



MCR Pathways
Aberdeen City

Draft -
**1st Stage Evaluation of Impact
2021 - 2023**



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Introduction

The following report sets out the progression and impact to date of the partnership between the Council (ACC), 6 participating academies and MCR Pathways.

Agreement was reached to launch MCR for both care experienced and other vulnerable groups of young people, immediately after which the pandemic hit. Understandably given the relationship based practice at the heart of the programme it has taken longer to be established. There have been significant challenges, notably maintaining the school staff on which the programme and partnership is based. Recruitment and retention of staff has been a well documented issue across the country.

Despite the challenges, progress and impact was evident in the academic year 2021/22. The number of young people supported will almost double in the current year. MCR had also been working with the Scottish Government on a plan to expand the MCR model across the country. The charity was successful in securing funding to reach 10,000 young people and effectively deliver the programme for no cost to each Council on the basis of the Council employing or redeploying staff in each school. MCR now has an effective process to facilitate successful transitions of council staff from varying backgrounds to become Pathways Coordinators.

We have been able to secure a significant cost reduction for Aberdeen in the last 12 months through the Scottish Government Funding. Were the council and schools able to invest at the same level as 2021/22 we would be able to expand into all 11 academies and provide relationships based support for over 750 of the city's most vulnerable young people. Each school has 3 years of funding.

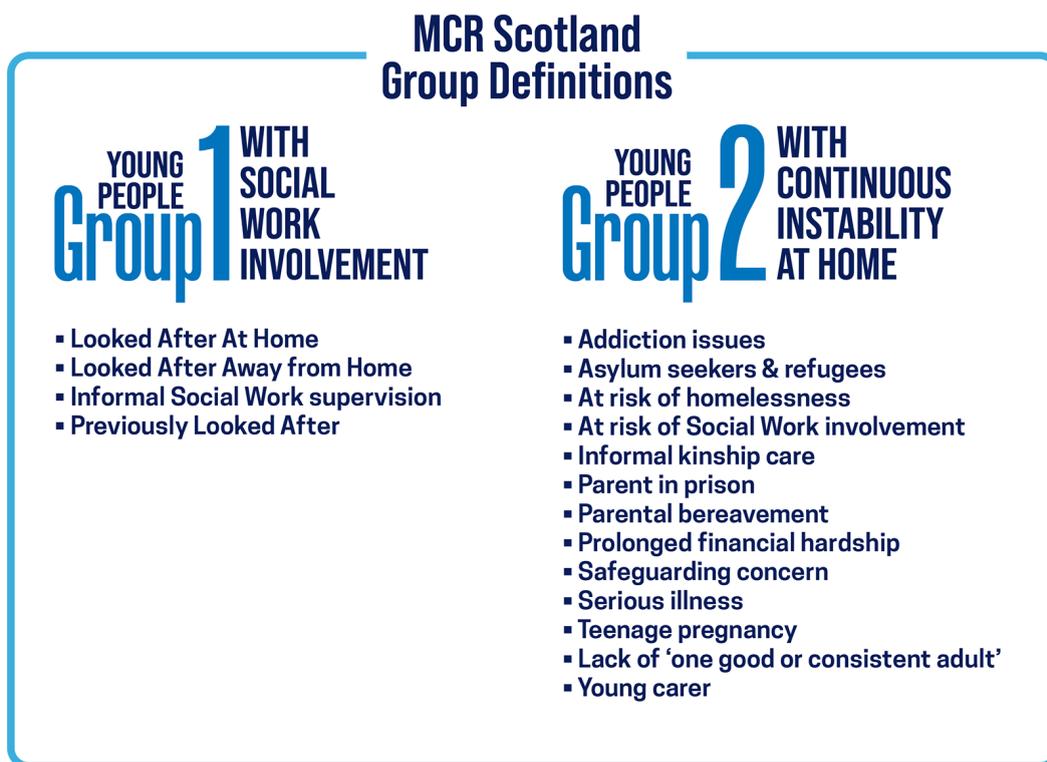
Given the impact of Covid, we have effectively had one full year of operation and would normally expect an evaluation in year three. We understand evaluation can occur at any time and are delighted to share the report in the spirit of a long term partnership as originally envisaged.

We have operated for 15 years and are confident in the impact of the MCR model, all of which have been independently assessed and verified. In this report we have shared both national data as well as data from the comparator group of local authorities. We recognise the challenge in the city is significant and fully recognise the budget constraints that all partners are working under. We hope to have the opportunity for our partnership to impact the young people in Aberdeen to the full extent possible. We are sure that the relationships now established with 251 of the city's most vulnerable young people will be central to all decisions.

We remain very committed to fully integrating the MCR model within the schools, and for the Council to be more self-sufficient after this three-year period. Our goal remains for the 'one good adult' relational approach, delivered at scale, through carefully matched 1:1 volunteers mentors to become a permanent part of the education system. An unpaid volunteer provides a unique and powerful bond for a young person, particularly those in the care system who have multiple professional adults and lack relationships without vested or professional interests. Trust based relationships deliver transformational education outcomes, job choices and life chances.

Executive Summary

We understand that the ACC funding is from Scottish Attainment Challenge resources designed for Care Experienced young people. MCR Pathways was referenced in the Scottish Government guidance documents as an example of how this funding could be used. The contract between ACC and MCR sets out the standard target group of young people being those care experienced or others who would benefit from the programme. MCR Pathways is focused on supporting young people in, previously in or on the edges of care. The common denominator is young people who are experiencing significant and sustained instability at home, which in turn affects their ability to engage in school and education.



Young People in scope & focus of support

To help ensure all groups of MCR young people are being considered in the evaluation, we have noted some key issues, with reference to The Promise and ACC's long term commitment to align with it. The scope is also based on the ACC and MCR commissioning contract.

- **Care Experienced (CE) Vs focussing on only those currently in care:**
The Promise is designed for care experienced young people, a term which takes account of those previously looked after and not just those in the care system at the census date. As a general rule, previously looked after will account for between 40% to 50% of care experienced. Data from across our 6 ACC schools indicates this to 50%.
- **Recognising the Schools' knowledge and expertise - MCR Group 2 Referrals:**
In addition to a full definition of care experienced young people, MCR supports those on the edges of care and who share the high levels of vulnerability and risks. MCR has always operated in response to need and not labels and has multiple experiences of helping prevent young people entering care. Importantly, schools choose the young people who they believe will benefit from their knowledge and needs against the criteria published by MCR. ACC also recognised that 'By offering

the programme to a wider range of young people within the school, it also ensures that it is non stigmatising'. Inclusion of these vulnerable groups was the basis of the commissioning contract.

