

SCHOOLS MENTORING PROGRAMME

Report of the Head of Housing Management & Housing Options

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report proposes that Derby Homes funds a pilot Schools Mentoring Project through our existing work with Enthusiasm.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the funding of a schools mentoring programme on the basis outlined within this report. Evaluation of the pilot scheme will be considered at a six month and twelve month position and consideration given to extending this work as part of an the ongoing programme around youth inclusion.

3. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To work with high risk young people within the school and family environment. The aim will be to increase the confidence and self-esteem of young people, avoiding exclusion from mainstream education and improving their overall life chances. This will in turn improve their behaviour and influence within their communities and contribute to the reduction of anti-social behaviour on our estates.

4. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 Derby Homes already works in partnership with Enthusiasm delivering youth inclusion services, predominatly in the south of the City at the present time. Our joint work has, over the years, contributed to the reduction of anti-social behaviour and more serious youth related criminal activity.
- 4.2 This report proposes that this work is extended, on a pilot basis, to work with troubled young people within the school and family environment. Our experience tells us that many young people who cause problems within communities have low educational attainment and low self esteem. At the present time we focus on working with young people out of school, many of whom will have already experienced temporary or permanent exlusion from mainstream education. This proposal is to work with the school, the young person and their families to manage and improve behaviour to reduce the problems that lead to exclusion, and therefore improve the educational attainment and life opportunities going forward for the individuals involved.

4.3 The project would offer 1-2-1 mentoring for young people who are deemed to be underachieving due to disruptive behaviour in school and/ or difficult circumstances at home. This may include but is not exclusive to poor parent engagement, poor attendance, poor behaviour in and around school, substance misuse, chaotic family environment and other negative influences outside of school. The young person will have a dedicated worker to support, challenge and amend their thinking and behaviour. Each individual will be formally assessed with an action plan developed in partnership with the school and where relevant other agencies. This action plan will lead to a multi-faceted package of activities designed to challenge under-achievement, anti-social behaviour, offending, and related forms of abusive lifestyles and will address the issues highlighted during their assessment. Regular reviews are built into the work with the individual to ensure that they are making progress and that we are reducing the risk factors associated with their offending or antisocial behaviour.

4.4 The mentoring package offers 3 key advantages

- Community connection – Reaching hard to reach young people who are disengaged with school and reconnecting school with parents.
- Underlying needs – Identifying and putting in action plans to deal with the root causes behind why pupils disengage and perform poorly in attainment, attendance and engagement
- Monitoring outputs relevant to school targets to track improvement in
 - Attendance
 - Negative points
 - Underlying needs
 - Fixed term exclusions
 - Narrowing the gap.

4.5 The mentoring consists of various elements

Assessment and Action Plan

All young people will be assessed during the first term of the program to help understand the reasons behind their behaviour and poor performance; the assessment will lead to an action plan to address the most urgent issues for that young person. The mentor will then support the young person, working with the school, parent/guardian and other relevant agencies in order to implement the action plan.

Mentoring in School and out of School

A mentor will see the young people at various times during school including before and/or after school on the gate, during lunch times, and during lessons with specific permission from staff to meet the mentor for a 1 to 1. The young person will also get home visits and 1 to 1 contact outside of school time.

Parent/Carer Contact

Although the focus for this project will be on the young person regular contact is also made with the parent/carers to inform the assessment and get support with the implementation of the action plan. The programme will also encourage parents/carers to engage with school.

Call out

The scheme will also offer set times and days when school staff can use the call out service to ask a mentor to come into school to assist a young person.

In all our delivery we aim to tailor the service to meet the needs of the school and the young people.

- 4.6 For the programme to be successful it is essential that the school is fully involved, they will be required to:
- Complete referral forms for all young people on the program.
 - Provide a key contact in school to communicate with on a weekly basis and for any safeguarding concerns.
 - Hold regular review meetings to assess progress within the project.
 - Provide an option for representatives to attend a staff meeting to ensure all staff know who the mentors are and why we are in school.
 - Share information on attendance, negative points and other school data to help us track the projects impact.
- 4.7 Derby Homes has already made contact with head teachers at two schools in the north east of the City, Leesbrook and DaVinci. Both of these schools take pupils from areas where there are high concentrations of students from estates where Derby Homes manages a high number of properties. The head teachers have already indicated their interest and believe that such a scheme would have benefits in terms of improving the life opportunities for some challenging young people. Obviously there are also benefits for other pupils if the disruptive behaviour is reduced.
- 4.8 The cost of providing the mentoring programme is £750 per pupil per term*, to a total of £22,500 for 20 pupils over 12 months**.
- *This is based on minimum numbers and duration. This includes continued work during school holidays.
- ** Based on a typical young person requiring 6 months of engagement on the program, it is recommended working with 10 pupils at any one time which means 20 pupils per school, per year.
- 4.9 Meetings will be arranged to discuss the scale of the pilot with a view to working across the two schools.

5. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 As this is a proposed pilot scheme we have proposed to link with an existing provider who has already delivered this work in Nottingham. Evaluation of the scheme may require a separate procurement exercise if it is continued on a wider basis.

IMPLICATIONS

6 FINANCE & BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is proposed that the one off cost of the pilot scheme would be contained within Derby Homes surplus.

The areas listed below have no direct implications directly arising from this report:

Consultation
Council
Personnel Implications
Environmental
Health & Safety
Policy Review
Equality Implications
Risk Implications
Legal & Confidentiality

If Board Members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact:

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Background Information: None
Supporting Information: None