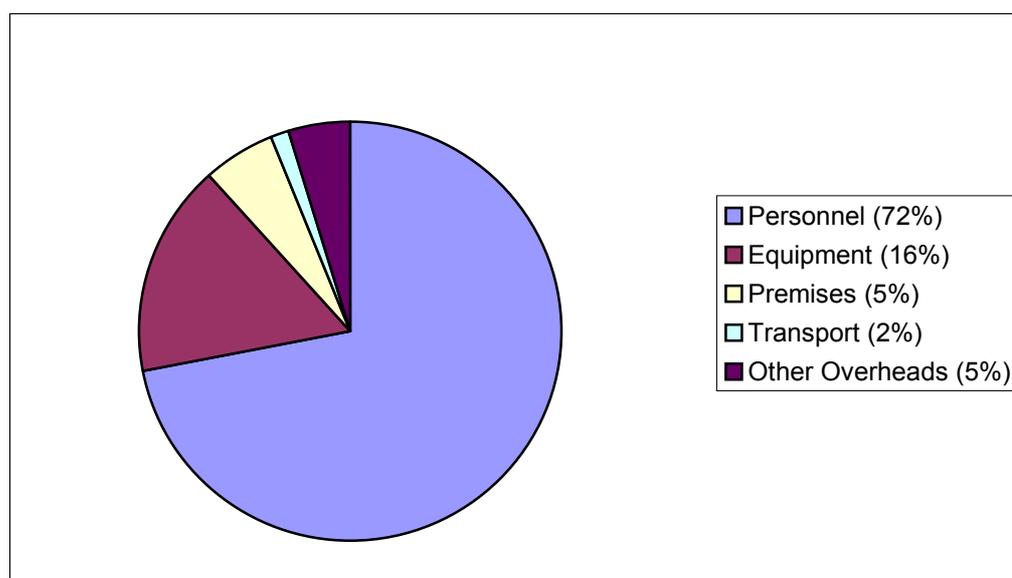


Table 1 shows a similar breakdown, in tabular format, for each of the twelve interventions to which costs have been apportioned. Again, Training and Advertising have been excluded as input categories from Table 1. Most interventions follow a similar distribution of costs to that shown in Figure 1. One exception is the ICT intervention, with 20 per cent of the resource use on equipment.

Table 1 Crude input costs, by type and intervention

£	Personnel	Equipment	Premises	Transport	Other	Total
Art/craft	19,210	2,135	795	165	665	22,970
Careers Education	7,056	2,355	795	165	1,174	11,545
Cookery	11,380	2,183	895	185	710	15,353
Counselling	12,358	2,355	795	165	704	16,377
Electronics/science	13,659	2,183	895	185	699	17,621
English	10,811	2,710	795	165	665	15,146
ICT	16,119	4,377	795	165	665	22,121
Maths	13,568	2,710	795	165	665	17,903
Music	4,387	2,135	895	165	665	8,247
Outdoor education	11,432	2,183	795	792	735	15,937
Personal and Social Education	6,993	2,355	795	165	679	10,987
Work experience	5,174	2,402	895	185	749	9,405
TOTAL	132,147	30,083	9,940	2,667	8,775	183,612

Figure 2 shows how the total resource use has been allocated across interventions. The pie starts at the top with the Art/Craft intervention and runs clockwise down the list of interventions. No one intervention stands out from Figure 3 as being particularly resource intensive. Two interventions account for over 10 per cent of the total resource use: Art/Craft and ICT.

