

Unlocking potential **in your school**

Until
everyone
**has
someone**

 **MCR**
Pathways



Every young person deserves a champion

At a time when we're all under pressure, every resource must deliver real impact for young people.

We understand the difficult decisions leaders are making every day to protect the core of their provision.

That's why MCR Pathways is working flexibly with schools to ensure our mentoring programme remains accessible, flexible and impactful.

By embedding the programme within your existing team, you can align your approach to your resources and strategy in new ways, ensuring you reach those who need it most, together.

MCR Pathways infrastructure provides all the support you need for an effective programme :

- Full training and ongoing support
- Access to our secure monitoring system
- Promotions and partnership working to drive volunteers to work with your young people
- Volunteer recruitment, vetting and monitoring, training and matching
- Data, case studies and impact reporting tailored to your school



We understand every school is different

That's why MCR Pathways will work with you to map out how we can complement your existing priorities, staffing and support structures.

With you we'll look at:

- School inspection reports and improvement plans
- Roles and remits of your support staff
- Key priorities around behaviour, attendance and wellbeing
- Understand your challenges for narrowing the gap and securing the best outcomes and positive destinations for all
- Local authority wide priorities and existing initiatives

Whether you're a single school, a Multi-Academy Trust or part of a wider Local Authority strategy, we shape the offer around your needs.



Tailored to your context

MCR's model is simple and proven.

The Pathways Coordinator is at the heart of MCR's mentoring model.

Whether employed specifically in the role or taking it on as part of an existing remit, this key contact ensures mentoring is embedded and effective within each setting.

As the link between young people, mentors, staff and the wider MCR team, the Coordinator plays a vital role in identifying pupils who will benefit, supporting mentor relationships, and tracking progress.

With full training, resources and ongoing support from MCR, the Coordinator ensures mentoring is safe, structured and impactful—contributing meaningfully to pupil wellbeing, engagement and positive destinations.

We don't mind what their job title is—as long as they're someone who's trusted, connected, and cares.

The right person to coordinate mentoring is already in your setting: someone young people relate to, staff respect, and who brings empathy, organisation and a can-do attitude.

These staff are normally already recognised as champions in your setting for care-experienced young people, those disengaged from learning, those with additional support needs or those needing extra help because of the challenges they are facing.

We work alongside them to enhance their impact through structured mentoring.

If they've got the heart for it, we'll give them the tools to make the MCR Pathways programme happen.

Across England and Scotland, schools have deployed existing staff from a range of different roles to help ensure that they can embed the MCR model in the best way for their setting. Examples of the roles used are:

- Pupil Support Assistant (PSA)
- Teaching Assistants (TA) and Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HTLA)
- Inclusion Support Worker
- Pastoral Support Officer / Advisors
- Health & Wellbeing Officer / Assistant
- Attendance Officer
- Youth Worker / Youth Development Worker
- ASN Support Worker (Additional Support Needs)
- Learning Support Assistants
- Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) Support Worker
- Family Support Worker

- Counsellors
- Cover Supervisor
- Home-School Link Worker
- Learning Mentor
- Social Work Assistant
- Case Manager Assistant
- Student Support
- Outreach Officers
- Transitions Coordinator
- Flexible Pathways Coordinator
- SEBN (Social, Emotional & Behavioural Needs) Support Worker
- Principal Teacher of Guidance
- Principal Teacher of Pupil Support
- Support for Learning Teacher
- Behaviour Support Teacher
- Nurture Teacher / Nurture Base Support



The Ideal Fit

Someone who knows

- the challenges and barriers faced by care-experienced and vulnerable young people in your school
- the safeguarding and child protection procedures and responsibilities
- how to plan for and evidence good practice and positive outcomes
- the needs of disengaged learners and how school is supporting their progression

Someone who can

- build strong, meaningful relationships with young people, mentors, school and partners
- deliver confidently in group sessions to young people and adults
- deal with data and administration to support the programme
- be organised and self-motivated
- support and manage volunteers

Someone who has

- a young-person-first mindset, rooted in empathy, care, and respect
- a solution-focused and non-judgemental approach
- a strong commitment to equity and inclusion
- a willingness to grow and adapt to meet the needs of young people and the school

Above all someone who acts as a positive role model for Motivation, Commitment, and Resilience



Bannockburn – Enhancing What Already Works

At Bannockburn High School, a Health & Wellbeing Support for Learning Assistant already supports care-experienced pupils, young carers, and those at risk of disengagement. By introducing MCR mentoring, the school enhanced this existing support with trained volunteer mentors offering 1:1 time each week.

The same staff member coordinates the programme with full training and resources from MCR, including access to the MCR tracking system and school-specific reporting. This model has strengthened the school's personalised pathways approach and provided impact on wellbeing and positive destinations.

MCR Pathways mentoring gave the role extra tools, structures, and purpose with measurable outcomes.



Falkirk's Collaborative Approach

In Falkirk, the continuing challenge of care-experienced young people disengaging from mainstream education—was an issue with clear implications. Failing to secure positive outcomes and subsequently finding and sustaining a destination in learning or work, would have long term impacts for these young people and the Falkirk communities they live in.

In response, Falkirk Council and MCR Pathways engaged in ongoing discussions about solutions to this problem. The Quality Improvement Officer, Care Experienced Team and MCR Pathways Head of Region explored how mentoring could offer additional, targeted support.

Through this collaboration, a flexible delivery model emerged.

Falkirk Council Care Experienced Lead, and their team, now identify and nominate care-experienced pupils for mentoring, securing their consent, and drawing up the essential young people's profile.

MCR's Programme Manager then matches each young person with a trained volunteer mentor. Mentoring takes place within the school, even where MCR doesn't have a full-time presence.

Each participating school allocates a member of the Pupil Support Team—usually someone already working with the young person—to act as the pathways coordinator lead.

This staff member welcomes and inducts the mentor, acts as their point of contact, and helps ensure consistency.

The Programme Manager provides all necessary support and training, and shares progress reports directly with Falkirk's Care Experienced team.

Tracking engagement and early indicators of impact is at the heart of their close working.

As a result of this successful approach, MCR Pathways has been able to expand to working with pupil support teams in schools across the authority.

Four schools are now using this flexible staffing model to engage with the MCR Pathways Programme.

This partnership-led model has enabled Falkirk schools to offer meaningful support to more young people, aligned with the local authority's wider goal of improving outcomes and sustained destinations for care-experienced young people.



Argyll and Bute's Winning Combination

Argyll and Bute Council's strong understanding of inclusion and what works in a diverse rural context has helped shape their mentoring programme with MCR Pathways.

Collaboration, flexibility and creativity on both sides has been key to finding and delivering the perfect programme mix for their schools. It caters for Argyll and Bute's secondary schools involved with MCR Pathways, ranging in size from almost 1400 learners in Helensburgh, to the smallest island school involved, with 300 pupils.

The Council has planned a valuable split-campus approach for Pathways Co-ordinators for smaller settings, working across two smaller schools and spending time in both across each week. Other larger schools have part time and full time single school models of delivery. The combination works well and has enabled the programme to continually grow.



"We feel this is the best fit for our context, and we're delighted to be supported by the MCR Pathways team to bring this vision to life.

We have exciting plans for our existing staff to run the programme in some of our smallest islands, to help us expand further into our most remote school communities. We believe that every young person should have access to MCR Pathways mentoring support—regardless of their context.

"Working together is the best way we can create new ways to deliver mentoring, and new ways to sustain it."

Jen Crocket, Chief Education Officer, Argyll and Bute Council

Get in touch



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