

Stockton Virtual School Case Study



Background

Stockton Virtual School is dedicated to enhancing the educational outcomes of children and young people in their care, supporting learners from birth up to the age of 18.

The Headteacher and/or Designated Teacher (DT) at each school collaborates with the virtual school staff, sharing key information that enables the virtual school to closely monitor and track the academic development and well-being of each young person under their care.

After hearing about Cornerstone VR from another local virtual school, Stockton Virtual School were keen to implement Virtual Reality (VR) into their training sessions to help put Attachment, Award and Trauma Informed (AATI) learning into context for their school and social care teams, and to provide professionals with a deeper understanding of children's lived experiences.




The Mission

When considering the use of VR, Stockton Virtual School really wanted to aid professionals in making a connection between what they'd learnt about AATI theory, and how a child's trauma responses are embedded.

The aim was to give adults an opportunity to consider a child's lived experience and reflect not just on the impact of that trauma, but also how it might feel.

Traditional training sessions typically involve a focus on cognitive learning, but sessions using VR also help participants to feel and learn emotionally, which can amplify that learning considerably.





As someone delivering sessions, I have been very impressed by the impact the VR content has. Participants frequently comment that viewing the situations from a child's perspective helps them reconsider the depth of the trauma that children experience, and understand better the enduring legacy it leaves.

Andrew Ruffell

Education Development Adviser

Stockton Virtual School





The different scenarios never fail to prompt reflection and discussion, and the content can be used flexibly with different audiences. We've shared it with school staff, social care staff, foster carers and parents, and all have seen the value. A frequent comment from participants is, '**Everyone should see this.**'

Andrew Ruffell

Education Development Adviser

Stockton Virtual School



The Outcome

During the training, Stockton Virtual Schools delivered training to at least 575 participants, and reached 35 different educational settings.

In addition to the educational settings, they also delivered sessions to foster carers, the police, residential home staff, local authority staff teams, and social workers.

The first schools that participated completed a pre-course survey and a follow up survey several months after the training to see if the VR had an affect. The results from the survey showed that staff saw an increase in their understanding of how trauma (including neglect) can have an impact on a child's wellbeing, and how confident and effective they are at applying the knowledge to real-life interactions with children. All training evaluations conducted rated the VR training as **good** or **excellent**.

- “ This was my first experience of VR headsets. It was excellent and made it very powerful.
- “ A very informative and emotional session – thank you!
- “ It's shown me how to look at children differently.





About Cornerstone VR



Cornerstone VR is a multi-award-winning, trauma-informed virtual reality programme used by professionals and caregivers who work with vulnerable children and their families.

Our 360-degree immersive films allow users to 'walk in the shoes' of children, bringing the challenges of trauma, neglect, and societal pressures to life.

Spanning critical stages of child development from pre-birth to adolescence, this approach helps professionals, educators and caregivers have a deeper understanding of the child's perspective - building empathy, improving decision-making, and raising the standard of care.

Our programme is used across almost 50% of local authorities, as well as independent fostering and adoption agencies, children's residential homes, schools, virtual schools, universities, NHS trusts, ambulance services, the police and other providers.

Our VR experiences cover key topics across our sectors, including:

- Abuse, Neglect & Trauma
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness
- The Digital World - Social Media and Digital Platforms
- Youth Violence and Knife crime



Contact us

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