Figure 2 Crude input costs, by intervention

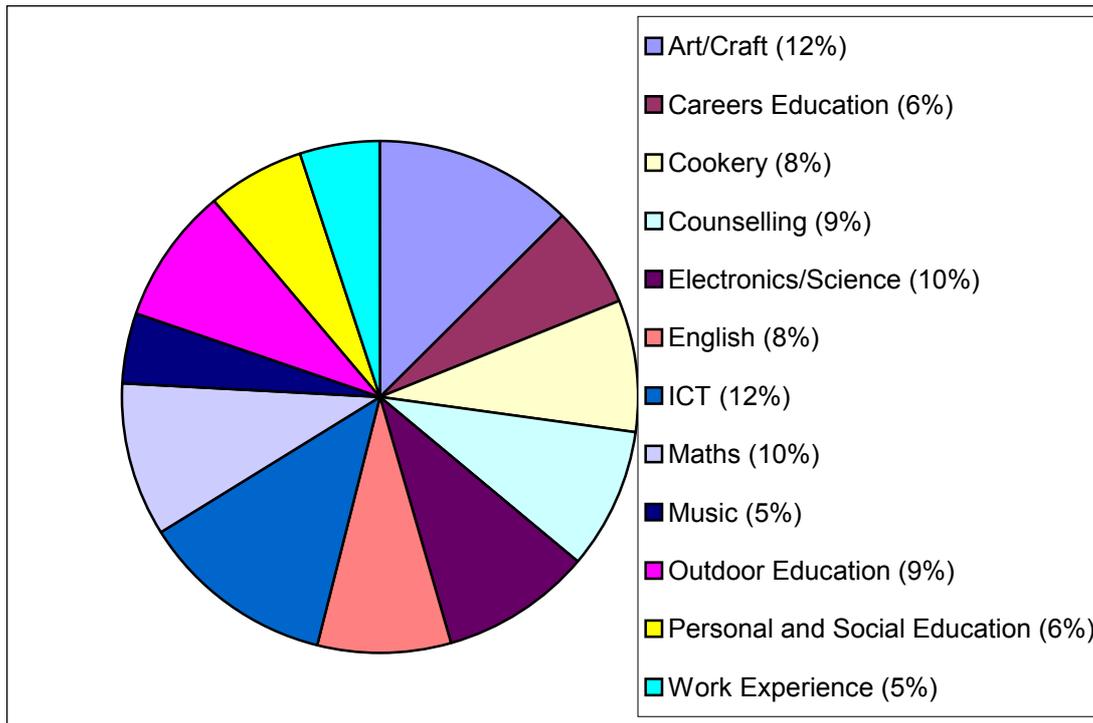
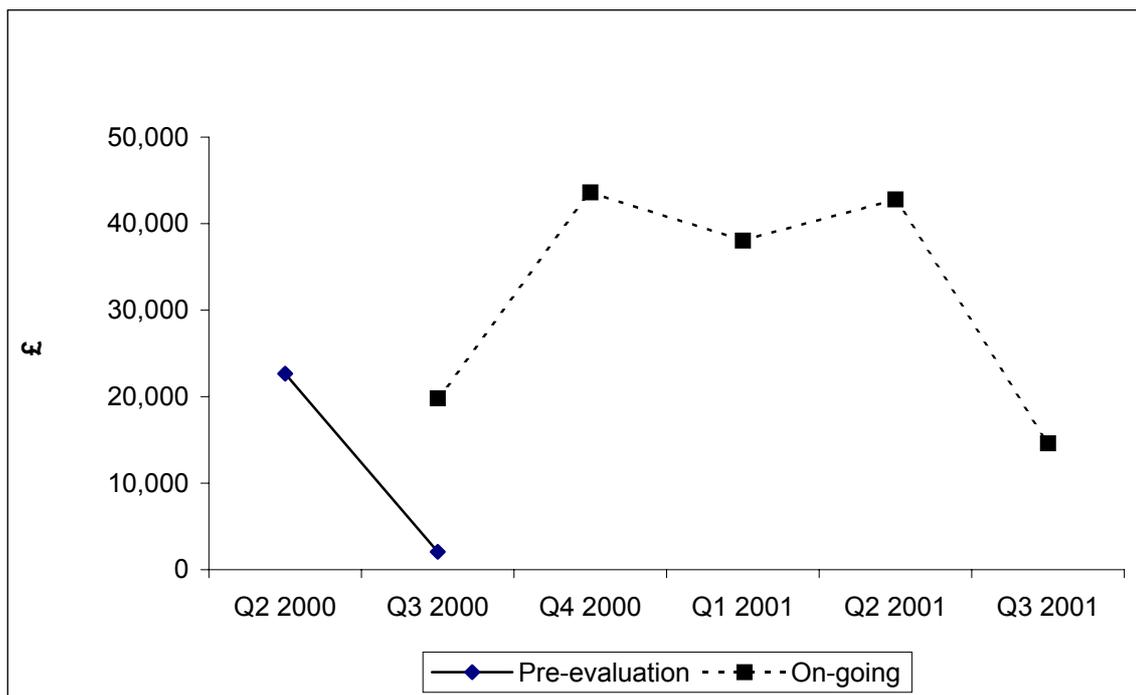