- **Engagement of CE young people in programme:**
MCR Pathways data indicates engagement in the programme, across S1 to S6, to be at **45% across all year groups**. Nationally, the engagement level is **60%+** and at maturity, we would anticipate this to be closer to **80%**. As a result of the pandemic, the programme has not had the anticipated length of time to build relationships and embed in the schools to deliver the full impact. This will change over time.
- **Significant number of CE young people out of scope at the moment**
At present, **37%** of care experienced young people are currently out of scope. For 21 young people, schools are not recommending the introduction of a mentor yet. On occasions there are multiple complexities which have to settle. This is not unusual in the earlier stages of the model and we expect this to significantly reduce over time.
- **Young person's perceptions of employed staff mentoring vs 1:1 matched volunteer Relationships** are key to supporting a young person to feel safe and loved and ultimately achieve. The Promise Scotland makes reference to 'relationships' **153** times in the foundation report and states that "schools must also be supported to encourage and develop mentoring relationships for those who would benefit" .

From the young person's perspective, the impact of a mentor who is there **just** for them and crucially, for no other reason than they **care**, is transformational. Contrasting employed staff vs volunteers; caseloads and time can be major issues and potential barriers for professional staff. By comparison, the time and leverage of trained and supported external volunteer mentors makes a significant difference.

- **The Role of Pathways Advocates**
We understand the role of the Pathways Advocates is being considered. The role and the potential of these school staff going from part time to full-time could enhance the strength and depth of support. MCR is not aware of the detail or plans but believe the combination could be a powerful support with Advocates covering a more focused case load whilst the Pathways Coordinators and external volunteers support all care experienced and those on the edges of care and otherwise vulnerable. We would be delighted to contribute to discussion on the outcomes sought, approach, time allocated and any budget issues.

Progression and Impact

- **Exceptional feedback from young people on power of relationships**
The current survey illustrates that our young people highly value the impact of their mentors. The survey forms part of the MCR Progress & Impact reviews and is open until the end of term. 55 responses have been analysed and reported on in the report. The full range of responses are included later in the report. The headlines are:
 - **83%** of young people surveyed **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor has helped with **confidence**.
 - **94.3%** **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor has helped them **identify goals** (87% nationally) up from 87.5% in the previous year.
 - **92%** of care experienced young people on the programme in 22/23 **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor has helped them *believe in themselves more*.
 - **84.9%** **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor encourages them to be *the best version of themselves*.

- **94.3%** agree or strongly agree that their mentor is a *good role model*.
- **98.1%** agree or strongly agree with “*Over time, we have built up a lot of trust*”. **100% of care experienced young people agreed with that statement.**

Having dedicated one-on-one time with a carefully matched relationships focused mentor has a profound positive effect on a young person’s self-belief, confidence and goal orientation. It is these unique qualities of the MCR mentoring relationship that lead to a positive impact in the post-school outcomes for the young people.

- **Initial attainment & positive destinations impact evidenced despite challenges**
Mentored young people in Aberdeen City are showing greater attainment and positive destination outcomes than the wider ACC care-experienced cohort. Given the challenges noted the numbers are smaller. However we have also included the MCR national data and from Aberdeen’s LA comparator group in which MCR operates. We hope that gives the confidence of the impact which is possible.
 - **83.3%** of mentored S5 young people (those who have had 10 meetings or more with a volunteer mentor) have achieved their National 4 Literacy & Numeracy units compared to **40.5%** of the ACC CE cohort. The MCR national impact is **74.1%** and **93.1%** in the LA comparator group.
 - **66%** of mentored S5 young people achieved 3+ qualifications at National 5+ compared to **16.2%** of the care experienced cohort. The MCR national impact is **62.3%** and **57.3%** in the LA comparator group.
 - **57.1%** of mentored CE young people in Aberdeen City went on to a more sustained MCR positive destination of Further Education, Higher Education or Employment compared to **46.9%** of the ACC care experienced cohort. For the LA comparator group, **88.9%** achieved one of those destinations. The MCR national impact is **79.8%**. As the MCR programme embeds we expect Aberdeen to see significant improvement.
 - Similarly, **61.5%** of mentored young people stayed on the school roll after the January of S5 compared to **46.9%** of the ACC CE cohort. The MCR national impact is **74.8%** and **67.4%** in the LA comparator group.
- **Numbers of Young People being supported:**
Data shows a **76%** YoY increase this academic year in young people being mentored and over **2,000** individual mentoring meetings recorded. The meetings are double those recorded last year and MCR would again forecast these to double in the next academic year. 1:1 relationship based contact on a carefully matched pairing is now a proven foundation for education outcomes, job choices and life chances. The expected impact is starting to be reflected in the education stats and qualitative assessments.

Challenges being overcome

- **ACC and MCR Contract - changes to the Target group**
As per the contractual agreement, MCR Pathways was established to support care experienced or other Young People who would benefit from participating in the Programme. We now understand MCR Pathways was included as a partner in the delivery of the LOIP, Project aim 6.1: Increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination by 25% by 2022. We assume that any evaluation is based on the programme, agreement and the MCR impact as a whole.
- **Recruitment & retention of Pathways Coordinators :**
There have been gaps in recruiting school staff which has restricted the programme. In 2021/22, the

days MCR was able to operate with school staff in post was just **57.2%**. This has improved now and if we analyse the days worked across the 6 schools from Feb 22 to May this year it is **80.4%**. We are very committed to our partnership and to continue to invest in the city and add additional resources to support more young people with what we know is transformational. The end of school year uncertainty is understandably limiting both ACC and related MCR staff to match new young people with a mentor and progress to the full extent possible.

- **Coordinating partners to the City's Corporate Parent Plans :**

To inform next steps, we understand that evaluation of the Edge of Care Pilots will be presented to the Education and Children's Services Committee, whilst the draft **Corporate Parenting Action Plan for 23-26** indicates that an evaluation on the impact of Pathways Associates on care experienced young people's attainment, achievement and positive destinations is due by **2024**. ACC and MCR have concerns that 4 of the Pathways Coordinators employed by ACC currently have fixed term contracts which now expire in September. We hope that a continuation of the programme would allow for staff to be made permanent and continuity for the young people as well as integration within other ACC plans.

- **Funding needed per school:**

The service from MCR was initially commissioned, but for the last 12 months has effectively been reduced to a utilisation of ACC staff who were recruited for each school and the Scottish Government funding. There is no financial relationship between ACC and MCR now. The cost per school has been reduced in the last year which could in theory allow ACC to implement the MCR model in all 11 academies.

Next 2 Years of Impact

On the basis that ACC wants to build on the impact from the 244 young people currently supported, we would expect to unlock the benefits for all participants in relationship based practice at scale.

- **Maturing MCR Model:**

At maturity of the MCR model, MCR Pathways Coordinators will support up to **50** young people and their mentors. Furthermore, Pathways Coordinators also deliver group work sessions for up to **30** young people across S1 and S2 This is a significant volume with a proven and independently verified model, impact assessed in staying on rates, attainment and positive destinations. Additionally in wellbeing, self esteem and confidence. We expect over 400 of the city's most vulnerable young people could benefit from the partnership in a powerful combination of a 1:1 matched mentor and the support and continuity of a Pathways Coordinator.

The MCR matching algorithm has been developed over 15 years of practice and the basis of successful matches. The use of the charitable status is essential to engage and retain the numbers required to ensure each individual is emotionally engaged and invested throughout.

