



## Press Statement

**23 March 2010, for immediate release**

### **v expands community action to 14-16 year olds in schools**

A new programme to embed a culture of community action across secondary schools in England will be delivered by v, The National Young Volunteers' Service. As part of the Youth Community Action programme being launched today by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), vschools will involve 14 to 16 year old students in activities which will help to develop their skills and experience and which will also benefit the whole community.

v is delighted to be working with the DCSF to deliver this element of the Youth Community Action programme for 14-19 year olds.

The new vschools programme will be delivered by a dynamic national team of vschools Advisers who will work with schools to:

- Audit existing community action initiatives for 14 – 16 year olds (e.g. school councils, peer mentoring, fundraising activities etc.)
- Explore ways to enhance and develop student-led and school-based community action programmes, and also broker more effective links between schools and local third sector organisations
- Provide recognition for 14 – 16 year old students who undertake activities for the benefit of their peers, school or wider community, by enabling them to record the hours and skills gained through their community action projects.

Terry Ryall, Chief Executive of v, commented:

“We’re passionate about encouraging lifelong community action and our research and experience shows that young people who have volunteered are more likely to do so again. Our unique assets, infrastructure and experience make us ideally placed to deliver this new programme. As The National Young Volunteers’ Service, v has already created over 900,000 opportunities for young people.”

v is appointing over 100 vschools Advisers to begin work in April 2010, who will work closely with schools to build on the brilliant work already being carried out by teachers. The school community action programme will also embrace the range of existing initiatives already being delivered in schools, such as the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award programme and the Community Sport Leaders Awards.

vschools Advisers will work closely with v's existing involved teams network across England, building on their knowledge, expertise and existing relationships with schools and third sector organisations to get the 14 – 16 programme off to a flying start.

vschools Advisers will provide teachers with valuable additional support and resources, offering fresh and innovative ideas for school-based community action projects, as well as brokering relationships between schools and local third and public sector organisations, to increase the supply of volunteering opportunities for 14 – 16 year olds. This will include a clear focus on supporting youth-led action in schools and communities, enabling young people to identify the issues that matter to them, and take positive action to address them.

### **Ends**

For further information please contact Paul Werb, Communications Manager, at [paul.werb@vinspired.com](mailto:paul.werb@vinspired.com) or on direct line 020 7960 7011

### **Notes to Editors**

1. **v, The National Young Volunteers Service** aims to inspire a new generation of volunteers (aged 16-25) in England. It does this by funding voluntary organisations all over England to create inspiring, diverse opportunities and by helping to overcome barriers that stop people from taking action to improve lives, communities and the planet.
2. **v's** aim is to create a culture where volunteering comes naturally and where the benefits of volunteering are understood and celebrated.
3. **v** is an independent charity launched in May 2006 as a result of the Russell Commission report, A National Framework for Youth Action and Engagement.

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