

Yorkshire Water **Education Report** *2020 – 2025*



Education at Yorkshire Water

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During AMP7 (Asset Management Period 7, covering 2020 to 2025), Yorkshire Water delivered against a bespoke Education Performance Commitment, designed to raise understanding of the value of water and proper use of the wastewater system.

Detailed definition of the performance measure

To achieve the performance commitment, Yorkshire Water committed to delivering 20,000 learning hours per financial year to raise understanding of the value of water.

This education activity was delivered through a combination of lessons, workshops, talks and school assemblies. The content focused on raising awareness of the value of water, understanding water/wastewater treatment processes, water safety and education around how customers can use water and sewerage systems wisely.

For the total number of hours to be included in the measurement, individual feedback from attendees had to be obtained. Each attendee was encouraged to provide information on how useful the session was and how likely they were to change their behaviour as a result of their learning. This feedback comprised of qualitative and quantitative data, which was used to establish if the programme met the required objectives and to see if the impact of the activities could be assessed. Feedback from both student and adult visitors has helped Yorkshire Water make informed decisions about continuous improvement for its education programme.

During the five-year period, Yorkshire Water is required to publish a report to assess the benefits resulting from the performance commitment, as far as possible based on primary evidence. This includes the relative success of different activity types and approaches, and the learning shared with other companies and stakeholders.

Scope

This report covers the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2025 (Years 1–5 of AMP7) in full.

It provides a summary of our education journey during AMP7 and how COVID-19 affected delivery, which resulted in new ways of working, alongside the development of new engagement programmes.

Data from 2021/22 onwards has been produced using a Power BI dashboard, utilising content from both student and teacher feedback. For the purposes of analysis, specific programme data has been used to evidence any potential changes from year to year. Details on how that evidence was collected is detailed on page 4.

Overview

How we collected our feedback

2020 – 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the regular changes of approach needed to deliver the education programme as events unfolded, it proved challenging to provide a consistent approach to managing feedback from students or teachers.

Each method of delivery was appropriate to the situation at that time.

Data used for this report relates to face-to-face primary school outreach programmes only.

2021 – 2025

During the financial years, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25, feedback has been collected from both teachers and students using the following methods:-

Teacher feedback

Feedback was collected via our education booking portal, Thrive. On receipt, the details were moved across to a management spreadsheet so that the information could be collated.

All feedback information has been collated centrally and, in Summer 2023, a Power BI dashboard introduced to automatically collate the summary data. Results from April 2021 have been extracted using the Power BI dashboard.

Qualitative information has been manually reviewed from the management spreadsheet and incorporated into this document.

Student feedback

To meet the requirements of the Education Performance Commitment (PC), during the 5-year period all groups of students were asked feedback questions.

The questions covered three areas – had the individual learnt something new or enjoyed the session, a fact check, and a behaviour change question.

Answers were obtained using (a) Plickers (QR codes collected via a scanning process), (b) hands up and manual collation by teachers/group organisers, (c) counters put into a box, or (d) direct feedback using an online survey.

The data was manually input into a management spreadsheet.

Evidence of the feedback method for all hours 'counted' as part of the Education PC has been assured annually by an independent external provider for the first 4 years, with the final year due to be assured in May 2025.

Overview

How we review feedback

Throughout this five-year period, we have focused on obtaining both student and teacher/organiser feedback. This content has enabled us to meet the requirements of the Education Performance Commitment, but also delivers insight into how our programme is received and provides constructive suggestions on areas for improvement.

All feedback data is reviewed (a) on receipt by our Education Support Officer, (b) by the Education Advisers delivering the programme, and (c) by our Social Value & Education Manager. The team discuss areas for improvement on both a local (site/adviser) basis and within the wider team. This shared learning and collaboration allows us to take best practise, alongside areas for development, and make changes quickly and where needed across the team.

All our education programmes can be tailored for specific audiences and we ask visiting schools and groups to complete an 'additional needs' form, which allows us to understand the learning levels of the visitors and whether there are any specific needs we should consider, ensuring everyone is included.



2020/2021 Reporting Year

Context

Year 1 of AMP7 began with the country in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yorkshire Water's education programme had been halted in mid-March 2020, with schools closing and adapting to a different way of teaching.

Furthermore, as our education centres were located on operational sites, to safeguard our colleagues from COVID-19, our education facilities remained closed to all visitors.

School closures meant that maintaining a normal level of education was challenging for the teaching profession. With a lack of adequate I.T. networks throughout most schools, coupled with students not having access to personal computer devices, or in some cases an internet connection, it meant that even engaging online was extremely challenging.

Initial safeguarding issues often prevented external agencies, such as Yorkshire Water, from being able to deliver virtually. Where we were able to engage, it proved difficult to obtain feedback as many teaching staff focused on delivering lessons rather than completing paperwork as evidence of our delivery.

As the pandemic moved into different stages, new ways of working were utilised; from using basic equipment (iPhone) to create short films for social media, to developing lessons which could be used in virtual classrooms to support the water topic.

To maintain some face-to-face activity, COVID-19 safe family workshops were developed and delivered at our Tophill Low Nature Reserve. These proved popular and successful and are now integrated into business-as-usual activity.

Yorkshire Water was the first water company to return to delivering within a school environment during Autumn 2020, and we continued to promote our social media education films and support online events, such as Bradford Festival and The Waterline Summit.

Delivering an education programme during COVID-19 was challenging as we were beholden to the events unfolding in different communities and nationally. We learnt to adapt our engagement strategy regularly, creating and developing new tools, many of which provide the foundation for the way we deliver in 2025.