- **Benefits to mentors including council staff**

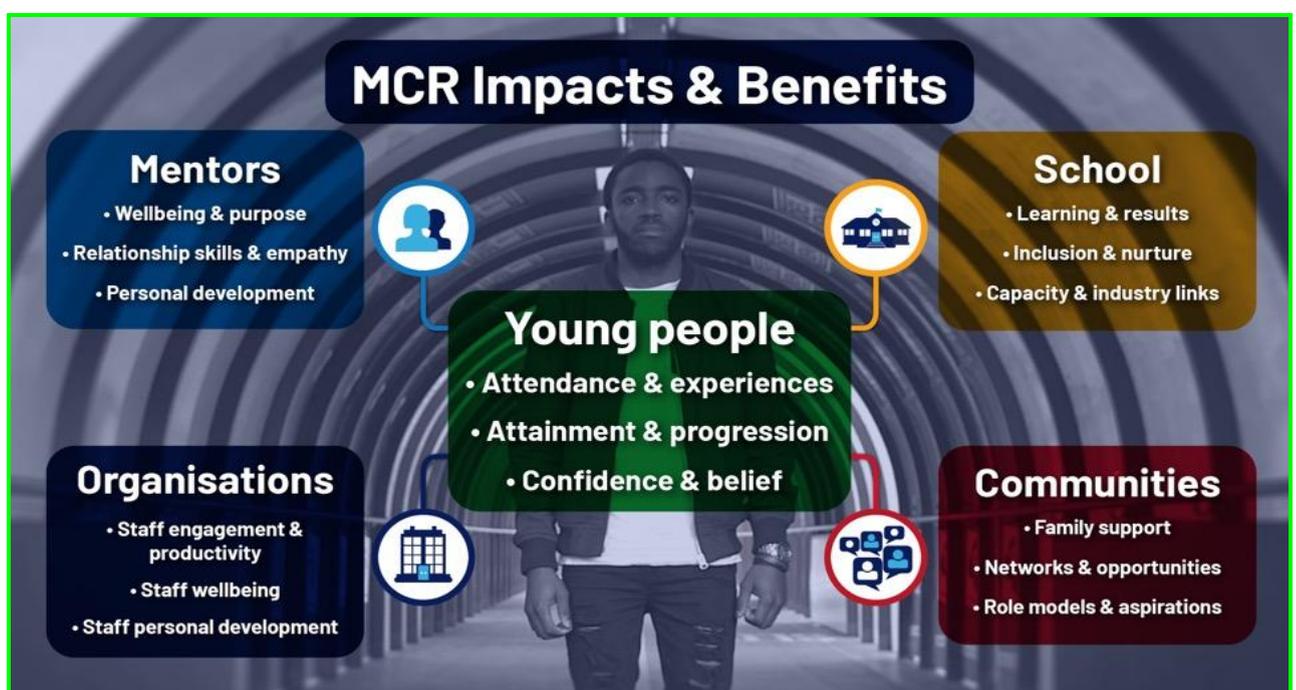
Mentoring gives a verified overwhelming sense of purpose and satisfaction in playing a part in helping young people identify and fulfil their goals and potential. Mentors and mentees develop a unique relationship, built on trust. Mentoring develops a diverse and broad range of leadership skills (coaching, active listening, empathy, motivation, goal setting, resilience) that enhance both professional relationships and effectiveness at work. Research also indicates that mentoring has a significant positive impact on employee engagement and wellbeing, both increasing corporate

priorities. There is now a University Course **Leadership through MCR Mentoring** and other accredited modules being launched for corporates in the new academic year.

We are conscious that ACC staff have yet to fully engage and benefit to the same extent as other council staff and corporate parents have. Our partnership could unlock many other benefits in community building and additional support of schools as well as opportunities for the young people.

- **Partnerships & Creating additional connections & opportunities:**

The MCR Model is both profound in its impact on the young people as it is proving to be on mentors, their employers, schools and local communities. The relationships and connections being made create a ripple effect and directly benefits all participants and stakeholders. Locally, over 40 partnerships have been established with Aberdeen based companies and organisations as sources of mentors. As the programme matures, these relationships and connections will create a substantial amount of opportunities for the young people and additional employability links with schools.



Young People Engaged

As the ACC staff become more established in school, the numbers of young people increase and with the relationships formed comes the transformational impact. The numbers of young people engaged in the MCR programme has grown significantly despite the challenges. Understandably the current uncertainty with employment contracts ending has impacted the progress being made.

S1 - S6 in Mentoring Relationships & Group work Relationship Building Sessions				
School	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Dyce Academy	22	24 ↑9%	47 ↑96%	45¹ (2 ML)
Harlaw Academy	21	19 ↓9%	42 ↑121%	42 (2 ML)
Hazlehead Academy	18	15 ↓17%	47 ↑213%	54² (4 ML)
Lochside Academy	33	49 ↑48%	56 ↑14%	56 (10 ML)
Northfield Academy	16	16 ↔0%	20 ↑25%	23 (1 ML)
St Machar Academy	28	27 ↓4%	31 ↑15%	33 (1 ML)
Totals	138	150 ↑9%	243 ↑62%	251 (20 ML)

ML - Mentored Leaver (is a young person with 10+ mentor meetings and is anticipated to leave school in Summer)

Mentor Relationships

Care Experienced S3 - S6 in Mentoring Relationships				
	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Currently Looked After	9	8	9	10 (3 ML)
Previously Looked After	6	12	16	16 (4 ML)
Total	15	20	25	26 (7 ML)

¹ Including 1 pupil from S2, who did not participate in Groupwork and who is meeting weekly with a mentor since April 2023

² Including 1 pupil from S2, who did not participate in Groupwork and who is meeting weekly with a mentor since April 2023

S3 - S6 Care Experienced Participation May 23	
Weekly Meeting with a Mentor	26 (31%)
PC - Supported	2 (2%)
Warmed Up	1 (1%)
School Not Recommended	21 (25%)
Alternative Provision	10 (12%)
External Transfer	7 (8%)
Young Person Declined	3 (4%)
Not Eligible Due To Attendance	5 (6%)
Disengaged Young Person	7 (8%)
Parent/Carer Declined	1 (1%)

37% of care experienced young people across the 6 MCR schools in Aberdeen City are not yet in a position to participate. This is at the judgement of the school (School not recommended and alternative provision, 31 of 54 non-participating young people). As relationships develop, this will change. Lower attendance of care experienced young people post-COVID is also a national trend that both MCR Pathways and Aberdeen City Council will need to address to fulfil The Promise.

S3 - S6 Young People in Mentoring Relationships				
School	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Dyce Academy	3	9	23	23
Harlaw Academy	7	12	28	28
Hazlehead Academy	10	10	34	36
Lochside Academy	10	27	35	36
Northfield Academy	6	7	11	14
St Machar Academy	10	17	13	14
Totals	46	82	144	149*

*12 S2s are currently matched and are a major matching cohort at this stage in the school year.

