

Report to	Southern Wiltshire
Date of Meeting	01/05/2019
Title of Report	Community Youth Grants

1. Purpose of the report:

To ask Councillors to consider the following applications seeking funding from the Southern Wiltshire Area Board.

Applicant: The Bridge Youth Project	£3352.00
Project Title: The Bridge Youth Project Mentoring Scheme	

2. Main Considerations

Councillors will need to be satisfied that grants awarded in the 2019/20 year are made to projects that can realistically proceed within a year of the award being made.

Area Boards have authority to approve Area Grants under powers delegated to them by the Cabinet member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding. Under the Scheme of Delegation Area Boards must adhere to the Area Board Grants Guidance 2014/2015.

Community Youth Grants will contribute to the continuance and/or improvement of cultural, social and community activity and wellbeing in the community area, the extent and specifics of which will be dependent upon the individual project.

Community Youth Grants give all local community and voluntary groups, Town and Parish Councils an equal opportunity to receive funding towards community based projects and schemes.

3. The applications

Applicant: The Bridge Youth Project	Amount Requested from Area Board: £3352.00
Project Title: The Bridge Youth Project Mentoring Scheme	
This application meets grant criteria 2014/15.	
<p>Project Summary: The mentoring scheme was set up to support vulnerable young people in secondary schools who need additional support by linking them with volunteers from the community. They meet with a volunteer mentor for an hour per fortnight over the course of an academic year. This is a safe space where they can discuss any issues that matter to them and have someone trustworthy who will listen to them and act as a positive role model. We help young people to set goals and to realise more of their potential. A full evaluation is undertaken.</p>	

Please tell us WHO will benefit and HOW they will benefit from your project and benefit your local community:

1. The Bridge Mentoring Scheme matches students in 4 Salisbury-based secondary schools with a mentor from the local community. These are currently Wyvern College, St Edmunds Girls School, Sarum Academy, and Avon Valley College.

Wyvern & St Eds receive the highest proportion of mentors within the scheme with 18 mentors out of a total of 39. There is now also a very strong possibility having recently met with the Headteacher that we will be taking the scheme into Trafalgar School who are extremely keen to access it. The Deputy Head and Pastoral Lead Rachael Faulkner comments As support from external agencies dwindles and schools are asked to take more responsibility for every aspect of a child's life we at Trafalgar feel that many of our students would benefit hugely from supportive mentoring from people with no agenda who are motivated by the desire to help encourage and challenge students who may not have this support out of school. Many of our students need time invested in them to flourish and to achieve their potential. With an exciting scheme like this that time can be provided and those students can be allowed to be the best they can possibly be.

After receiving full training and induction mentors are matched with a mentee from one of the schools and they meet together fortnightly in school typically during a lesson time for an entire year. The mentor acts as a listening ear and positive role model enabling the mentee to unpack life, build necessary skills, and look towards the future. Over the last couple of years the issues that young people in school are facing have escalated and the schools know that these young people desperately need someone to talk to and a reliable consistent role-model to help them to grow and to learn coping strategies.

The mentoring scheme is now a key part of the pastoral structure within WyvernSt Edmunds and our Mentoring Coordinator Kate Moody has an office base there. Pupils can be referred by teaching staff but they are also able to self-refer should they wish to do so. Mentors and mentees can work through a range of issues ranging from difficult family relationships and bereavement, to mental health issues and friendship struggles. However whilst there are often difficulties to work through in each young person's life the mentor is able to extol the positives that undoubtedly exist and speak encouragement and support.

There is a significant demand for more mentors within WyvernSt Eds and a very obvious need at Trafalgar where we hope to launch the scheme in the coming months. However we do not charge the schools a single penny for the scheme for budgets are often stretched. Therefore we do appeal to the South Wilts Area Board for support that will enable us to serve more young people within this catchment area.