Figure 3 shows how inputs have been used over the six quarters for which data are available. The data have been ‘corrected’ in this analysis to adjust for the quarterly allocation problem identified in the accompanying notes to this report. The graph splits costs into pre-evaluation costs and on-going costs. On-going costs are low in quarter 3 (for both 2000 and 2001) as the intervention was undertaken in only one of these months (September for 2000 and July for 2001). For the three full intervention quarters, on-going costs appear to be around £40,000 per quarter. Pre-evaluation costs include the purchase of a large computer system in March 1999 (but recorded and analysed as purchased in quarter 2 2000).

Figure 3 Total costs, by quarter



Inputs by resource type

All items of equipment used at AEI 6 are capital costs, with a total value of £30,000. This represents 16 per cent of the total resource use. Looking only at capital purchases in the intervention year, the capital expenditure of £10,000 represents 6 per cent of the resource use in the ‘on-going’ period. All items of capital equipment are to be depreciated over a five year period (with no re-sale value). Most items of capital equipment are used equally in all the interventions. Exceptions are curriculum materials for Maths, English and ICT, and the purchase of computers and warranties which are used exclusively for the ICT intervention.

Levered-in inputs

In addition to the college placements and training inputs noted in the assumptions, two inputs are included in the database at zero cost: Keylink (for the Music intervention) and APL Training (split equally across all interventions). Both inputs are sponsored and hence the costs are met externally to the AEI. The value of the Keylink input is unknown, although it is possible to estimate the value of the APL Training input at £2,250. Two young people attended the APL training from September-December 2000. The cost-effectiveness analysis has been undertaken using the perspective of the AEI, and hence this cost has not been included. However in a full opportunity cost assessment, this cost would be included. Given that the value of the APL Training accounts for only 1 per cent of the total cost of the intervention, the omission of this value will not have a significant effect on the cost-effectiveness or rate of return calculations.

Modelled input costs

The crude input costs have been modelled to convert these costs to a common price base (GDP deflated) and point in time (discounted). The modelling process is fully described in the accompanying notes to this report (see Appendix 7.2). The modelled costs are shown in net present values at Midpoint January–March 1999 prices. Table 2 provides a summary of the modelled costs, by intervention. This shows the results of two modelling processes. The second column includes all costs associated with each intervention and the third only includes the costs incurred during the intervention period (September 2000 to July 2001).

The total costs have also been modelled in two ways. The first corrects the data for the quarterly allocation problem, and the second uses the data as set out in the reports calculated from the database. Costs for each intervention have been modelled using the second approach: correction for actual quarterly spending was not undertaken due to the delays in obtaining the data, and because the difference in the two approaches for the total costs is very small (at around 2 per cent). Due to the modelling process and rounding, the sum of the modelled costs for each intervention does not exactly match the total modelled cost.

Table 2 **Modelled input costs, by intervention**

£ Midpoint January–March 1999	Total	On-going only
Total (corrected quarters)	142,779	132,164
Total (uncorrected)	142,465	135,133
Art/craft	18,660	17,824
Careers Education	8,920	7,946
Cookery	12,169	11,352
Counselling	12,941	12,025
Electronics/science	14,058	13,207
English	11,614	10,760
ICT	16,279	15,372
Maths	14,776	13,922
Music	6,147	5,311
Outdoor education	12,618	11,759
Personal and Social Education	8,375	7,463
Work experience	7,042	6,106

Table 2 suggests that the total modelled cost of the intervention is about £142,000 including the pre-evaluation costs, and £132,000 without the pre-evaluation costs. The next stage in the analysis requires effectiveness data to be incorporated into the analysis. The cost-effectiveness analysis uses either both the total modelled costs and the on-going modelled costs or (where appropriate) the on-going costs only: the resulting range in cost-effectiveness is a simple form of sensitivity analysis. For analysis using total costs, the corrected values are used.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: number of young people

The first and simplest measure of cost-effectiveness using the number of young people is to compare total costs with the AEI's roll. In the academic year September 2000 to July 2001, 30 young people were enrolled at the AEI. However, 13 young people left before the end of the academic year and a further 12 joined after September 2000. Hence a more accurate measure of per-young person costs may be in terms of total young person months at the AEI. A young person is deemed to be registered at the AEI from September 2000 up to (and including) the month in which they left. Had all 30 young people remained for 11 months (the whole year), the AEI would have provided 330 young person months of education. Adjusting for the months in which young people left the AEI, 226 months of education were provided. This is equivalent to 21 young people attending for the full year (i.e. 21 Full Time Equivalents, or FTEs).