On page 8, we have provided details of the programme activity and a summary of the feedback received during the financial year.

Engaging in a pandemic

Home learning

Resources created for parents to support home learning.



Family workshops

With the reopening of Tophill Low Nature Reserve, we launched our 'Covid compliant' family workshops to great success:

- Summer holiday & October half term events
- 458 customers attended
- 827 education hours delivered
- Our promotional film reached a potential audience of 16,496 customers with 6828 individual views recorded

Virtual Outreach

Autumn term commenced with the offer of our virtual outreach, a huge learning curve for teachers and education advisers alike.

Social media 'shorts' created on key themes

- Highest audience reach for one of our films – 46,655 customers
- Audience engagement rates for each film between 2.2% and 10% (usual benchmark for such activity is a reach of 10% of the potential audience)
- There were 126,000 individual views of our films

Online lessons

A series of online lessons for teachers to self-deliver remotely or in the classroom.

Collaborative events

Working with other water companies on World Water Day & World Toilet Day live events.



Careers Talks

Created to reach a virtual audience and support The Gatsby Benchmarks*.

After School Club

Created for colleagues children, providing support for those delivering home learning.



National Apprenticeship Week

Mass engagement events to increase awareness of our apprenticeship programme.

Awareness sessions

Created to support graduate recruitment adding value to the existing HR process.

*Benchmarks to define world-class careers education, information, advice and guidance for young people in England, based on international evidence.

Qualitative Feedback

We have provided below a cross-section of feedback from visiting groups.

There were several comments relating to technology, which reflected (1) the challenges that teachers had accessing IT, (2) teachers' knowledge of Zoom, Google Classrooms and Microsoft Teams, and (3) the difficulty teaching remotely into student homes, or with classes half full.

"The students enjoyed the visuals and props related to sensible toilet use, it informed them of what could happen if toilets aren't used sensibly. The students enjoyed watching the short videos and asking Emma questions at the end of the session."

Specialist Education Secondary School, Sheffield, October 2020

"They have enjoyed all of the lessons and the virtual session. The video of the treatment works was great."

Primary School, Hull, February 2021

The session was fantastic, and the children were really engaged. They enjoyed the experiment to show how water is filtered and the virtual tour around the treatment works. Although they were disappointed at not being able to visit in "real life" we all agreed that the session was just as good, and they all said they had learnt something new about how we use water."

Primary School, Wakefield, March 2021

"Possibly the section about the water treatment plant. Of course, this would have been far more engaging if the children had had the opportunity to visit the site and see it first-hand"

Primary Academy, Bradford, November 2020

"The challenges with technology!"

Community Primary School, Scarborough, November 2020

"The presentation/content very good just a few technical issues which were a little distracting for some students but equally its power for the course in the world of work when using & being so reliant on technology, so good resilience building."

Specialist College, Leeds, January 2021

2021/2022 Reporting Year

Context

April 2021 saw schools gradually adjusting back to a new level of normality, but they were still being affected by the impact of COVID-19. Most of our delivery throughout the year was delivered via outreach in the school environment, as our education centres remained closed until January 2022 to protect our operational teams.

We increased the delivery of more online virtual events and had promising engagement, especially in relation to water safety where we explained the dangers of what lies beneath open water locations, particularly reservoirs.

Our family workshops continued to remain popular during holiday periods and we introduced live sessions for secondary schools to boost bookings – providing information about the company using careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) as the hook to explaining how our company operates and what we do.

Delivery during this financial year remained challenging due to the unknown impact of COVID-19 in schools and the reality of cancellations taking place on the morning of a booking. It took most of the year for schools to get back to a normal curriculum offer.

Feedback Summary

During the financial year 2021/22, summary feedback from participants across our programmes (excluding careers for question 3*) was:

- Individuals who correctly answered a knowledge check question – **91.45%**
- Did you find out something new today? – **88.67%**
- Individuals who said they would change their behaviour because of their learning – **77.43%**

**Careers programmes were excluded for the analysis of question 3, as the answer was personal to them based on their career aspirations.*



Qualitative Feedback

We have provided below a cross-section of feedback from visiting groups.

Teaching staff were appreciative of efforts to deliver in difficult circumstances and, whilst feedback and benefits were largely positive, the challenge of delivering sessions remotely and ensuring children were actively involved remained a consistent theme.

"We learnt about how to save water. Based on the session the children then wrote a set of instructions to give to another class of children."

Primary Academy, Halifax, April 2021

"It has supported us with our Geography topic this half term – it was nice to have input from someone rather than me (the teacher). In strange times, we were happy that we were able to have visitors into our class to share their knowledge with us. It has helped secure the children's knowledge."

Primary School, Sheffield, May 2021

"Children have a better understanding of water waste and how to minimise this e.g. turning the tap off when brushing their teeth. Length of time listening (sat still) at times – difficult due to COVID restrictions."

Junior School, Castleford, May 2021

"I feel the children are more aware of global situations in comparison to their own. The statistics, figures and videos leave a lasting impression on the children that this is really happening and is a real problem."

Primary School, Leeds, May 2021

"Always better in person but due to covid, virtual was the only option this time. It was excellent though."

Secondary School, Bradford, June 2021

"The experiments about what different materials do in water (wipe, nose tissue etc) and then seeing how it would block a pipe."

Primary School, Sheffield, July 2021

"The children really enjoyed learning about how water is cleaned and what not to put down the toilet."