S1 & S2 Young People in Group work				
School	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Dyce Academy	19	15	24	22
Harlaw Academy	14	7	14	14
Hazlehead Academy	8	5	13	18
Lochside Academy	23	22	21	20
Northfield Academy	12	9	9	9
St Machar Academy	18	10	18	19

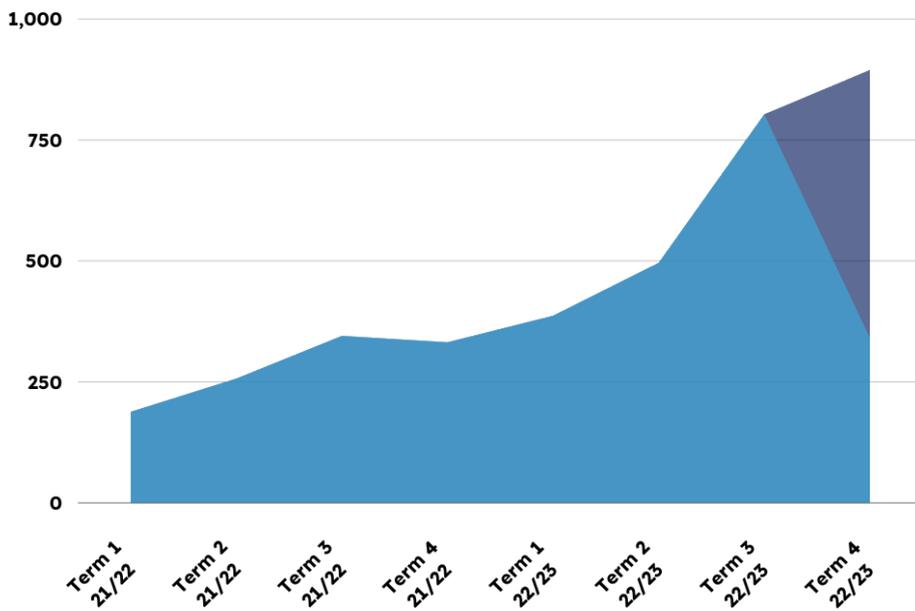
Totals	92	68	99	102
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Mentoring & Relationship Building Sessions

Since August 2021, young people and their mentors have attended **3,149** mentoring sessions. In the school year 2021/2022, **1,122** meetings took place. So far in 2022/23, **2,027** have taken place with a further **554** scheduled for the rest of the school year. These are hugely significant numbers which are providing the essential relationships on which outcomes, wellbeing and confidence are based.

It is important to note that these are just the recorded sessions and that many more informal contacts with Pathways Coordinators and additional mentoring sessions occur as a matter of course. Some drop-off generally occurs in Term 4 due to study leave and school leavers leaving post-April.

S3 - S6 Mentoring Sessions



S1 - S2 Group Work Sessions

In **2021/22**, there were **129** relationship building group work sessions across the 6 MCR schools in Aberdeen City. These sessions averaged 3 participants meaning **472** hours of relationship building took place.

In **2022/23 so far**, there were **311** relationship building group work sessions across the 6 MCR schools in Aberdeen City. These sessions averaged 3 participants meaning **949** hours of relationship building took place. This is over **double** the previous year's tally.

Since August 2021

4570+ hours

Of Mentoring & Relationship Building Sessions.

Partnerships & Mentor Profiles

MCR Pathways understands the importance of local relationships and partnerships and as such, has invested significantly in this area. Across Scotland, we are members in a number of chambers including locally, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce. This membership allows us to grow our network, seek out new partners and stay well connected in the North-East.

We also work very closely with our local third sector interface, ACVO, tapping into opportunities such as volunteering fayres, networking events and the local ACVO monthly newsletter. As recent examples, MCR is scheduled to have a spotlight article feature published in the July Edition of the newsletter and have recently been invited to speak about the MCR programme on the local community station, shmuFM.

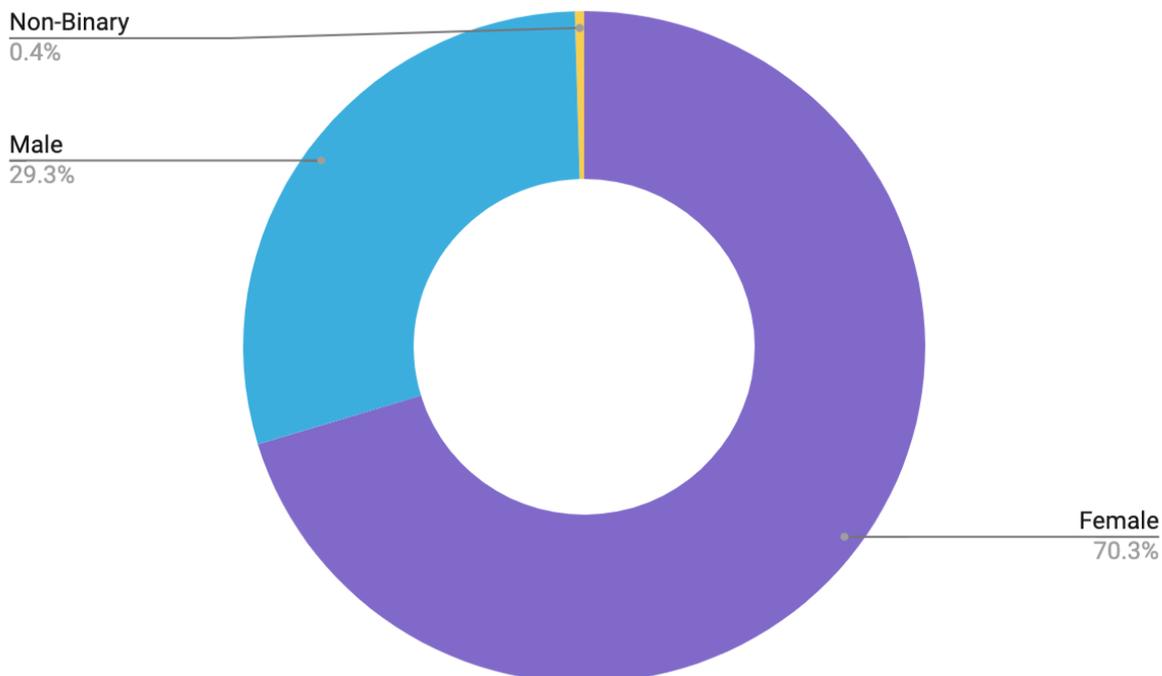
Across the city we have delivered engaging information sessions to the Local Authority, public sector organisations, local businesses, other third sector organisations and community groups, developing multiple partnerships and support networks.

A localised approach has allowed MCR Pathways to recruit mentors from a diversity of industry sectors, with 301 volunteer mentors fully recruited and trained in Aberdeen City since 2020. Local organisations are equally keen to play their part in positively impacting the lives of young people in the local community.

Recruiting committed volunteers who are asked to mentor in school for an hour a week for a year, ideally 2 years is a specialist and skilled process throughout. The MCR matching algorithm has been developed over 15 years of practice and the basis of successful matches. The use of the charitable status is essential to engage and retain the numbers required to ensure each individual is emotionally engaged and invested throughout.

