











Insider

A WORLD CLASS CITY WITH A THRIVING AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY WHERE EVERYONE CAN FLOURISH



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A PIONEERING PARTNERSHIP – ONE YEAR ON



January marks the first anniversary of the council's partnership with MCR Pathways which aims to support the city's disadvantaged young people to reach their full potential.

MCR Pathways recruits, trains, matches and supports volunteer mentors to inspire vulnerable young people in Glasgow secondary schools and raise aspirations for their future.

Since its creation in 2007, the charity has grown significantly. It currently supports over 900 young people and is expanding its presence to 30 secondary schools across the city.

The number of care-experienced young people progressing from school to university, college or a job has increased from 48.8% to 81% with mentor support through MCR.

COUNCIL COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT

In January 2017 our Chief Executive, Annemarie O'Donnell, announced a commitment to encourage 10% of the council's staff to sign up as mentors.

Iain MacRitchie, founder of MCR Pathways said: "It's an amazing commitment, which will see so many of Glasgow's care experienced young people get the support they need and deserve. Our aim is to make sure that they get the same educational outcomes, career opportunities and life chances as any other young person."

The campaign has seen a positive response citywide with staff of all ages, backgrounds and experience volunteering. Every Service and ALEO is supporting the initiative - City Parking has already seen 5% of their workforce becoming mentors.



Michelle Black, SVQ Advisor at Cordia, presenting the programme to a group of Cordia staff.

Chief Executive, Annemarie O'Donnell, who has signed up to become a mentor, said: "Our workforce is very diverse. Staff have a wide range of skills and experiences that could be used to support and encourage a young person who is disadvantaged through circumstances that are not their fault."

"We're asking staff to consider committing to one hour a week over one or two school years to be part of this amazing initiative. The rewards are plenty but it's also about staff development as well as the obvious benefits to the young person."

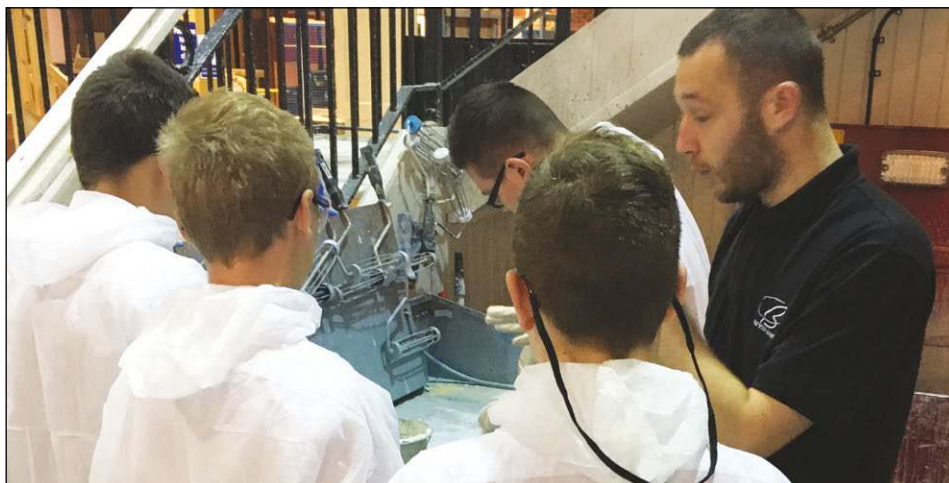
BENEFITS OF MENTORING – FOR STAFF AND THEIR YOUNG PERSON

Alongside the emotional rewards of mentoring, growing evidence also shows the personal development it

can offer to the mentor. Learning to empathise with the challenges facing a young person, being a positive influence and encouraging them to achieve through their education is a hugely rewarding experience.

Karen Strachan Senior HR Officer said: "Our managers are encouraging their staff to get involved as a tool to build their competence, whilst feedback from staff describes improved morale and an enormous sense of purpose and fulfilment."

The sad fact is that many young people do not get the opportunity and support to realise their full potential. Especially those in and on the edges of the care system. The only way to break the mould and make sure they are defined by their potential – and never their circumstances – is through education and one-to-one support.



Pupils enjoy a 'Taster' session at City Building.

CHANGING LIVES

Almost 80% of care-experienced young people leave school at the first opportunity. But MCR have developed a simple but highly effective approach to help give young people consistent support. Simply down to a caring adult listening, building a relationship of trust and helping that young person find, grow and use their talent, a radical difference in these outcomes is possible. And at the same time mentors, and their organisations, are experiencing a rich return in morale, satisfaction and personal development.

Iain MacRitchie, added: "Behind the results of the last year there has been lots of hard work, developing an inspiring partnership with the council – and, at the heart of it all, we have listened to the needs of young people. There's a lot to be proud of."

For vulnerable young people, role models matter. Simply devoting 50 minutes a week to listen, build a trusting relationship and help a young person to find their talent, people can make a life changing difference.

One member of staff who enjoys mentoring is Kimberley Hose, Head of Transformation at Cordia. Talking about her experience, Kimberley said: "I'm probably a better listener now than I was, even with my own kids who are a bit younger. When

I sit with my mentee, I am 100% present and there for her and I can feel the difference that makes."

GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE A TASTE OF WORK AND BUILDING CONFIDENCE

MCR is working with the council family on their industry-based work experience programme known as 'Talent Tasters.'

Twice a year, young people on the programme, are given the opportunity to try out different jobs, cultural experiences, further and higher education - all designed to inspire and raise aspirations.

The council family is working to support these taster opportunities to offer a wide range of career options. Development and Regeneration Services, Land and Environmental Services and Glasgow Life, have already organised successful taster sessions to introduce career options to young people.

Sharon McGrath, Head of Corporate Services, City Building said: "City Building have a strong ethos of giving something back. We advocate adding value to communities by providing jobs and training opportunities. It makes sense for us to extend that ethos by partnering with MCR Pathways and working together with them to support young people in Glasgow secondary schools."

Alongside practical work experience and regular mentoring, young people are encouraged to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh award. The programme allows them to get involved with a wide range of activities. It also helps them to build new skills such as leadership, communication, negotiating, decision making and teamwork which helps to develop their self confidence – and boosts their CV.

THE NEXT 10 YEARS

MCR has a national ambition, which can be made real with the commitment of individuals and organisations across the country. The pioneering partnership with the council will help achieve that.

Iain MacRitchie concluded: "I'm excited about what the next 10 years will bring for MCR Pathways and our partnership with the council. Our aim is to reach every care-experienced and disadvantaged young person in Glasgow and across the country."

CAN YOU GET INVOLVED

- To learn more about how the council is supporting volunteer mentors, or to find out who your Service Champion is, and how to sign up, please visit [Connect](#).
- If you would like to have a short presentation to a group of colleagues, please email kirsty.brennan@mcrpathways.org or phone **0141 221 0200**.
- Come along to a public information sessions this month:
Scotstoun Sports Campus, 72 Danes Drive, Glasgow G14 9HD
 Monday 8 January: 5pm to 7pm
 Monday 15 January: 5pm to 7pm

Gorbals Sports Centre, 275 Ballater Street, Glasgow G5 0YP
 Monday 15 January: 5pm to 7pm
 Monday 22 January: 5pm to 7pm