Primary School, Leeds, November 2021

"It has helped with their understanding of how sewers can become blocked and of the key things we should avoid placing in sewers. Also, looking at the permeable things we can use in our gardens to avoid flooding and looking at the wider picture of how our actions can affect things."

Specialist Education School, Hull, February 2022

"Students understand how water is treated and where we get our water from in our homes. They also understand how to stay safe near water in the community."

Specialist Education School, Halifax, February 2022

"I hope that Yorkshire Water are able to recommence sessions at the treatment works soon. Although this session was informative and enjoyable, the children used to get a lot more from visiting the treatment works and seeing the process in person."

Primary School, Bradford, March 2022



2022/2023 Reporting Year

Context

The education programme delivery was reasonably stable during the 2022/23 financial year, despite cancellations due to schools focusing on Jubilee/British Values Week, snow days, teacher strikes and a reduction in bookings due to the economic crisis (parent ability to pay/increased coach costs).

Feedback Summary

During the financial year 2022/23, summary feedback from participants across our programmes (excluding careers for question 3*) was:

- Individuals who correctly answered a knowledge check question – 95.64%
- Did you find out something new today? – 92.12%
- Individuals who said they would change their behaviour because of their learning – 90.6%

**Careers programmes were excluded for the analysis of question 3, as the answer was personal to them based on their career aspirations.*



Qualitative Feedback

We have provided below a cross-section of feedback from visiting groups.

Qualitative feedback received showed that the tour of the water treatment plant is the most enjoyed part of the session during our clean water programme, that students enjoyed the hands-on activities within our Living with Water learning lab and teachers appreciated the structure and delivery of the sessions.

Here are some of our findings, alongside relevant quotes:

Benefits

"They enjoyed the whole visit" (College, West Yorkshire, May 2022) and ***"It was all interesting"***.

But if choosing one thing, then most visitors stated the tour as being the most enjoyable.

Additional comments indicated that the ***"practical hands-on experiments"*** (Junior & Infant School, Kirklees, September 2022) were enjoyable too, some stating this as their favourite part - ***"The children enjoyed the practical element of the lesson"*** (Community Primary School, Sheffield, October 2022).

Many people commented that the tour and sessions were very well organised, e.g. ***"The whole tour was well organised and engaging. From reception to introduction and conclusions"*** (College, West Yorkshire, November 2022).

With many thanking us for the sessions, such as:

"The children also said they loved 'EVERYTHING'!!! Thank you very much". (Primary School, Rotherham, March 2023)

"Our pupils and adults enjoyed the experiments and the range of interesting, interactive resources and presentations."
(Primary Academy, Doncaster, March 2023)

For older visitors, such as college students, we received good feedback stating that they enjoyed the tour, but also, ***"the part regarding potential apprenticeships/employment as they've realised there's much more scope than being 'just a plumber' when working within industry"***.
(College, West Yorkshire, January 2023)

Areas of improvement

When we asked for feedback about the part of the session that was enjoyed the least, we received many positive comments despite asking the opposite. Some visitors couldn't add a negative, for example: -

"None. They enjoyed it all" (Primary Academy, Grimsby, January 2023)

"There wasn't anything they didn't enjoy"
(Junior & Infant School, Kirklees, June 2022)

"Leaving at the end of the day!"
(Community Primary School, Halifax, October 2022)

"It was all amazing!" (Community Primary School, Goole, January 2023)

Most of the feedback about the 'least' favourite/enjoyed parts were the less practical elements of the sessions. Some visitors mentioned, ***"There was quite a lot of listening before the practical and some children were becoming less focused."***

(Community Primary School, Sheffield, October 2022)

This was more so for younger visitors (e.g. Year 3), where comments such as the following were received as least enjoyed part: -

"The carpet/benches time" (Primary School, Bradford, November 2022)

"Children being children, some became restless whilst doing the sit-down learning activities, but these were really well delivered, incorporated lots of active breaks and quiz questions to grab the children's attention again. I thought it was brilliant!"
(Primary School, Sheffield, March 2023)

"The talks were interesting, but they were quite long having the two sit down sessions together. (Especially for our children who require breaks and short inputs)."
(Primary School, Sheffield, February 2023)

We actively encourage feedback following our sessions and value all comments received. As a result, we regularly review our programmes to ensure they meet visitor requirements. Our Education Advisers have taken steps to introduce more interactive activities into both our face-to-face and virtual programmes and adjust content based on the age and abilities of participants.

2023/2024 Reporting Year

Context

The education programme delivery was stable during the 2023/24 financial year, with the biggest impact being the cost of transport hindering schools wanting to visit our centres.

During the Autumn 2023 term, as well as our usual education programme offering, we started work on two new projects.

The first was our Lego programme – using the creation of Lego bots to help children understand how they can support their environment. Students use coding to program the Lego bots to move around a giant map, unblocking homes and businesses and correctly removing waste to the right location. This activity then evolved into two other activities – one focusing on flooding and sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), and the other demonstrating how communities can work together to improve coastal bathing water quality. Following successful trials during the 2023/24 academic year, these programmes are now proactively offered to schools in targeted areas.

Hey Girls, our second programme, was developed to support our Brand & Campaigns team in their work to reduce blockages in targeted areas. Focusing on raising awareness of reusable period products, the female only sessions cover topics such as the cost of period products, the correct way to dispose of these items to prevent sewer blockages, and the impact on the environment. Students receive a bag of products to go away and trial, alongside discount codes to use against future purchases. Hey Girls has been integrated into the full education programme for the academic year 2024/25, as a proactive offer to secondary schools in hotspot blockage areas.