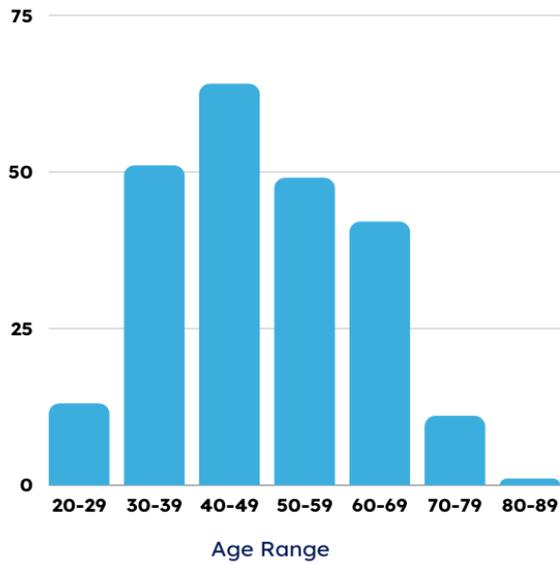
Mentors by Gender

The gender split in Aberdeen City is in line with other areas across the country.



Mentors By Age

The average age of a mentor in Aberdeen City is **48 years old**.



Mentors By Industry



Mentors By Corporate Parent Employer

Currently 43 (14.3%) Mentors who volunteer in Aberdeen City come from Corporate Parent employers. This includes Council staff; Cabinet Office; Civil Service; DYW; NHS; Police Scotland; Scottish Fire & Rescue; and Scottish Government. This number is lower than the average across the country and given the increasing national arrangements between MCR and many corporate parents we expect this to increase. We are also setting precedents with various Health Boards and Health & Social Care Partnerships.

Mentors and Partners creating opportunities for the young people

MCR Mentoring is now research proven as a potent professional development, providing mentors with highly sought after leadership and management skills. MCR's relationship focused mentoring builds effective active listening and communication skills with deep empathy and establishing trust as a precursor to influential and values based coaching. The experience is empowering and motivating employees across all industries, levels and roles. Alongside Personal development, seeing a young person grow through their weekly mentoring meeting generates a lasting sense of accomplishment, impacting on employee engagement, satisfaction and wellbeing.

Given the relationships based focus of MCR mentoring, mentors come from every walk of life and experience. From front line staff to CEO including a number of Council and corporate CEOs and key influencers. Relationships are built through a tried and tested process to maximise the match and subsequent impact. Both young people and prospective mentors can step through at a pace comfortable to them and are fully supported by MCR staff at every point.

Seonaid McIntosh, Chief Operating Officer and Donna Liddle, Vice President of Business Development at OPEX Group, a technology company based in Aberdeen have shared their thoughts:

Seonaid, the driving force behind OPEX's involvement, expressed her enthusiasm for the initiative. *"I am delighted to have introduced the programme to our employees. Mentoring offers a unique opportunity to share our experiences, knowledge, and guidance, empowering these young people to achieve their potential, regardless of their background or circumstances."*

Donna said, *"Engaging with my mentee from Hazlehead Academy, one of our local schools, has been an incredibly rewarding experience. Witnessing the power of one-on-one mentoring has been truly inspiring. Through the programme, young people are able to confide in a trusted adult, supporting them to overcome challenges, improve their education outcomes, and reach their full potential."*

As the programme matures mentors are encouraged to provide further opportunities for their young person. We are pleased to see this happening in Aberdeen and this exchange of both social capital and practical post school experiences has a significant impact. Given the impact of the pandemic the arrangement of Talent Tasters has been limited and focused on mentors creating opportunities. A number of talent tasters were organised last year locally, which included a Police Station, visit to the Subsea Expo, Army recruitment office, Grays School of Art, a Fashion show, NESCOL and CMS a lawyers office. As noted with relationships established there is a variety of Talent Taster options which we will build on.

MCR Pathways mentor Colin Bell kindly arranged a bespoke opportunity for pupils from Harlaw Academy, Hazlehead Academy and Lochside Academy to visit Gray's School of Art at Robert Gordons University. Colin also provided 5 tickets to the Student Fashion Show at Aberdeen Art Gallery where young people had the privilege of front row seats to see the amazing creations from the students of the art school. Pupils were then invited to browse through the students' work books and sketches before having the opportunity to

chat with the students about their work and their time at Grays.

These opportunities allow our young people to explore job roles and industries they might otherwise never have encountered, encouraging them to pursue and achieve their goals. They also shine a light on the different routes to careers, helping young people understand how to get there.

Impact - Young Person Feedback

Having a mentor impact

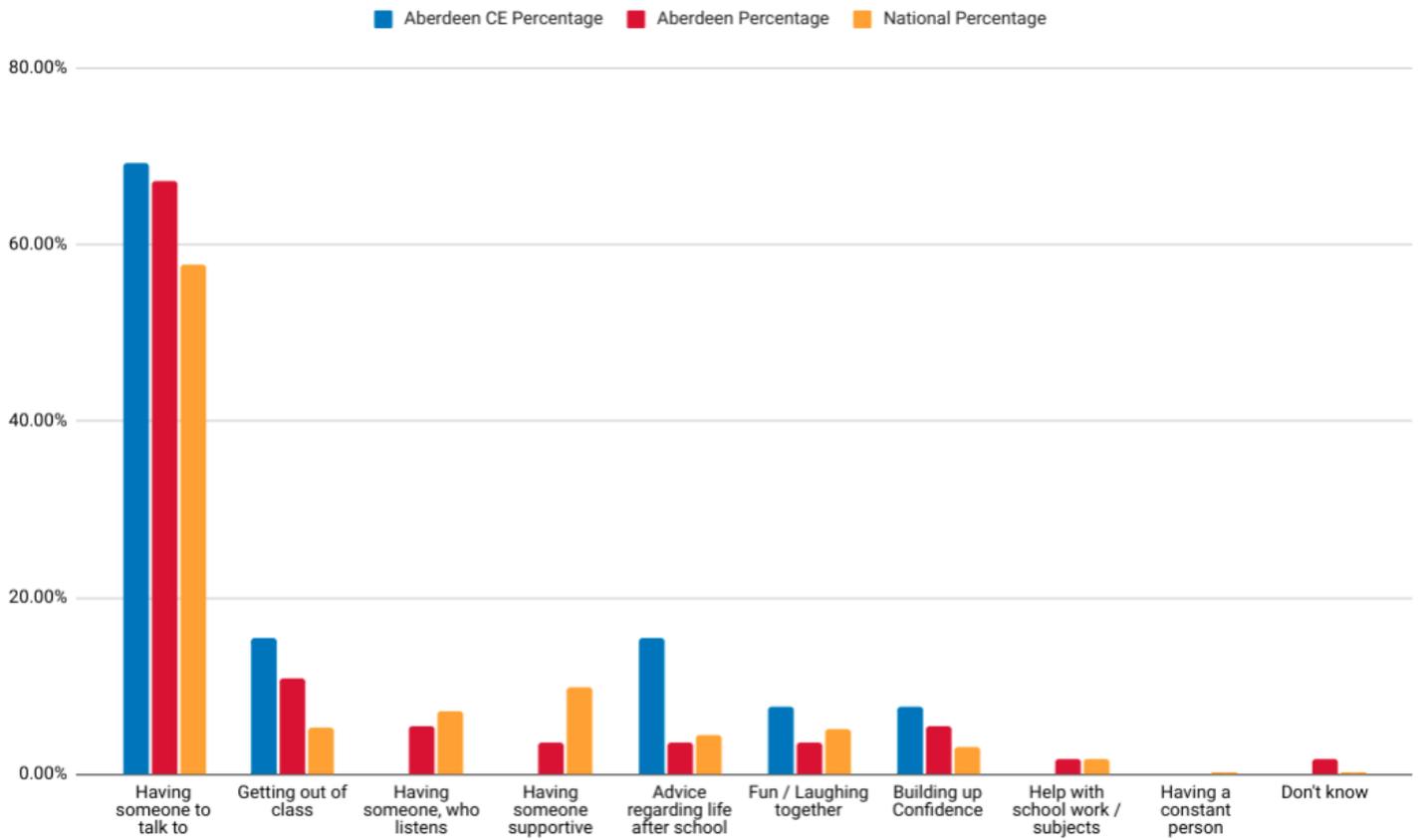
Question - Having a mentor	Aberdeen Care Experienced (CE) Agree / Strongly Agree	Aberdeen Agree / Strongly Agree	National Agree / Strongly Agree	Difference Aberdeen to National
Has improved my confidence.	76.92%	81.82%	83.52%	-1.70%
Has supported me to identify goals.	100.00%	94.55%	87.49%	7.06%
Has helped me to understand my individual talents & strengths.	76.92%	76.36%	84.19%	-7.83%
Has helped me believe in myself more.	92.31%	80.00%	85.55%	-5.55%
Has helped me feel good about myself.	84.62%	85.45%	85.88%	-0.43%
Has improved my relationships with other young people.	69.23%	54.55%	50.89%	3.66%
Has improved my relationships with family.	38.46%	38.18%	40.57%	-2.39%
Has helped me understand who I am and what my needs are.	92.31%	74.55%	76.25%	-1.70%
Has helped me become more motivated within school.	76.92%	74.55%	74.05%	0.50%
Has improved my attendance at school.	53.85%	43.64%	47.84%	-4.21%
Has helped me decide to stay on in school.	38.46%	38.18%	49.28%	-11.10%

