



TRYING TOGETHER

BECOME AN SOHK EDUCATIONAL PARTNER

School of Hard Knocks (SOHK) works with over 30 schools in high areas of deprivation across the UK. We are looking for a number of Independent Schools to become SOHK Educational Partners so that no child is left behind due to a lack of funding.

SOHK is a social inclusion charity that works with young people who are brimming with potential, but who come from challenging backgrounds and who are in complex and stressful circumstances. The [SOHK Schools Programme](#) uses a combination of rugby, and a unique psychology to help children who have not been given the same advantages others have, to realise and reach their potential. The programme is delivered over three years to facilitate long-term change, and has been designed by behavioural specialists and expert psychologists to create internal change in participants, which in turn enables positive external behaviours. We give young people the tools to cope with the stresses in their lives and empower them to use these strategies so they can achieve their potential.

SOHK is asking esteemed educational institutions to consider becoming SOHK Educational Partners. By doing so, you would directly contribute to the success of our programmes in schools that, despite their need, face challenges in funding our transformative work.

Your partnership would not only be a beacon of hope for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds but a testament to your commitment to social responsibility and inclusive education. Together, we can make a tangible difference in the lives of those who need it the most.

This informational pack includes detailed insights into the impact of our programme, the success stories that have emerged, and the logistical details of how your partnership can make a significant difference.

HISTORY & INTRODUCTION

School of Hard Knocks (SOHK) is a national charity, that uses a unique combination of rugby and behavioural psychology to help adults and pupils failing to thrive in school.

SOHK was set up by Ken Cowen in 2009 and established as a not-for-profit organisation in 2012. The first SOHK course was developed in Liverpool and sought to help young men from deprived backgrounds to find and sustain employment by using the values and game of rugby as central components.

Sky Sports heard about the premise and impact of this course, and shortly after picked it up as a docuseries that followed the development of SOHK participants. It was at this time that School of Hard Knocks was introduced to rugby legends Scott Quinnell and Will Greenwood, who fronted the programme for seven years.

The SOHK Schools Programme was conceived as a way of adults avoiding ever needing the SOHK Adult Course. After a 10-week pilot with two groups in East London, it was designed as a 3-year intensive intervention to allow for meaningful long-term support and change.

Starting with just three schools in East London, the programme is now running in over 30 schools nationwide in the areas that the map to the left shows.



WHO DOES SOHK SUPPORT?

School of Hard Knocks works with young people aged 11 - 16 across the whole of the UK. The lived experiences of our beneficiaries are varied, some of our participants may be homeless or living in extreme poverty, others may be victims of exploitation or abuse - there is no defining characteristic of an SOHK participant, but all of our participant, are living in complex and challenging circumstances, and all of the schools we run our programme in are in areas of high deprivation. SOHK's aim is to enable participants find purpose and meaning in their lives and to give them the tools they need to cope with their experiences.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?

School of Hard Knocks supports its beneficiaries using a three pronged approach. Outdoor rugby sessions help to physicalise the challenges our participants face and are then supported by social and emotional learning sessions that cover different topics and highlight various issues that our young people face today. We then nurture participants' individual growth by ensuring that every young person receives one-to-one support from an SOHK Social & Emotional Learning Lead. All three of these activities work within SOHK's 5Cs framework. The 5C is built on an evidence-based sport-for-development framework and has been adapted over the years to best apply to our beneficiaries. SOHK believes that in order for our participants to realise their potential and go on to fulfil it, that they need confidence, cohesion, control, commitment and communication; all of SOHK's activities seek to improve these things.

CONFIDENCE...

to believe in themselves and believe in their potential to succeed

CONTROL...

the ability to express themselves constructively and appropriately even in confrontational situations

COHESION...

teamwork, the unique bond between people working together towards a shared goal

COMMUNICATION...

the ability to accurately share ideas, feeling and information with others, verbally and non-verbally

COMMITMENT...

consistent effort and dedication to making a positive change and achieving goals

HELP US TO CLOSE THE GAP

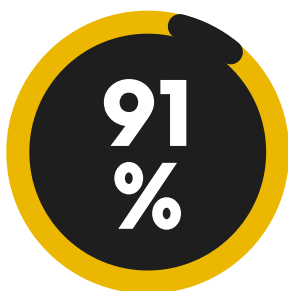
The cost of a SOHK Schools Programme is between £30-£32k per annum. This includes 38 sessions for up to 50 pupils. The schools that we work with contribute whatever they are able, and SOHK raises funds to meet the shortfall. As a result of the funding crisis, we are seeing a rapid decline in financial contributions from state-funded schools and have seen a number of schools drop out of the programme for the 23/24 academic year. The success of the programme relies heavily on consistency for these young people.