Feedback Summary

During the financial year 2023/24, summary feedback from participants across our programmes (excluding careers for question 3*) was:

- Individuals who correctly answered a knowledge check question – 95.19%
- Did you find out something new today? – 92.93%
- Individuals who said they would change their behaviour because of their learning – 92.13%

**Careers programmes were excluded for the analysis of question 3, as the answer was personal to them based on their career aspirations.*

Qualitative Feedback

We have provided below a cross-section of feedback from visiting groups.

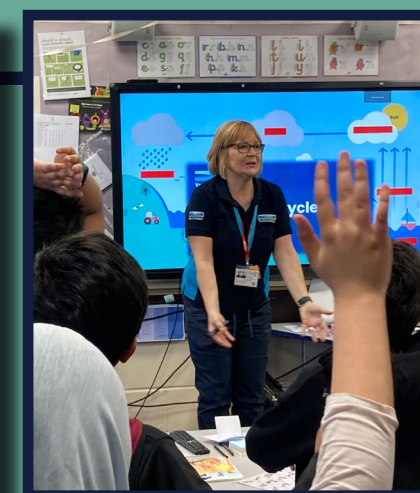
Benefits

"My own children were really enthused by the day and were keen to share what they had learned with Beavers/Scouts leaders that evening and their grandmother. The longer-term benefits are that they have agreed they feel they have more control and power to actively affect water use and waste – sometimes it can seem like a single person can't make a lot of difference, but they have been making links themselves about how much water they use for different things. Other parents have said their children found it really interesting – some have quizzed their parents more on fat blocking pipes and how they are fixed, some have been linking their knowledge to water works they have seen in and around the city."

Home Educators, Hull, November 2023

"The class have gained a greater understanding of how they can modify their behaviours in order to conserve water. They have also gained a deeper understanding of how we manage water on our planet and how lucky we are to be able to access water freely."

Junior & Infant School, Liversedge, May 2023



"It has taught them about where our drinking water comes from and how it is cleaned. It has revisited vital knowledge about how to use water sensibly around the home and also how precious water is by showing the difficulties collecting water for children in Ethiopia."

Primary School, Skipton, May 2023

"It has benefitted them as they are more mindful of what goes down the toilet and how to save water and be more responsible"

College, West Yorkshire, January 2024

"It helped add the practical, real-life element to the children's learning and will help with their retention as they have something practical to relate their future learning back to."

Primary School, Leeds, February 2024

"Reinforced learning about the water cycle, better understanding of the process of treating water and where accessible fresh water is, highlighting the need to save water and not put certain things down the drain."

Primary School, Leeds, March 2024

"Opened their eyes to where our waste can end up and how much water we use. We're having a big push to not flush wipes and to share that with families."

Primary School, Bradford, March 2024

Qualitative Feedback

Areas of improvement

"A couple more practical activities would have worked well to maintain the interest of some groups of pupils."

Primary School, Barnsley, May 2023

"The classroom-based discussion but this was discussed in advance and made as short as possible."

Alternative Provision Academy College, West Yorkshire, October 2023

"Some of the technical language at the beginning - many of my pupils are new to English so more visuals would have helped with this."

Primary School, Bradford, January 2024

"As the group was a group of adults who are interested in rivers, perhaps they would've been keen to have a bit more time for the discussion at the end."

Special Interest Adult Group, Sheffield, March 2024

Throughout the AMP, we have worked hard to increase our provision for classes with mixed abilities and special educational needs. To ensure that our sessions are accessible to all levels of ability, we engage with group leaders ahead of sessions to ensure lessons are tailored to the needs of their students and ensure feedback is built in to our process of continuously improving our offering.



2024/2025 Reporting Year

Context

As we approached the final year of AMP7, our education programme was stable with our new programmes being integrated into the standard offer.

During the year, we were delighted to be able to recruit four additional members of the team to support with the increasing growth of requests (both internally and externally), whilst looking ahead to our plans for AMP8.

A new wastewater education centre has been developed with pilot sessions completed in March 2025.

For the purposes of publishing the report within the AMP7 period, the quantitative and qualitative data for this reporting year covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Feedback Summary

During the summer term of the financial year 2024/25, summary feedback from participants across our programmes (excluding careers for question 3*) was:

- Individuals who correctly answered a knowledge check question – 96.29%
- Did you find out something new today? – 93.18%
- Individuals who said they would change their behaviour because of their learning – 91.53%

**Careers programmes were excluded for the analysis of question 3, as the answer was personal to them based on their career aspirations.*



Qualitative Feedback

We have provided below a cross-section of feedback from visiting groups.

“This is the third time I have visited Yorkshire Water with my class at JCA. The visits have also impacted my teaching. As I am moving year groups next year, I sadly won’t be visiting next year. However, I will be 100% recommending this visit continues next year during my handover to the new class teacher. A huge thank you to for an incredible learning opportunity & the impact they have had on the children’s learning.”

Primary Academy, Wakefield, April 2024

“All student enjoyed the tour of the facility and information about blockages in pipes. All students were positive about the whole visit. Staff feedback – the content covered was broad and there was lots of little segments, (e.g. where water come from, how it’s treated, careers, blockages, etc.). Could go into more depth on a smaller range of topics.”

Secondary Academy, Wakefield, April 2024

“Learning about Yorkshire Water’s connection to the SDGs – i.e. challenges the organisation is facing, understanding how clean water impacts Leeds.”