The mentor relationship itself

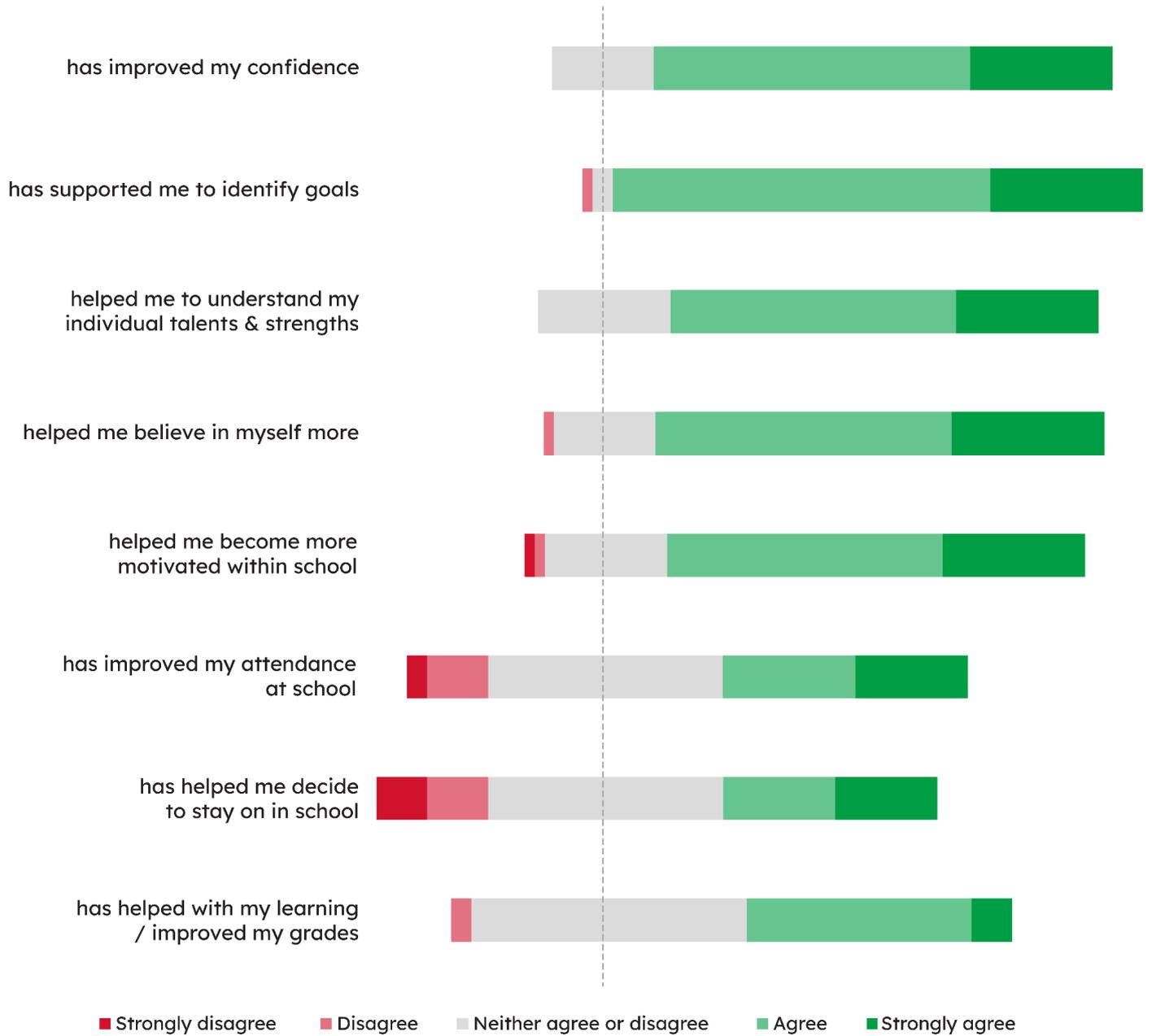
Question - How you feel about your mentor relationship	Aberdeen Care Experienced (CE) Agree / Strongly Agree	Aberdeen Agree / Strongly Agree	National Agree / Strongly Agree	Difference Aberdeen to National
Over time, we have built up a lot of trust.	100.00%	98.18%	93.58%	4.61%
They understand me.	100.00%	90.91%	94.34%	-3.43%
Still not made a connection.	0.00%	5.45%	5.33%	0.13%
We can talk about anything.	84.62%	87.27%	86.39%	0.88%
They encourage me to be the best version of myself.	92.31%	85.45%	91.38%	-5.92%
We laugh a lot together.	92.31%	89.09%	89.94%	-0.85%
Up and down.	15.38%	12.73%	8.37%	4.36%
We discuss how I can achieve my goals.	84.62%	87.27%	90.96%	-3.68%
My mentor is a good role model.	84.62%	92.73%	95.60%	-2.88%
At first, it was a bit awkward, but we get on well now.	61.54%	70.91%	63.06%	7.85%