Cost-effectiveness in terms of total young person numbers is shown in Table 3. Cost-effectiveness is measured in terms of cost per young person (either FTE or number of young person months), using both total and on-going costs (both modelled to midpoint January to March 1999 values).

Table 3 Cost-effectiveness – total young person numbers

	Cost-effectiveness, £	
	Total costs	On-going costs
30 FTE	4,759	4,405
21 FTE	6,799	6,294
330 months	433	400
226 months	632	585

The results in Table 3 suggest that the cost per young person (adjusted for leavers) at the AEI is between £6,300 and £6,800, depending on whether pre-evaluation costs are included. At full capacity (i.e. 30 young people attending for the full year), the cost would be lower, at £4,400 to £4,750. In some respects the latter cost is the most appropriate, particularly for the young people who had no other educational input during the year (with the former cost being more appropriate for leavers re-integrated into mainstream education – about five of the 13). Also, many costs are fixed costs and would have been incurred whatever the number of young people. Given the nature of the data, it is not possible to undertake an analysis splitting the costs into fixed and variable costs.

These figures could be compared with the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) allocations for the LEA of £2,085 for Year 10 pupils and £2,801 for Year 11 pupils. Hence it appears to be around twice as expensive to educate a young person at the AEI, compared to the costs of doing so in mainstream education.

Of the seventeen young people who started at the AEI in September 2000, nine (53 per cent) were retained for the full academic year.

While information on young person timetables is available, it is not possible to calculate a per-young person cost for each intervention, as young person numbers would have to be adjusted to reflect timetable changes during the year (and also AEI leavers). Also, some interventions are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. counselling) and are not recorded against young people who would have received them. Furthermore, some young people appear to have undertaken interventions not included in the costs analysis. Given these problems and the very limited time available for analysis, priority has been accorded to other measures of cost-effectiveness.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: attainment

One outcome measure for the young people at the AEI is their academic achievement in terms of certificated attainment. A number of young people were awarded certificates in different subjects, as shown below in Table 4. The table shows the number of certificates awarded, and the number and percentage of young people awarded a certificate, out of all the young people undertaking at least one session of the subject (intervention). Cost-effectiveness is calculated by intervention (where possible) in terms of these three outcomes. The intervention-specific rows use the on-going modelled intervention cost, while the final row of totals uses the on-going modelled cost of the project. It is essential to note that certification is only one outcome and that the cost-effectiveness calculations allow comparison between interventions and projects, but should not be used alone to judge the cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

With the exception of the Personal and Social Education intervention, the cost per young person certificated appears to be just over £5,000 (in April 1999 prices, on-going costs only). The costs per percent of young people taking the subject vary significantly due to the low class sizes for Music and Personal and Social Education. In addition, eight young people were awarded a total of 15 GNVQs and two were awarded a total of three GCSEs. However these were obtained through placements at a local college and this intervention is not included as being run by the AEI. Of non-college placed young people, four (18 per cent) were awarded at least one certificate.

Using the total cost of the intervention (modelled costs, corrected quarters, on-going costs only), the cost per certificate (of any type) is £4,894. Excluding the attainments of the college-placed young people, the cost per certificate is £14,685 and the cost per percent of young people certificated £7,342. However some certificates (e.g. GNVQ/GCSE) may be worth more than others: this figure is not weighted.