University, West Yorkshire, July 2024

“The children now have an understanding of the work Yorkshire Water carry out as well as recapping the water cycle, learning about what causes blockages and the roles and responsibilities of the children”.

Primary School, Leeds, July 2024

“The morning session on water and treatment at the works built on our science and geography work in school, bringing it all to life for the children. The afternoon session involving building Lego bots to remove ‘blockages’ in the water supply network was a new addition to our visit. The children very much enjoyed the Lego session. They were able to use their knowledge of scratch programming in school to experiment and edit instructions to guide their personalised bots. Again, the education team were on hand to help the children to succeed in doing this, with great results.”

Independent School, Halifax, July 2024

Qualitative Feedback

“Excellent presentations, loved the illuminated information board which was accessible for so many levels/ages even pensioners!”

Special Interest Group, Harrogate, July 2024

“The dioramas provided to the children gave them all a very clear understanding of the way Yorkshire Water and the water cycle engages with the infrastructure around them. They demonstrated how the behaviours and actions of the individual have a larger, long-lasting impact on the world around us. Children love to be interactive and hands on. Is there an opportunity for children to complete a task that would allow them to be tactile in the activities?”

Humber STEM event, June 2024



Quantitative Data

2020 – 2025

Introduction

In this section, we have provided an overview of both the student and teacher feedback scores.

Over AMP7, we have developed and brought in new programmes each year to reflect the changing requirements for education. The results have been compiled across all activities, as some schemes of work would potentially have fewer data sets to provide a fair comparison.

The data is generally showing an increasing trend for most question sets, with a high level of results being achieved.

Teacher Feedback

2020/21

As the first year of AMP7 was affected by COVID-19, we have provided the data on page 29 from our face-to-face schools' programmes. The questions set are consistent with the remainder of the AMP.

2021/22 to 2024/25

For the remainder of AMP7, we introduced a PowerBI dashboard which enabled us to collate the numbers across all the programmes we delivered.

Student Feedback

We have provided a summary of the student evaluation asked across the range of our programmes during the AMP7 period. This demonstrates a high level of learning and willingness to change their behaviour in respect of water efficiency and reducing blockages.

STUDENT FEEDBACK	Did you find out something new today	Correct knowledge check question	Behaviour change due to learning
2020/21	90%*	85%*	69%*
2021/22	88.69%	89.05%	77.43%**
2022/23	91.97%	95.09%	90.6%**
2023/24	92.86%	94.95%	92.13%**
2024/25	93.18%	96.29%	91.53%**

**COVID-19 period – programmes delivered to primary – face-to-face – averaged*
*** Excluded careers programme data, as this referred to individual future career goals*

To support the student data, we have provided summary information from the teachers' evaluation form.

This provides a different lens on how well the students have understood the sessions, how it has benefited them academically and customer satisfaction levels. The key data set is around behaviour change, and whilst the figures are somewhat lower than the individual feedback indicates, it still demonstrates that the majority of attendees are likely to change their behaviour.

TEACHER FEEDBACK	Likely to change water behaviour use? (Very Likely/Likely)	Learning & progress of students (Excellent or Good)	Level of support for classroom teaching (Excellent or Good)	How useful was the session? (% either Very Useful or Useful)	Satisfaction with the visit (% either Very Satisfied or Satisfied)	Likely to recommend or rebook with Yorkshire Water
2020/21	65.38%	88%	87%	96.15%	100%	100%
2021/22	72.51%	93.57%	92.81%	97.65%	99.44%	96.04%
2022/23	79.35%	95.19%	94.58%	99.06%	99.54%	95.89%
2023/24	82.32%	96.6%	95.4%	99.54%	99.53%	99.07%
2024/25	78.76%	97.22%	98.69%	100%	99.23%	99.62%

Benefits, Successes & Shared Learning

Benefits & Successes

It's not just all about the numbers

In this section of the report, we'll cover the benefits and successes of our education programme across AMP7 (Asset Management Period 7, covering 2020 to 2025) and detail how we've worked with others to share our learnings.

The world of education is collaborative and thrives on working in partnership, and at Yorkshire Water we've always been keen to share our work and help others improve their practice.

Our successes

Year 1 of AMP7 was significantly affected by COVID-19, and to enable our educational work to continue, we introduced new ways of working.

During lockdown, we introduced family workshops to enable visitors to learn and have fun whilst being in family 'bubbles'. At a time when many recreational activities were closed to the public, families loved being in a safe, outdoor environment and our sessions were often oversubscribed. Our family events still take place and are now delivered by the Warden team at Tophill Low Nature Reserve.

One key element of our programme was the delivery of a series of on-line lessons – filmed at external locations and uploaded onto YouTube. Teachers were able to request access to the lessons and teach them remotely during lockdown, or use the films in the classroom when face-to-face teaching was permitted.

As schools returned to normal, the need for these lessons reduced and, whilst we no longer offer this option, the principle of teaching on-line has remained and is now firmly embedded in our programme.

Online learning

Following a 'one-off' live event on clean and wastewater treatment in March 2021 for Science Week, in September/October 2021 we introduced regular 'Ask the Operator' sessions, which involved our clean and waste operatives answering students' questions. These proved very popular and allowed classes to think of interesting questions to ask the company and receive direct feedback from our colleagues who deliver these services. Some of our operators also attended site visits aimed at older groups, for example, university groups.

We continued with ‘Ask the Operator’ until 2023/24, when, out of respect for our colleagues, we chose to discontinue them as we had many schools signing up but then not attending on the day.