Question - How much influence did your Pathways Coordinator & the MCR programme have on your engagement with school? (10 = strong influence; 1 = very little influence)	Aberdeen Care Experienced (CE) Agree / Strongly Agree	Aberdeen Agree / Strongly Agree	National Agree / Strongly Agree	Difference Aberdeen to National
have on your engagement with school? (10 = strong influence; 1 = very little influence)	7.77	7.82	8.33	-0.51

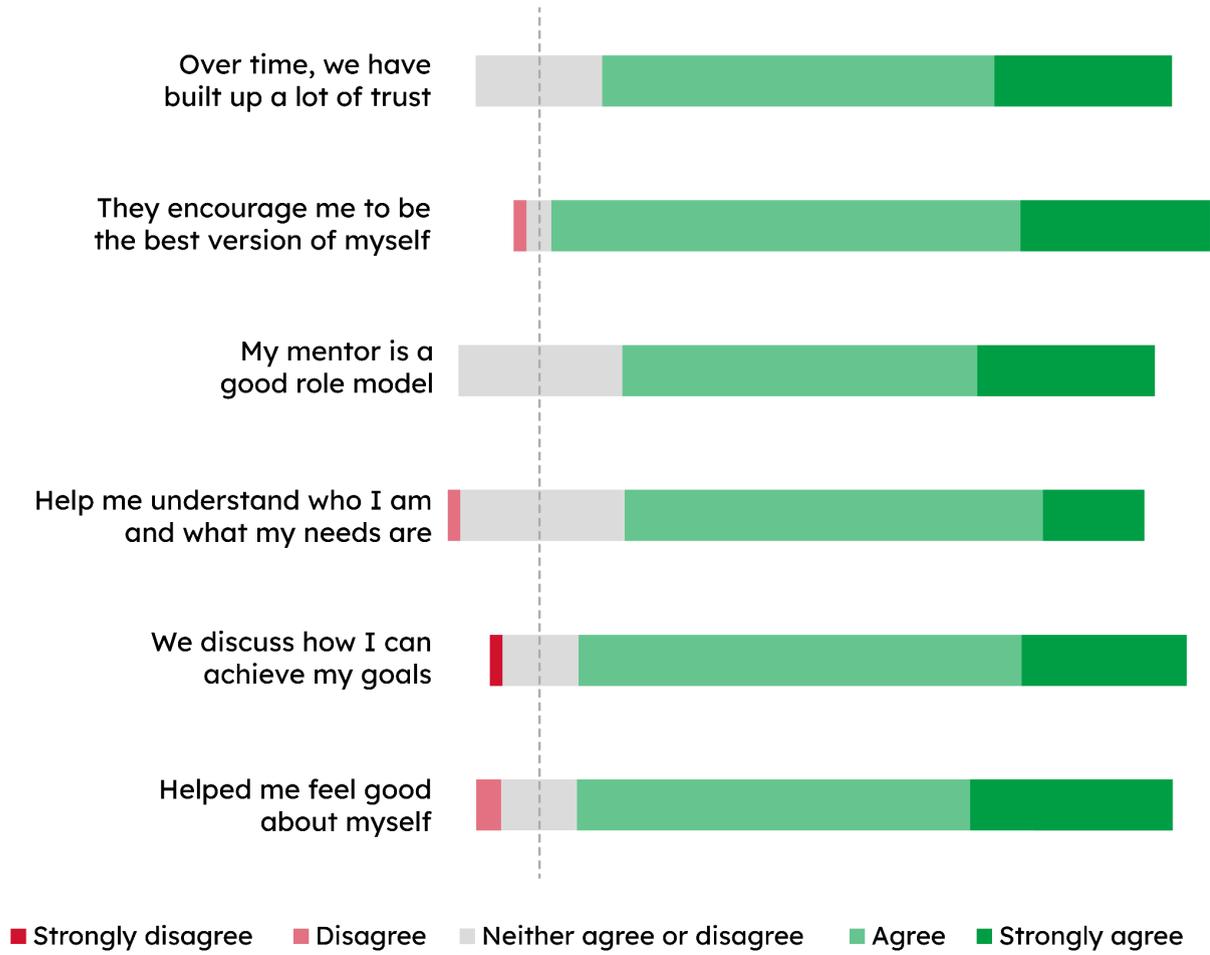
What is the best thing about having a mentor?



My mentor...



What best describes your relationship with your mentor?



Impact - Education & Education Outcomes

We have analysed the last 2 academic years (2020/2021 and 2021/22). These have been combined in the first table. We have calculated impact in the comparator group of local authorities in which Aberdeen sits but focused on those that adopted the MCR programme at a similar time to Aberdeen City (including a COVID start). This group includes Shetland, Aberdeenshire, Edinburgh and Perth & Kinross.

Mentored young people have had 10+ meetings with a volunteer mentor.

Attainment 2020 - 2022						
Key Performance Indicators	MCR Mentored ACC Care Experienced Young People	ACC Care Experienced Young People (All)	MCR Mentored Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People	MCR Mentored Care Experienced National Data	Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People (All)	National Care Experienced Young People (All)
Literacy & Numeracy Nat 4	83.3% (5/6)	40.5% (15/37)	93.1% (27/29)	74.12% (126/170)	75.1% (171/227)	66.8% (1584/2371)
5+ qualifications at Nat 4+	66.7% (4/6)	16.2% (6/37)	84.7% (50/59)	84.71% (144/170)	59% (137/227)	58.2% (1379/2371)
1+ qualifications at Level 5+	66.7% (4/6)	16.2% (6/37)	79.7% (47/59)	83.53% (142/170)	62% (141/227)	61.3% (1454/2371)
3+ qualifications at Level 5+	66.7% (4/6)	16.2% (6/37)	57.3% (34/59)	62.35% (106/170)	41% (94/227)	42.8% (1015/2371)

MCR Positive Destinations Definition 2020 - 2022 (SDS Confirmed)						
Further Education, Higher Education & Employment	57.1% (4/7)	46.9% (23/49)	88.9% (72/81)	79.82% (174/218)	71.6% (207/289)	69.8% (2181/3124)

Staying on Rates 2020 - 2022						
On school roll after January of S5	61.5% (8/13)	53.7% (29/54)	67.4% (60/89)	74.79% (175/234)	48.0% (145/302)	

We hope the numbers in the MCR national stats and in the comparator group give the confidence of the impact which is possible when the staff are in place and supported and the MCR programme fully matured.