Table 4 Cost-effectiveness – attainment certificates

Intervention	Type of certificate	Number of young people awarded certificates	Percentage of young people in intervention	No. of certificates	Cost per young person certificated £	Cost per percent £	Cost per certificate £
English	Foundation Literacy	2	12%	2	5,380	897	5,380
ICT	Key Bytes Plus	3	19%	3	5,124	809	5,124
Music	Keylink Music	1	100%	2	5,311	53	2,656
Personal and Social Education	Foundation Lifeskills (Fairbridge)/PSE	2	100%	2	3,732	75	3,732
TOTAL		4	20%	9	33,041	6,608	14,685

NB. Attainments of young people at college are excluded from this table as the input data does not include any information on this intervention. These young people are excluded from the total percentage calculation.

Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness: destinations

An alternative outcome measure would be the first destinations or reason for leaving of those young people who left the AEI either during the intervention year or at the end of the year. Where students have an intermediate and a final (known) destination, final destinations are used. Table 5 lists the first destinations or reason for leaving of all 30 young people at AEI 6, at the earliest of the date they left the AEI or at the end of the 2000/01 academic year.

Table 5 First destinations/reason for leaving

First destination	Number of young people
Reintegrated into school	8
Training	6
College	3
Referred to LEA/PRU	3
Remain at AEI	3
Not known	3
Employment	2
Custody	1
Unemployment	1
TOTAL	30

While it is not possible to 'rank' destinations in terms of their desirability, it is possible to split the destinations in Table 5 between 'desirable' and 'undesirable' destinations. Desirable destinations are represented by shaded rows in the table. Of the 30 young people in September 2000, 22 went on to 'desirable' destinations, including reintegration, college or training and employment. One way of measuring the effectiveness of the AEI would be to calculate the 'success rate' in terms of desirable destinations. At AEI 6, 73 per cent of young people left for a 'desirable' first destination. This is a conservative estimate, as the destinations of four young people are unknown (including the young person who emigrated).

Using the on-going modelled cost (corrected quarters) for the AEI, the cost per desirable destination was £6,007. The cost per desirable percent was £1,810 (this figure will be used to make comparisons across AEIs).

Crime outcomes

Two years' worth of crime data have been obtained from the PNC for all 30 young people registered at the AEI during the 2000/01 academic year (the intervention year). The period September 1999 to August 2000 provides a 'baseline' offending pattern, with the period September 2000 to August 2001 used for the 'intervention' offending pattern. Several outcomes regarding offending behaviour are used here. These are summarised for AEI enrollees in the intervention period in Table 6. A young person is included in the figures if they were enrolled at the AEI in the intervention year AND committed a crime in the baseline OR intervention years.

Table 6 Offending behaviour

	1999/00	2000/01	Change
Number of young people offending	8	9	1
Total number of offences, by these young people	33	34	1

Table 6 suggests a slight increase in the number of offenders and the number of offences between the baseline and intervention years. In total, there were 13 different offenders, who committed one or more crimes in the baseline and/or intervention periods. Four out of the eight ‘baseline’ offenders committed less, or no crime in the intervention period. There were five ‘new’ offenders in the intervention period, and three young people increased their number of offences. Of the 30 young people registered in the intervention year, therefore, 30 per cent committed one or more offences. The average number of offences per person committed in the intervention year was four, and this ranged from one to nine.

There was also a change in the types of crime recorded. The major increases were in the number of Vehicle crimes (0 to 5); and Other crime recorded (1 to 7). The numbers in brackets represent the number of offences recorded in the baseline and intervention years. There was a reduction in the number of Criminal Damage crimes (10 to 2) and Disorderly Behaviour crimes recorded (8 to 3).

AEI Economic evaluation: accompanying notes

Introduction

This document provides a general introduction to the economic evaluation of the AEI projects, specifying aims, methods and general assumptions applied. Other issues pertaining to the economic evaluation process are raised and any concerns relating to the interpretation of the results are highlighted.

Aims of the economic evaluation

There are two key aims of the economic evaluation of the AEI projects. These are: to analyse the crude input costs of each provision and model these into constant prices; and to calculate and compare the cost-effectiveness of each project in terms of various educational and crime outcomes. It was also intended to provide a cost-benefit analysis of the projects in terms of the value of crime averted. However, due to the lack of robust data it has been agreed with the Home Office that this cannot be undertaken at the present time. Future work may result in a cost-benefit analysis being undertaken. Economic analysis of offending behaviour is undertaken on a per-person basis.