Moving forward we have embedded half-termly offers into our programme, which are managed by the Education Advisers. These are enhanced with annual themed events linked to World Water Day, World Toilet Day, National Careers Week and National Apprenticeship Week. Drowning Prevention Week is also an area of significant focus.

As our capacity to deliver live events has increased, we’ve been able to build resilience for snow days and days when we may experience operational challenges on site, or with school transport. We can now adapt our offer quickly to reduce short notice cancellations and ensure students still receive their learning.

Case study

Water Safety



In June 2022, we began delivering ‘Water Safety Live’ sessions in response to several incidents and fatalities that had occurred, not just in Yorkshire, but around the country.

We initially started this programme during Drowning Prevention Week, and then included the sessions in our half-termly ‘Live’ events offer. The numbers below depict the attendance on these events per academic year. (Numbers do not include water safety delivered as part of other bookings).

Reporting Year	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3/4	Yearly Total
2022/23	2,349	6,028	4,197*	12,574
2023/24	7,554	10,885	742	19,181
2024/25	7,854	12,417	2,813	23,084
Total	17,757	29,330	7,752	54,839

**High numbers following incidents locally.*

With the exception of the secondary school offer, we are seeing a gradual increase in numbers attending across AMP7. We’ve acknowledged it is difficult to engage secondary schools due to timetabling and respond to bespoke requests from interested schools by sending recordings of the sessions.

By delivering a programme virtually we can reach large numbers of children, with small numbers of staffing, to deliver a very important lifesaving message.

Water safety education in schools

Every child should have the opportunity to learn to swim and receive water safety education at primary school and, where required, at Key Stage 3.

Equipping children and teenagers with knowledge, skills and experience in swimming and water safety contributes to their long-term safety in, on and around the water. Over the past four years, a subgroup of the National Water Safety Forum, the Water Safety Education Working Group, has brought together stakeholders in England to progress this key target.

Yorkshire Water is part of the Water Safety Education Working Group, which includes partners from across England including the RNLI, Swim England, RLSS, ROSPA, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and Canal & River Trust. This group shares key learnings and works collaboratively to provide key resources for schools, which align to best practise and deliver consistent messaging.

The Water Safety Education Working Group has worked in collaboration with the Department for Education to support more schools to teach water safety. Key achievements include the water safety code being included in the draft statutory guidance for RSHE11, support for SEND inclusive lessons through the Inclusion 2024 grant, and 1.25 million children participating in Drowning Prevention Week in 2024.

The School Swimming and Water Safety Charter was published to improve the quality of swimming and water safety lessons, and to raise attainment in schools.

Yorkshire Water has also engaged with Safeguarding Teams from local councils, to support awareness of our sessions, which in turn has generated more take up from schools for our education programme in areas where water safety is a specific risk.

Student feedback from virtual on-line learning

During AMP7, we have learnt that teachers would happily take part in our on-line activities, but it proved challenging to obtain student feedback after the lesson as the reliance was on teaching staff collecting and returning the data. We now have an integrated approach which offers the best possible chance of receiving feedback – students are asked the questions during the live event and teachers encouraged to record the answers at the time. With experience, we now have a better understanding of the challenges of obtaining feedback during remote delivery.

Curriculum focus – age range

Despite the topic of water now being part of the national curriculum for Year 4 students, during AMP7 we saw an increased number of Year 3 classes attending. This was mainly due to schools operating with mixed year groups. As such, more adaptation has been undertaken to suit the ages and abilities of the children, though we do recognise that we are reliant on teaching staff providing the requested information prior to the visit taking place. To support a younger age

demographic, we might provide more question and answer time, encourage working in pairs, and increase the number of practical and physical activities.

Specialist expertise

We were delighted to see an increase in the number of local colleges bringing students to our sites, many of whom are studying plumbing or building related courses. As a result, we collaborated with one of our colleagues, a Water Regulations Inspector, to provide guidance on content and to attend sessions where appropriate, so students can benefit from their extensive knowledge and experience.

Looking forward to AMP8 (Asset Management Period 8, covering 2025 to 2030), we have recruited an Education Adviser who will have specific responsibility for supporting education on the coast, focusing on water safety and bathing water compliance.

Proactive ‘v’ Reactive

During 2023/24, with the development of our new programmes (Lego and Hey Girls), we started to move towards allocating specific educational dates for ‘proactive’ work.

This involves reaching out directly to schools in areas affected by our capital programme and blockage hotspots, to offer them the opportunity to take part in one of our activities.

A specific number of dates are secured for this work within our schedule of activity, and we work collaboratively with teams across the business to identify schools who we would like to target.

To ensure key messages are included in lesson content, we also cross-reference (1) blockage hotspot postcodes, (2) areas where we believe there are concerns about water safety, and (3) a number of key capital scheme locations, against our education delivery plan. All new bookings from schools are cross-checked against this information, so we can build key company messaging into their visit. By tracking the delivery against key messages, we can report back to the business on how we are supporting certain areas of work.

Benefits

Teaching young people and members of the community about the world of water has numerous benefits, not only supporting the national curriculum but providing life-long learning and behaviour change to our customers and future bill-payers.

Here, we have provided details of other benefits that have come from the work we have delivered, looking from both an internal and external perspective.

Inclusive, targeted and media friendly

The creation of our Lego programme has allowed us to develop a product which is attractive to schools when we want to proactively engage with them. As schools mainly follow a curriculum led timetable of themes, it can be difficult to engage if students aren’t studying a related topic. By offering an enrichment session which is exciting, new and accessible to students at different educational levels, we have seen a greater uptake in bookings. We have been able to book sessions in advance, as we know which geographical areas we want to reach and have created a targeted proactive approach.