We are pleased to include some recent quotes that demonstrate a need for the service locally. **View from a tutor - St Edmunds June 2018 E. has become really confident this year to talk more about her Dad's death and making people aware of support that students can get if they too have lost a parent. E. has talked about the project that she is completing with her Mentors support and**

has really appreciated the way her Mentor has allowed her to be independent with this. E. has shown a mature approach to her loss. View from a student-Year 8 female pupil March 2018 My sessions with my Mentor are the highlight of my week. She listens to me and encourages me. View from a mentor who is leaving due to getting a full-time job Thanks for the Mentoring opportunity. I will really miss it. I certainly learnt a lot about teenagers and about myself. Schools are currently very stretched financially with central funding cuts having an impact. One teacher recently said to us There have been so many funding cuts over the years and the Bridge does an amazing job at supporting vulnerable children in my school.

Perhaps one of the biggest needs locally is the lack of generational integration. It is so unusual for two people of completely different ages and backgrounds to come together and many of the mentors talk about this as an amazing opportunity to give something back to the community and to show young people that there are people out there who care for them. A significant number of mentors are retired and it is vital that they are able to volunteer in worthwhile causes that really make a difference.

2. We ran a pilot scheme in the summer of 2015. This involved the voluntary participation of six young people from Wyvern College. These students were absolutely instrumental in helping us to establish the scheme and were particularly helpful in articulating the key priorities and the needs that existed amongst their peers. They told us about the need for a positive role model to talk to and a non-judgemental listening ear to share their concerns with on their journey through the year. Young people continue to be pivotal in shaping the mentoring scheme. This is evidenced through their ongoing feedback and evaluation. A Year 10 pupil says Mentoring is inspiring for you and for the person you are going to meet ...I have changed in myself cos I can speak more openly and I am more confident. I am telling my friends to get a mentor too. Some of the referrals come from students themselves having heard about the positive experience through a friend

3. To date over 50 young people have engaged with the scheme in 4 local secondary schools most of them having met with a mentor every fortnight for an entire year. Currently 13 young people are being mentored within the South Wilts area board catchment. Statistics from the schools indicate that eight of these pupils live within the catchment area for the Board. However new mentees are continually coming on board throughout the academic year. Given the Laverstock schools catchment area and that of Trafalgar it is likely that the majority of these will live within the South Wilts boundary. This cannot be predicted with any accuracy. We are very much aware of the potential for expansion by way of recruiting and training new volunteer mentors so that more young people can be supported. In addition there is the possibility of extending the scheme into more secondary schools. Your funding would enable us to ensure that many more new young people would benefit from this scheme and have a mentor in their lives to support them.

4. There is absolutely no charge to young people or their families to engage with the mentoring scheme. We are thrilled that for the cost of one part-time co-ordinator we are able to engage with so many young people who may otherwise not have individual support. It is so cost-effective. The mentoring scheme is also available and accessible to all young people. We welcome anyone who would benefit from a mentor. We also make sure to promote this opportunity to teachers and staff and with pastoral teams. **Often the Bridge Mentoring Scheme is part of the official pastoral care route within the schools.**

5. All of the mentors are volunteers drawn from a wide range of local churches. Mentors are encouraged to come forward via publicity across all of our networks. It should be noted that whilst the Bridge Youth Project is a Christian organisation absolutely nothing about the mentoring scheme is about talking to young people about Christianity. It is simply about the resources of local churches making a difference in the lives of young people.

CEM comment:

The request is to contribute £3352 towards the overall costs of this scheme in 2019/20 which is £13,674 (£600 of which is refreshments and materials, £13,074 of which is the project co-ordinator's salary). Mentoring is proving to be a really effective means of support for young people, and more and more schools are turning to these schemes to reinforce their pastoral care strategies. The applicant has clarified that currently 8 young people out of the 13 being mentored at Wyvern/St Eds live within the Southern Area Board catchment area, but that new pupils will enter the scheme during the year, also at Trafalgar School, a new school wishing to adopt the scheme. The Youth Fund exists to facilitate young people's engagement in positive activities. Some young people need more support than others in order to feel able and confident to engage in positive activities, mentoring is a proven method to assist with this.

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