Method of analysis

Perspective: Due to the nature of the data available, the economic evaluations are undertaken from the perspective of the AEI. Some, but not all, levered-in inputs are included in the data, and most of these have not been valued at their opportunity cost. Levered-in inputs and their valuation are described in the reports for each AEI.

Interventions: Each intervention/curriculum area undertaken by the AEI is classified by the National Intervention Category deemed most appropriate. Sub-National Intervention Categories are not available for the AEI projects.

Input Data: The input data used in these evaluations are derived from the standard input templates completed by each AEI. The templates apportion costs using an ingredients approach (Levin and McEwan, 2001) across seven input categories: Personnel, Training, Equipment, Premises, Transport, Advertising and Other Overheads. Data has been entered into the Home Office Data Collection Tool on a per-intervention basis. Input data are available for all AEIs for the intervention (on-going) period (September 2000 to July 2001). Pre-evaluation costs data, for up to one academic year preceding the intervention year, are also available for five out of the six projects.

Outcomes Data: Young person-specific outcomes (numbers/persistence, educational attainments and destinations/reasons for leaving) have been identified using the educational templates completed by each AEI.

Crime Data: Police National Computer (PNC) data for each young person at all AEIs have been obtained for the academic years 1999/00 and 2000/01. This details the offending behaviour of each young person in terms of type and number of offences. Recorded crime data (as opposed to actual crime data) are used in this evaluation. The PNC dates a crime from the day it was committed, rather than the day it was recorded. Crime data are analysed at the level of the young person; rather than at AEI level.

Analysis of Crude Input Costs: The first stage in the economic analysis involves a basic analysis of the crude input data as identified in the Data Collection Tool. The analysis primarily apportions total costs by category, intervention and quarter of expenditure.

Modelling of Crude Input Costs: The crude input costs of each project and intervention are modelled to represent all costs in midpoint January-March 1999 prices. This process allows for inflation, impatience and the amortisation of capital costs. The modelling process is described in greater detail below. All subsequent analyses use modelled costs.

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis: Educational outcomes are compared to the modelled costs of each intervention to provide measures of cost-effectiveness in terms of: young person numbers, retention rates, educational attainments, desirable destinations and offending behaviour. Cost-effectiveness is measured by the average cost per outcome. Due to the delays in obtaining the input data, it has not been possible to undertake cost-effectiveness at a per-young person level. The use of different cost types (as described below) allows for a basic sensitivity analysis.

The AEIs in the economic evaluation

Six AEIs are included in this economic evaluation, all of whom returned input and outcomes data. The comparability between the six AEIs is unclear, in terms of local context and the type of young people enrolled. Hence comparisons between AEIs in terms of resource use and cost-effectiveness should be made with caution. This caveat also has implications for the replicability of the different provisions. No comments on replicability are offered in this analysis, as it is considered that the local context has a significant role in determining the costs and outcomes of each project. Also, the six projects are spread throughout England: costs may vary considerably between different areas.

General assumptions

The following assumptions have been used in the economic evaluations of all six AEIs. Assumptions specific to each AEI are included in the individual reports.

- All data are assumed to have been validated.
- Personnel “all values” costings have been used, as designated in the Data Collection Tool.

- Salary costs have been uplifted by 10 per cent to account for offices and other personnel-related inputs.
- It is not known whether National Insurance and pension costs are included.
- Quarters are designated on a calendar year basis (Q1 – January to March; Q2 – April to June; Q3 – July to September; Q4 October to December).
- Capital costs are written off over five, ten or fifteen years. The time period used reflects the maximum possible lifetime of the asset (not just the lifetime of the AEI project). All capital assets are assumed to have a zero re-sale value.
- Crime data (from the PNC) are assumed to be correct and inclusive.

Economic modelling

The costs of each project and intervention have been modelled to represent all costs in midpoint January to March 1999 prices. The model has been constructed on a quarterly basis, with the base quarter (quarter 0) being January to March 1999. All projects have data up to quarter 10 (July to September 2001), but start at various points (not always quarter 0). The aim of the model is to take i) inflation, ii) impatience and iii) amortisation of capital costs into account.

Inflation: Prices have been ‘deflated’ using a GDP deflator, adjusted from an annual value of 2.5 per cent. This allows prices to be shown as real, rather than nominal values.