The result of this work is an increase in the number of positive media stories being published. Positive coverage helps to inform our customers about the work we do to support young people and communities across the region and promotes our activities, which results in more engagement.

Teachers have praised the programme for its inclusivity, enabling students with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and EAL (English as an Additional Language) to fully participate.

“The session was absolutely brilliant. We have a number of children who have English as an additional language or SEND. These children were fully engaged in the session and all children thoroughly enjoyed it. Children got the opportunity to learn about flooding which is not something they are aware of locally. Some fantastic learning and teamwork.”

Primary Academy, Hull



Case study Hey Girls



The recent roll out of our Hey Girls programme, has provided another opportunity to engage with our customer base through media coverage.

In January 2025, we were approached by BBC 1 Yorkshire–Look North in relation to our Hey Girls programme. This was completed at Outwood Academy Shafton and aired on the programme on 23 January 2025, followed up by a press release to local media.

Based on reported media figures, the potential reach for this activity was over one-million customers and supported Yorkshire Water’s messaging regarding sewer blockages.

YORKSHIRE WATER CAMPAIGN HELPS BARNSELEY SCHOOL WITH PERIOD EDUCATION

Students at Outwood Academy Shafton are the latest to learn about sustainable period products and eradicating period poverty through Yorkshire Water and Hey Girls’ educational period campaign.

The campaign aims to improve period dignity, educate young people about sustainable, reusable period products, and find an alternative method of disposal to flushing pads and tampons down the loo, which can cause blockages in the sewer network.

Yorkshire Water’s education team have devised

a programme that includes sessions on period health and wellbeing for secondary school students. As well as distributing free ‘Full Cycle’ kits, the period health education sessions feature where to access products and explain the benefits of sustainable products that can be better for the environment, the pocket and the sewer network.

The partnership will provide 20,000 reusable, sustainable period packs to a number of secondary schools across the region.

Outwood Academy Shafton was selected to take part in the programme because blockages are a known issue in the area.

Publication	Publication date	Audience Reach
BBC1 Yorkshire – Look North	23/01/2025	825,000
BBC Radio Sheffield	23/01/2025	30,500
Barnsley Chronicle (Web)	31/01/2025	Monthly visits 77,600
Doncaster Gazette	31/01/2025	60,000
Rotherham Gazette	31/01/2025	
Barnsley Gazette	31/01/2025	
Barnsley Chronicle (Town)	31/01/2025	17,374
Yorkshire Post	17/02/2025	18,534

External Benefits

The evolution of our education programme over the AMP7 period has resulted in an increase in the number of education hours delivered and our audience figures have shown an upward trend. This means we are now reaching more people with key industry messaging and influencing behaviour change throughout the region.

Financial Year	Hours delivered under Education PC requirements	Hours completed (with & without feedback)	Audience numbers (with & without feedback)
2020/21 (Covid-19 closures)	5,590	7,067	8,257
2021/22	22,576	25,446	27,485
2022/23	28,164	34,446	35,168
2023/24	29,174	36,039	36,781
2024/25	30,407	39,395	42,749

Investing in our future

During 2024/25, we put plans in place to increase availability for AMP8 and have recruited more Education Advisers to support delivery. This will enable the team to deliver more proactive work in targeted areas, as well as meet the increasing demand from schools wishing to book our services.

In Spring 2025, we aim to open a new education facility at Ewden Wastewater Treatment Works in north Sheffield. This will provide the opportunity for students to see both clean and wastewater treatment in the same day.

Qualitative feedback

Comments from our customers can best demonstrate the impacts of our education programme, and a selection from our evaluation across the year can be seen below: –

“We have learned a lot about Water Treatment which is what we wanted out of the day. We definitely have a better appreciation of how our water becomes drinkable.”
Home Educators, Wakefield, April 2022

“The students have studied the water cycle and water treatment process as part of their in-college plumbing course and have discussed the processes seen. This has helped to reinforce their learning and linked it to real world situations.”
College, East Riding of Yorkshire, May 2022

“Increased our knowledge and allayed worries.”

University of the Third Age, July 2022

“It has brought to their attention the need to save water. They also understood river use and protection.”

Primary School, Pontefract, September 2022

“This will benefit them in their lessons when we discuss the Hull Floods as they already have the knowledge of how to reduce the impacts of flooding in the future.”

Secondary Academy, Hull, October 2022

“The children are more mindful of water wastage, and they can confidently explain what water waste is and why it is important we don’t waste water. It has cemented the learning we had ...about water scarcity.”

Primary School, Leeds, March 2023

“Increased awareness of how water can be saved, how not to block sewers, how to make homes more flood resistant. The children and staff were all able to participate and contribute new learning to the class discussions when we returned to school.”

Primary Academy, Doncaster, March 2023

“The children now have a solid understanding of the water cycle and the process it goes through to make it safe enough to drink. It has raised awareness of issues around climate and recycling as well as making the children think more carefully about the water they are using and how they can improve their use. It has given them a real-life experience to link this to.”

Primary School, Rotherham, April 2024

“It has benefitted us immensely as it has changed mindsets and behaviours that we don’t usually think about.”

College, West Yorkshire, April 2024

“Our recent visit to Yorkshire Water is also more likely to change students’ behaviours with respect to water use.”