School of Hard Knocks is asking you to help us close the gap. Your support will enable us to continue working with all of our young people so that our programmes have a lasting impact.

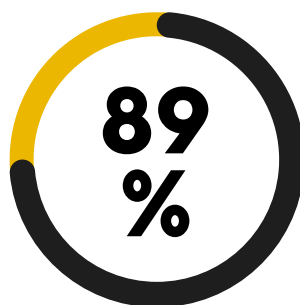
YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL MAKE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE

Any contribution your school makes will go directly to the front-line delivery of our Schools Programmes. Since the end of the UK lockdown, the need for SOHK's work in state-funded schools has grown exponentially. In their [COVID-19 mental health and wellbeing surveillance report](#), the UK government reported that evidence suggested that children and young people's mental health and wellbeing has been substantially impacted during the pandemic, especially for those living in areas of higher deprivation.

As such, School of Hard Knocks has seen a significant increase in the number of schools seeking support for their pupils. Prior to COVID-19 the SOHK Schools Programme was being run in 15 schools for 305 pupils. In 2023, the charity is working with 1787 pupils (13-16) in over 30 schools in the UK.



of Schools Participants reported that they feel **more confident in their abilities**



of Schools Participants reported that they feel **more hopeful for the future**



of Schools Participants reported that they feel **more engaged at school**

HARROW SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY

School of Hard Knocks began working with Harrow School in 2016. As a distinguished public school with a commitment to helping young people in more difficult circumstances than their students, and with team sport being an integral part of the Harrovian culture, supporting School of Hard Knocks seemed an excellent fit for the school.

Once Harrow School's Head of Rugby, James Melville, became more familiar with the charity's work, a partnership began with a friendly fixture at Harrow School between an SOHK cohort and the school's rugby team. This provided incredibly valuable experiences for both Harrow's and School of Hard Knocks' young people as they were able to enjoy post-match conversations and gain insight into each other's lives and backgrounds. After the success of this initial match, more and more SOHK cohorts from London and Hertfordshire were invited to Harrow to play against each other, with the number of fixtures at the school increasing year over year.

"These fixtures have not only showcased the power of sportsmanship on the field but have opened a gateway for invaluable exchanges between our students and the inspiring young people from the SOHK Schools Programmes. The post-match conversations have proven to be enlightening, providing a unique opportunity for our students to gain insights into diverse backgrounds and life experiences."

James Melville, Harrow School Head of Rugby



Beyond the pitch, Harrow School have exemplified the core values of rugby by successfully raising £5,000 to support the delivery of School of Hard Knocks' School Programme within London. Harrow also now host and cater for all of our SOHK England Boys teams for our annual SOHK X Harrow Tournament with the school welcoming 300 of our young people this year for a fantastic and impactful event. Seeing students from all schools engaging with one another in a positive and accepting way was truly a joyful experience. SOHK and Harrow School continue to enjoy a fruitful partnership that allows for growth and development in all of the young people involved.

HOW YOUR SCHOOL CAN SUPPORT SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS IN A MEANINGFUL WAY

THE COST OF A SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

It currently costs £1,076,000 per academic year to deliver the programme to 1787 pupils, or £615 per pupil.

REGION	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
# SCHOOLS	15	8	14
# YOUNG PEOPLE	501	290	996
£ COST	£343K	£276K	£457K

6K will allow a Schools Programme Facilitator to work with our young people for one school for an academic year.

12K will provide the programme with both a Schools Programme Facilitator and a Behavioural Specialist for one school for an academic year.

18K will provide the programme with all the staff required to run the Schools Programme for one school for an academic year.

30-32K will provide us with all the resource we need to run the Schools Programme in a school for an academic year; this includes giving our young people valuable and life-changing experiences through enrichment days.

WHAT YOU WILL RECEIVE AS A TRYING TOGETHER EDUCATIONAL PARTNER

We are committed to forging a partnership that is mutually beneficial and understand that different schools have different aims and priorities. As such, we do not have a one size fits all approach to these partnerships and would love to discuss how we can best collaborate in a way that works for your institution. Below however, is what you will 100% receive.

- A framed certificate of our partnership for your school
- A termly update from the SOHK Schools Manager overseeing the school/s you are supporting
- Your School's name & logo displayed prominently on our website
- Free access to our mental health in the workplace webinars
- Recognition of your support on our social media channels.
- Fundraising opportunities for your young people to support them in social enterprise skills