Impatience: The second adjustment is to discount the value of flows occurring after March 1999 in order to take impatience into account (impatience reflects the fact that £100 today is more highly valued than £100 in a year’s time). The discount rate is a quarterly adaptation of an annual rate of 6 per cent.

Amortisation: The third adjustment allows gradual amortisation of capital costs over the lifetime of the asset. Assets are written off over 5, 10 or 15 years on a straight line basis, assuming a zero re-sale value. The lifetime used assumes that the asset will continue to be used in alternative projects after the AEI project evaluation period is completed. A straight line approach writes off an equal proportion of the cost of the asset every quarter. Amortisation begins in the quarter following acquisition. Each quarters’ amortisation cost is inflated to reflect the relevant price level by multiplying the quarterly cost by the ratio of the current GDP deflator to the GDP deflator in the quarter of acquisition. Amortisation costs, like revenue costs, are subject to the adjustments for inflation and impatience described above.

The costs calculated by the model reflect the amount of money, in midpoint January to March 1999 prices, that would be needed to run the project for the time period covered by the costs data. Where pre-evaluation data has been recorded, the modelling process has been undertaken twice. The first model uses the total cost of each intervention (and the project as a whole), including both pre-evaluation and on-going costs. The second model uses the on-going costs data only. This is because the time period for which pre-evaluation costs data is available varies between projects.

Also, pre-evaluation costs need to be attributed to provision in more than one year, and hence the on-going cost may be a more accurate representation of the annual cost of provision. The on-going model includes the quarterly amortisation costs of capital assets acquired in the pre-evaluation phase. One-third of the quarterly amortisation cost is included for quarter 3 2000 and quarter 3 2001 in the corrected model (see below), as the intervention was only undertaken for one out of the three months in these quarters.

Cost apportionment by quarter

Before the input analysis for the AEI projects was undertaken, it was noticed that the costs database is not entirely accurate in its method of apportioning costs. This is a particular problem for the AEI projects because they are based on school years, rather than calendar years. In this case, many inputs are brought into use in September. As a result of the quarter system used in the database (January being quarter one), September is the final month in the third quarter of any year and July the first month in the third quarter (of the next year).

The quarterly allocation problem is best illustrated using an example. If a member of staff was appointed in September and left at the end of December in the same year, having worked for four months, their salary costs should be apportioned as follows:

0.25 – Quarter 3 (September)

0.75 – Quarter 4 (October, November, December)

However the database does not recognise the need to apportion costs in this way, and makes the following apportionment:

0.5 – Quarter 3

0.5 – Quarter 4

If the existing method of apportionment was used in the analysis, it would mean that the per-quarter costs analysis would not be accurate. Hence the input data for the total AEI cost has been ‘corrected’ manually to adjust for this problem prior to the per-quarter costs analysis. Hence the per-quarter analysis is a more accurate representation of actual spending patterns. The per-intervention costs (pre-modelling) are not affected by this problem, neither is the breakdown of costs by input type.

The quarterly allocation problem also impacts on the modelled costs, as quarterly values are deflated and discounted. Hence the total costs of each project have been modelled using both the ‘corrected’ quarterly data and the uncorrected data. The difference in the modelled costs using these two approaches is very small (maximum 8 per cent of the modelled cost). Given this finding, and the lack of time for analysis, the per-quarter costs of each intervention have not been corrected prior to modelling.

Crime data – time periods

Data on each young persons' offending behaviour have been collected for two academic years. The baseline period is the academic year 1999/00 and the intervention period is the academic year 2000/01. Academic years run from September to the following August. There are three points to note regarding these time periods.

First, offenders may have been enrolled at the AEI during the baseline period. However, we might expect continued enrolment to have a cumulative effect on offending behaviour.

Second, the young people may have left the AEI before the end of the intervention year: their attendance at the AEI will not therefore have affected their offending behaviour for the entire year. The relationship between offenders and early leaving is explored in the summary of the projects.

Third, the crime data have been collected up to and including August 2001, although the academic year ended in July 2001. We might expect offending behaviour to rise in the summer holiday, although the same approach is used for the baseline period and hence comparisons should be valid.

