



YOUTH START MENTORING PROJECT FOR SOUTH LONDON

My Voice London (formerly Kingston & Merton Education Business Partnership, KMEBP) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Its role is to promote, develop, and support links between education and business for mutual benefit. Programmes are designed to enable young people to be effectively prepared for adult and working life; and employers provide time and expertise to bring a real context to learning. The benefits to employers include the opportunity to put something back into the local community and many now use links with education to develop their own skills and understanding of education and those of their employees.

The Youth Start mentoring project is supported by a wide range of funders. It has been operating in Kingston and Merton for nine years and has been operating in all south London boroughs for the last three years, working with young people between the ages of 10 and 17. The aim is to promote social inclusion to those who are disadvantaged due to exclusion from or who are at risk of exclusion from mainstream education and training; and to enhance their personal and social development.

The following information outlines the Youth Start mentoring project, which provides mentoring for young people by adults who have successfully made the transition between school and further education, training, and/or work.

If you have any queries or you want to use the service, please contact Tope Hunter, Mentoring Project Manager, or any other member of the mentoring team will be happy to help.

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OBJECTIVES

- To provide a mentoring scheme to enhance the personal and social development, education, training and work experience of young people
- To promote social inclusion to those who are disadvantaged due to exclusion from or at risk of exclusion from mainstream education and training
- To support young people in their practical, emotional and family/carer problems and to enable them to re-engage in school
- To reduce school exclusion
- To reduce truancy
- To raise self-esteem

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Youth Start mentoring project is aimed at 10 – 17 year olds and offers 1:1 mentoring in personal and social issues, such as:

- *improving attendance*
- *raising self-esteem*
- *reducing truancy*
- *enabling re-engagement in school*
- *helping with problems in and outside school*
- *advising on contacting other agencies for additional support*

MENTORS' ROLE

Mentors will discuss with students their interests, aspirations and progress at school. They will encourage students to apply themselves at school to maximise their achievements. They will also share with students some aspects of their working life.

Mentors will give brief feedback to the mentoring team about their sessions with mentees for the team to be able to monitor the mentoring relationship.

MENTORS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Demonstrate through their own education and career history the value of learning and achieving
- Demonstrate how they came to understand the relevance of learning to adult life, but we do not expect, and would not want, all mentors to have achieved exceptional exam results or to be at the top in their field.
- Help students to see the relevance of the mentor's experience to their own present and future.

Mentors may or may not have had experience of working with young people but they have all been teenagers once and they would remember what that is like.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

This is an equal opportunities initiative and students will be targeted on the basis of their requirements. This is a multi ethnic project and we are seeking a diverse group of mentors to support students. The application procedure includes ethnic monitoring.

MENTORS COMMITMENT

Mentors will make a commitment to one to one mentoring for one hour per week. Mentors will be fully trained and briefed prior to their first introduction to the students.

MY VOICE LONDON COMMITMENT TO MENTORS

- Mentors will be selected after an interview, two satisfactory references, and checked by the Criminal Record Bureau. Please note that due to the nature of working with children and young people we are unable to recruit volunteers who have had a criminal record.
- Free training will be given in Mentoring and Child Protection.
- Mentors will be given a Mentoring Handbook and a copy of My Voice London's Child Protection Policy.
- Full support will be given to mentors and mentees by the mentoring team.
- My Voice London will provide a full briefing for all mentors to enable them to fulfil their role.
- Schools will provide a member of the senior management team who will be responsible for managing the project in the school, including liaising with mentors and teachers and provide a first line of support for mentors in schools.
- My Voice London will organise regular networking and support meetings for mentors to discuss their role with the Programmes Manager and the Mentoring Co-ordinator and fellow mentors.

QUALITY – THE PAN-LONDON MENTORING STANDARD

The Pan-London Mentoring Standard was developed as a quality assurance model by a partnership of organisations experienced in managing mentoring schemes, including Education Business Partnerships, and the Government Office for London. The Youth Start mentoring project will follow the guidelines set out in the Standard (copies of which are available on request from My Voice London).

MENTORING AND BEFRIENDING AWARD (APPROVED PROVIDER STANDARD)

My Voice London was re-awarded the APS in March 2009. The 'preparation of mentees and the well-structured mentors training and support processes' has been highlighted as particularly strong features of the mentoring programme'.

MATCHING

Where possible, students and mentors will be matched according to common interest areas but this is unlikely to be achievable in every case.

EVALUATION

There will be a full evaluation of the programme against its objectives at the end of the summer term. This will include evidence from mentors and students and will ask teachers/tutors to assess the impact on the achievements of the students.