College of Building, West Yorkshire, May 2024

The above feedback examples show the impact of the education programme and that the sessions are useful for all ages. The learnings taken from the visits will influence behaviours throughout the remainder of that individual’s lifetime.

Furthermore, our education programme proves successful in taking messages about water saving and water usage into the home environment, as this comment from a Primary Academy in March 2023 demonstrates: –

“It has already led to discussions at home with the parents on how they can save water, with some questions from parents already”.

Shared Learning

How we’ve shared our learning & knowledge

Within the wider water industry and afar

Over the five year AMP7 period, Yorkshire Water has chaired the Water Industry Education Forum, where education managers come together to discuss opportunities, share challenges and successes, and work collaboratively.

Throughout these meetings, we have been open and transparent about the successes and challenges of our various programmes and provided support to other education managers, who were working without the benefit of additional education colleagues.

During Covid-19, we shared our learning and programmes regularly through the Water Education Forum and helped to instigate the first collaborative water company live events for World Toilet Day and World Water Day. Together with other key contributors, including Thames Water, Anglian Water and Northern Ireland Water, we worked to deliver live events for the benefit of schools across the whole country.

We’ve welcomed guests to shadow our virtual live events, so they could see how we deliver and work with numerous schools at the same time. Visitors to these events have included Thames Water, Southern Water, Gorse SCITT (School-Centred Initial Teacher Training), students from the University of Leeds and University of Huddersfield, the National Trust, the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust and Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority.

Following the implementation of the Lego programme into ‘business as usual’, we have shared our learning and delivery model with colleagues at Anglian Water.

We’ve also demonstrated our education (and volunteering) booking portal with a number of organisations, including Southern Water.

Within Yorkshire Water

In May 2024, we introduced our first half-termly newsletter, which showcases to colleagues the wide range of work we deliver supporting Social Value & Education across the business. These publications have been well received by colleagues.

Developing social value with our contract partners

In order to maximise social value across our asset management programme, we've created an opportunity for contract partners to work collaboratively with us on a new careers activity.

Targeted at schools in the catchment of our capital schemes, we have been working with Kier Natural Resources, Nuclear and Networks, Seymour Civil Engineering and Galliford Try to offer a joint careers presentation focusing on careers within both the water and construction industries. We plan to include other contract partners as we enter AMP8.



By utilising our existing education framework, we have been able to maximise opportunities for careers engagement and ensure our contract partners are benefiting from clear student and teacher-based evaluation and feedback.

Pictured left: Sam Battle, Graduate Engineer, Kier Natural Resources, Nuclear and Networks; Jess, Social Sustainability Advisor, Kier Natural Resources, Nuclear and Networks; Justine, Project Manager, Yorkshire Water; Simon, Social Value Officer, Yorkshire Water.

Supporting the wider community

The education team has worked with several different organisations to share learning and support the personal development and knowledge base of others.

These have included site visits for community organisations, such as the Women's Institute, Probus Clubs, University of the Third Age, Civic Societies, Camera Clubs, Football Foundations and other adult social groups.

Supporting an increased knowledge of the water sector, we regularly engage with Riverlution (from the River Stewardship Company) and the Environment Agency to provide training.

Our Education Adviser at Tophill Low Nature Reserve regularly offers CPD (Continued Professional Development) for teachers delivering the habitat topic and has also worked with the Wild at Heart Nursery and Bishop Burton College, demonstrating how to deliver outdoor environmental sessions and offering guidance on career pathways.

At Tophill Low Nature Reserve, we also offer practical educational sessions for SEND students from local special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) schools.

In Spring 2025, we welcomed visitors from Gatwick Airport and The National Trust, who came to learn more about our education programme. We shared with The National Trust our student evaluation tool and they were so impressed they were taking the idea back to their Landscapes for Water project.

We'll continue to share our knowledge and learning as we progress through AMP8.



Summary



This report has provided an overview of our educational journey during AMP7 (Asset Management Period 7, covering 2020 to 2025).

We began the AMP in the midst of Covid-19, which immediately brought challenge to the delivery of our programme. Rising to the evolving changes happening around us, we took the opportunity to dynamically create, evolve and deliver brand new programmes, which have changed the way we now operate.

The creation of our virtual live events, online lessons and family events, helped to shape the direction of travel across the rest of the AMP and we now offer a layered approach covering 'in-person' sessions at our centres, outreach in schools and virtual on-line delivery.

The development of innovative programmes, such as our Lego blockages workshop and 'Hey Girls', has kept our content fresh and engaging, enabling us to reach audiences of all abilities across the region.

We pride ourselves on obtaining both student and teacher feedback and we have adapted our practice to ensure session content is appropriate to the curriculum, whilst supporting the challenges we face as a business.

Our targets have been focused on the delivery of quality education, with half or full day workshops, rather than aiming for large audience figures through the delivery of short assemblies. By providing a high standard of learning, we hope to inspire behaviour change and help develop an appreciation of what happens before the tap is turned on and after the toilet is flushed.

Over the AMP7 period, we have delivered 115,594 hours of education against our Performance Commitment and over 142,400 hours across the full programme. Our education team has reached over 150,000 individuals on matters relating to water.

Looking forward to AMP8 (Asset Management Period 8, covering 2025 to 2030), we have already increased capacity within the team to enable us to divide our delivery between proactive and reactive engagement opportunities. We will work in collaboration with our contract partners to deliver education in areas affected by Yorkshire Water's capital programme and will continue to support key business themes.

Finally, we'd like to thank the many schools and organisations that have taken part in our sessions during the past five years and we look forward to welcoming you back in the future.

