Newcastle University: A leader in Widening Participation

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Outline

1. Understanding the challenges of WP
   Policy, context, our research and practice

2. Newcastle University and WP
   What is required of us, where are we now and what’s next?
Research base

- Evaluation of Children North East’s audit tool poverty proofing the school day, 2016
- Analysis of how children 5-11yrs spend time out of school from Millennium Cohort Study, Nuffield Foundation, 2013-6
Policy

- Academisation
- Local Authority Funding
- Mental Health
- Attainment Gap
- EBacc
- LAC Support
- School Budget Cuts
- EMA Cuts
- No Maintenance Grants
- Surestart Cuts
- £9,250 Fees
- Curriculum Change
Current University activity in schools
Attainment

- Breakfast club
- After school club
- Sports club
- Religious activity
- Extra tuition
- Music lessons

Disadvantaged Non-disadvantaged

- Breakfast club: 14 (12) vs 12 (12)
- After school club: 32 (32) vs 32 (32)
- Sports club: 61 (77) vs 77 (77)
- Religious activity: 24 (13) vs 13 (24)
- Extra tuition: 20 (26) vs 26 (20)
- Music lessons: 6 (26) vs 26 (6)
Poverty proofing the school day

- **Barriers to learning** were found in every participating school in a wide range of areas including ability/behaviour, bullying, uniform, food, exams, extra-curricular activities, support, homework, resources, transport.

- **Schools were often unaware of parental and pupil perceptions** and of cumulative costs across the year – stigmatising practices are largely hidden without an understanding of pupil’s lived experiences.

- **Action plans raised many low-cost ways in which schools could lessen barriers** to learning and improve how pupil premium funding was spent.

- There was **evidence of improved attendance and attainment** and improved take-up for FSM.

- There was **evidence of changed attitudes** and a shift of ethos.
So to be a Doctor, you’ll need...

- **5 ‘A’s** (Scottish Highers) including English, which you struggle with
- **Extra tutoring** for English
- A good **UKCAT test score**
- **Work experience** in hospitals that you should organise yourself (although you don’t know that)
- To do a **WP programme** (eg PARTNERS)
- **Coaching** for the medical interview
- Help with **UCAS personal statement**
- Knowledge of **current health topics** from medical journals
- **Extra curricula activity** (Duke of Edinburgh)
- **Budget** for this is £0 – no tuition, travelling or UKCAT training (£300)
- **Emotional support** throughout ...
Innovative research: Project Based Learning

- Based on/leading to excellent research
- 32 children for 2-3 day projects
- Outputs: film, app, book...
- Projects proposed by university staff, students, businesses, public services or charities
- Full-time co-ordinator, volunteers and teachers
- Outcomes C21 learning skills, aspirations, widening participation experiences, CPD for teachers
- Collaboration with external organisations
- Links to SOLE
In summary...

- Newcastle University has highly innovative interactions with schools in the NE
- In a challenging schools context
- Social mobility is time consuming and costly
- Young people have ‘needs’ ie social capital – but the challenge is to view them as having assets
- We have to understand young people’s aspirations first, by actually *talking* to them
- Should the focus be on WP, increasing social capital...problem-based learning .....or a more systemic change to schools?
- Or is the problem more structural ie current in-work poverty and food banks?
- Widening Participation is complicated!

...so what is actually required of us in WP and how/what are we doing...?
What is required of us?
What is required of us?

• An Access Agreement - a contract between OFFA & the University

• Committing £1000 of every £9,000 fee to supporting WP students to enter, progress and succeed at Newcastle

• Rigid requirements, most recently to “raise attainment in schools, and open a school or sponsor an academy”

• Our performance is measured annually against Benchmarks and targets (not just intake)

• Failure to make progress could lead to us not being able to charge undergraduate fees

“a regulatory body to promote and safeguard fair access to HE”
Where are we now?

• A **national leader** in WP, innovative in research, and often influencing national policy

• **Our PARTNERS Programme** is one of the largest, most successful in England. In 2016, 56% of our WP students entered through PARTNERS (507 students)

• **We lead Realising Opportunities** - an award winning national scheme involving 15 leading universities

• **We have just secured £7.7million from HEFCE to lead a regional WP project** involving the five NE universities and 16 FE colleges

• **Our students, graduates and alumni** act as role models, mentors and buddies for students on our programmes, and shape what we do
Lower Socio-Economic Groups

Lower socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 4-7) (young entrants)


- Entrants (%)
- Benchmark (%)
- Number
Low Participation Neighbourhoods

Low participation neighbourhoods (LPNs) (young entrants)

Year of Entry

- Entrants (%)
- Benchmark (%)
- Number

2014 2015 2016
The challenge of geography

Overall UG Intake, 2016

- 1052, 22%
- 889, 19%
- 745, 15%
- 484, 10%
- 444, 9%
- 315, 7%
- 245, 5%
- 173, 4%
- 163, 3%
- 115, 2%
- 42, 1%

WP Intake, 2016

- 211, 47%
- 86, 19%
- 52, 12%
- 20, 4%
- 17, 4%
- 9, 2%
- 8, 2%
- 7, 2%
- 5, 1%
- 3, 1%
- 14, 3%
- 13, 3%
- 10, 3%
- 8, 2%
- 7, 2%
- 6, 2%
- 5, 1%
- 4, 1%
- 3, 1%

Geographical distribution:

- North East
- Yorkshire & the Humber
- North West
- East Midlands
- South East
- East of England
- South West
- West Midlands
- Northern Ireland
- London
- Wales
- Scotland
Strategy & Next Steps

WP Tactical Areas

- Positioning as a leader in Widening Participation
- Progressive programme of Outreach
- Targeted Access Programmes (e.g., PARTNERS, Realising Opportunities, Access to Medicine)
- Innovative research in WP
- Scholarships & financial support
- Support into employment & further study
- Admissions strategies that support WP
- On-course support
Targeted Access Programmes

eg Access to Medicine
Maximise progression to graduate-level employment eg Career Insights Programme

"I was excited about the scheme because of the opportunities to network and engage with a range of different companies from all career paths" [Laura, Stage 2]
Our approach to satisfying the latest OFFA requirement?

“A strong expectation that universities will establish or sponsor schools, or have advanced plans to do so…”

…not without a fight!
Want to get involved?

We’re seeking:

- **Alumni and advocates** to act as role models and get involved in our outreach...(focusing on careers and employer engagement)

- **Support for our Career Insights Programme**
  - ideas for sourcing funding for Work Experience bursaries
  - offering work placements

- **E-mentors for our Professional Networking Platform** helping WP students access the professions

- **More School Governors please...**
Questions?