Attributing causality

Of particular concern to the Home Office is that causality between inputs and outcomes (including crime) can be established. Although some outcomes can more reliably be linked to the AEI (e.g. educational attainment), causality cannot be guaranteed for other outcomes, including crime. This is because young people are subject to a number of external influences (family, friends outside the AEI etc.) that cannot be controlled by the AEI. Most of the cost-effectiveness calculations are undertaken at AEI level, and this implies that a number of interventions would have had a role to play in achieving effectiveness. Even for educational attainment, analysis at the intervention level may not be appropriate, however, as skills gained in one intervention may help a young person gain a certificate in another.

A more powerful method of exploring causality would be to apply a randomised controlled trial design to the evaluation. Young people could be matched on various characteristics and randomly assigned to either the AEI (intervention) arm or a control arm. Young person-level outcomes could then be compared to determine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the AEI provision.

General comments

While basic information about the funding sources for each AEI is available, it is not known how much each source contributes to the total cost of each project. As highlighted earlier, projects may also vary on the extent to which levered-in inputs are included in the input database, and whether these have been assigned an opportunity cost or not.

The AEIs have all provided costs using their own perceptions of resource use, and hence between-AEI comparisons may not be entirely accurate. Also, each AEI has their own system for monitoring costs, and these are more developed at some AEIs than others. Most AEIs have allocated some inputs equally over all quarters and interventions. Whether this is a true representation of the expenditure pattern at the AEIs is unclear. However the total cost analysis will not be affected.

Some costs arising in the year prior to the evaluation year have been included in the analysis. These costs are associated with expenditure on capital equipment, staff training and advertising. Such expenditure is assumed to have an impact on the provision for the young people attending the AEI in the evaluation year and thus needs to be accounted for in a full opportunity-cost assessment. Expenditure on other categories on input has not been included as it is assumed that this would not have had an effect on the young people enrolled in the intervention year. Had the AEI projects started in September 2000, then these costs would be 'set-up' costs. However, the AEIs themselves were up and running in the previous academic year and hence a more appropriate term, as used in the economic evaluation, is 'pre-evaluation' costs.

Where AEIs have acquired capital equipment and used this over the duration of the project, the full cost of acquisition has been charged to the quarter of acquisition in the input analysis. For some items, this has required an adjustment to the Data Collection Tool, which apportions the total cost of the asset over all the quarters for which it was used in the project (even though all the expenditure would have occurred in one quarter). This discrepancy would have affected the results of the per-quarter analysis and of the modelling process.

Training costs incurred by the AEIs have been included in this analysis as revenue costs. However the economics of education literature suggests that training, like schooling, is an investment in human capital that affects the individual trained over a period of time. Furthermore, skills learned may be used in non-AEI activities and may continue to be used after the AEI project is completed. In this vein, training could be considered more of an item of capital expenditure. However, little is known about the longevity of the benefits of training (and how such benefits depreciate over time), and hence including training costs as capital costs would be problematic.

Appendix to economic summary: recorded crime, by AEI and type

	AEI 1		AEI 2		AEI 3		AEI 4		AEI 5		AEI 6		TOTAL	
	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01
Drugs – possession	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	2	4
Drugs – supply	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	4
Burglary	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	6	3	3	0	11	5
Vehicle crime	3	2	3	5	0	0	2	3	6	3	0	5	14	18
Assault	8	0	3	10	1	4	1	0	15	18	1	3	29	36
Theft	11	13	4	3	5	7	11	2	8	16	6	6	45	47
Criminal damage	0	4	6	22	8	15	0	0	20	24	10	2	44	67
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	6
Disorderly behaviour	1	0	2	5	1	3	0	0	15	13	8	3	27	24
Breach of court orders/bail	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	5
Road traffic/motoring offences	0	4	0	10	0	9	0	0	6	2	1	3	7	28
Deception (incl fraud)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6	0
Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	2
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	2
Other	4	3	1	10	3	5	0	0	21	13	1	7	30	38
TOTAL	29	28	19	66	22	52	16	5	105	101	33	34	224	286

Copies of this publication can be obtained from:

DfES Publications
P.O. Box 5050
Sherwood Park
Annesley
Nottingham
NG15 0DJ

Tel: 0845 60 222 60
Fax: 0845 60 333 60
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© Queen's Printer 2003

Produced by the Department for Education and Skills

ISBN: 1 84185 922 2
Ref No: RR403

www.dfes.go.uk/research