

Appendix 4

Youth Futures Foundation: Freshstart Project

Summary December 2020

Background

A stage one outline application has been submitted to the Youth Futures Foundation to express an interest to deliver Freshstart, a £6M project over five years, to support young people in Birmingham aged 14-18 who are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET. Freshstart is a joint working project involving the Council's Skills and Employability Service, 14-19 Participation & Skills Team, Birmingham's Youth and Careers Services and Birmingham Children's Trust.

Youth Futures Foundation funds have been launched in 2020 and have considerable advantages due to being aimed at creating solutions to support disadvantaged young people. The fund is also designed to include a significant independent evaluation element led by the central YFF team who monitor agreed KPIs to ensure impact is measured. In this sense the project is research in action and as this project is 5 years long it provides opportunity for a range of learning from discrete early intervention actions to longitudinal support impact measurement.

Purpose

14-18 year olds facing challenging or chaotic situations are far more likely to be at risk of NEET or already NEET. There is longstanding delivery of programmes to support NEET young people in Birmingham, but there is a need to move towards earlier and more specific intervention. Managed moves and classroom-based Alternative Provision do not work for everyone, and some young people need to aspire beyond education at an earlier stage. Freshstart will target extremely disadvantaged groups, such as:

- Not in employment, education or training
- Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic young people (including those of Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Heritage)
- Care experienced or have caring responsibilities
- Economically disadvantaged
- 14/15 year olds at risk of NEET
- Experience of school exclusion or alternative provision
- Experience of offending
- Special educational needs or disabilities
- Adverse Childhood Experiences

Freshstart is a five-year longitudinal project to support young people at key intervention times with quality employability training and work placements to prevent or limit NEET status to under 3 months.

Three Step Support

Step 1, Freshstart Mentoring, is the element common to most support journeys on the programme. This relationship of trust will be the main foundation for any additional support provided by the programme. It is anticipated that 1800 young people, referred principally by Birmingham Children's Trust, will be supported by Freshstart Mentoring.

Step 2, Flexible fast track employment focussed training, in addition to Freshstart Mentoring, this stage will support 900 young people aged 16 - 18. It is likely to be most beneficial for young people disengaged from learning and training where the need is for short, engaging and supportive vocational learning in small groups that can ignite an interest in the EET pathway and increased confidence. Most young people supported in fast track training will also be supported by a Freshstart Mentor and may also progress to Step 3 support.

Step 3, part time paid work placements for 450 young people supported by a Freshstart Mentor. Part time work placements will be supportive settings for young people to gain work skills and become more work ready, to provide an environment in which they can succeed. Suitability for support in Step 3 is likely to be

determined by aspiration and engagement in their EET journey, although they may not be fully work-ready they are positively engaging with becoming so.

Costs

Outline project costs over five years are shown in the table below.

	TOTAL (Yr1-5)
Engagement & Mentoring	£2.62M
Reengagement Provision & Alternative Training	£1.89M
Paid Work Placements Scheme	£0.56M
Project Delivery Costs & Overheads	£0.93M
GRAND TOTAL	£6.00M

Outputs:

The following output targets are linked to each project pathway step:

- Number of participants starting the programme = 1935
- Step 1 Number of young people mentored = 1800 (93% of young people starting the project)
- Step 2 Number of fast track training places = 900 (46% of young people starting the project)
- Step 3 Number of P/T paid placements = 450 (23% of young people starting the project)
- Number of young people supported to access non-project employment development/training = 300 (16% of young people starting the project).

Outcomes

Freshstart will achieve the following outcomes for young people supported by the project:

- 70% increase their attendance or positive engagement in education - reducing risk of exclusion
- 85% participants gain increased soft skills (confidence, self-esteem, problem solving, resilience etc.)
- 60% of supported NEETs go into EET outcomes within 3 months of completion