Data for the last academic year

Attainment 2021/22						
Key Performance Indicators	MCR Mentored ACC Care Experienced Young People	ACC Care Experienced Young People (All)	MCR Mentored Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People	MCR Mentored Care Experienced National Data	Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People (All)	National Care Experienced Young People (All)
Literacy & Numeracy Nat 4	80% (4/5)	53% (8/15)	84.2% (16/19)	87.4% (160/183)	75.9% (63/83)	66.3% (561/846)
5+ qualifications at Nat 4+	60% (3/5)	N/A* / 11 (N/A)	83.3% (15/18)	86.3% (160/183)	62.3% (52/83)	62.4% (492/789)
1+ qualifications at Level 5+	60% (3/5)	N/A* / 11 (N/A)	77.8% (14/18)	87.4% (160/183)	65.1% (54/83)	63.8% (503/789)
3+ qualifications at Level 5+	60% (3/5)	N/A* / 11 (N/A)	55.6% (10/18)	67.8% (124/183)	45.8% (38/83)	43.5% (343/789)

*Sample size too small to report on actual number - suppressed

Positive Destinations 2021/22 - MCR definition & Scottish Govt						
Further Education, Higher Education & Employment	50% (2/4)	64.71% (11/17)	89.6% (43/48)	81.5% (212/260)	77.3% (99/128)	70.9% (741/1045)
Scottish Government	75% (3/4)	70.5% (12/17)	95.8% (46/48)	93.8% (244/260)	82.8% (106/128)	87.9% (919/1045)

Staying On Rates 2021/22						
On school roll after January of S5	50% (3/6)	55% (11/20)	60.9% 28/46%	73.3% (151/206)	42.5% (51/120)	85.96% (918/1068)

Again give the strength of the MCR national stats and in the comparator group we hope that gives the confidence of the impact which is possible. The foundations to this are the strength and depth of relationships and in particular when the Pathways Coordinators are in place and supported.

Impact - Recent Views From Our Schools

Alongside the positive impact on attendance, engagement and achievement, school colleagues report a positive impact on their capacity, since young people benefit from the support of two additional trusted adults (Mentor and Pathways Coordinator). Mentoring also increases general awareness and wider understanding of the challenges that young people might be experiencing.

*Names of young people have been anonymised to protect their privacy in the case that this becomes a public document.

Lochside Academy

'The support and guidance that has been given to Alex* has been amazing. Alex is very proud to have a mentor from Gray's school of art, this has increased his confidence in his abilities and the routes available to him. His mentor's advice, support and kindness has had a significant impact and allowed Reese to flourish. No words can describe how significant your support is for our young people.'

Samantha Batsford
Teacher at Lochside Academy

'I feel this is an amazing programme. The offer of group work and taking a strengths-based approach is so valuable, as well as the introduction of a Mentor. This is a great example of why relationships are key - how important it is for children to feel valued, to feel as though they can relate to someone, and to have that person to have time with, without the pressure of the agenda that often comes within professional relationships. Children need a champion and I think Mentors can be this person.'

Two pupils, known to my service, have accessed MCR Pathways and their relationship with the Pathways Coordinator has been one of trust, respect and inclusion. The relationships with their mentors have offered positive role modelling, hope and connections. No matter their academic progress, success and achievement is promoted by MCR Pathways. Both children have been excited to see their Mentor, adding to their motivation and sense of inclusion. For one pupil in particular, I have observed his confidence grow as well as his ability to look forward and plan for a positive destination.'

Caroline McEwan
Social Worker

'We have a number of pupils who are not engaging with school very well, yet they turn up to school on the days their mentor is due to come in and see them. Some of our mentors have created a pathway to help sow the seeds of reengagement. They have been seen as a highlight to some of our young people in what could otherwise be perceived as a really negative period of time in their schooling.'

Our Pathways coordinator has also managed to stay connected with young people and their families when there has been a lack of engagement with a number of professionals. She has been seen as unbiased, positive support that is 100% looking towards positive outcomes for the young people she has been working with. She has assisted in pupil reengagement and at times has been the only point of contact for some of our pupils and families. Her ability to develop relationships with some of our young people have given us more insight to the challenges and barriers they are facing.'

Trisha Walker
Family Liaison Officer at Lochside Academy

'I think the programme has had a huge impact with Cora*. Yourself and her mentor have really supported her and her Grandma. There has been a lot going on in Cora's life but she always knew she had your support. You worked with Grandma and myself to get her into school, take her to College interviews, and help build up that much needed confidence. Cora showed me her CV she wrote with her mentor also - It's brilliant and will really help her going forward. It is very clear she has a great relationship with her mentor, and it was great to see her so genuinely happy to meet her just before she gave birth. Cora finished S4 with 5 qualifications - N4 English, N3 Maths, N4 History, N4 Geography and N4 Modern Studies. You have played a huge part in her achieving this as you have worked tirelessly to get her into school, to the Hub, and letting me work with her from her home. I am very grateful for that help and support. I don't think we would have achieved this if it was not for your help.'

Gemma Smith
Teacher Operations - Integrated Children's And Family SVS

'I have been working with Derek* over the past 3.5 years. During this time I have seen him blossom from an angry, aggressive and confrontational young boy into a caring , compassionate and funny young person. Encounters with Derek in earlier days often resulted in staff being greeted with angry outbursts, damage to property and expletives being directed towards them at the top of his voice.

Recently during a breaktime I saw a gentleman, with a dog walking through the school grounds with a pupil. They were deep in an animated conversation and were also taking time out to play with the dog. They looked as though they were related or had known each other for years. Only when I got closer did I realise it was Derek and his mentor. I had a little chat with both and plenty of cuddles from the dog. This to me was the real turning point for Derek. The mentor was seeing Derek for the person he is and was taking the time to listen and advise.

The Derek I now see (yes, like us all he can still have his moments lol), however, he engages in chat, does not receive referrals on behaviour and is never flagged up to me regarding any outbursts. He is sustaining meaningful relationships and now has a girlfriend. In addition he has now got career aspirations and has been accepted on to a college construction course.

Thank you to all involved in this programme as it has given not only this pupil but others also a new lease of life and a second chance that they so very, very deserve.'

Joanne Campbell

Depute Head Teacher / Year 4 Head at Lochside Academy

Hazlehead Academy

'MCR Pathways and particularly Gail, has had such a positive impact on our school community. Gail has built amazing relationships with both staff and pupils alike and has become a safe, nurturing place for some of our most vulnerable pupils. Her room is a place where pupils can go for lunch and relax if they are feeling overwhelmed. She has a real knack for matching our young people with positive mentors and I have given details of some of these positive relationships below. She really has had such a positive impact on Hazlehead Academy.

Kieran* - built an engine with his mentor. Now building a robot. Project manager so project plan and strategic planning. Blair struggled with what to do after school, so this mentor has given him lots to think about.

Sarah* - Young female mentor on purpose as Sarah struggles to build relationships. Sarah has low self-esteem, and her mentor has started to build up her confidence. She no longer skives class and comes to see Gail if she is overwhelmed. Mentor helped write the college application for - accepted.

Claire* - Claire has a passion to travel. Mentor sets up travel projects for teachers, so this relationship is supporting Claire with future choices.

Jenna* - attendance poor but since meeting mentor her attendance has improved, and she is coming to school to meet her mentor. Focusing on art and using those skills.

Kirsteen* - Loves art and being creative. Mentor fosters this in her. Kirsteen thrives on 121 and mentor is helping build her confidence .

David* - Wants nurture and responds well to adult conversation. Never misses a session. She helped him do his college application and he was delighted that she took extra time to complete it. Accepted to college. Brings out the best in him.

Beth* - Coat of arms, identifying strengths.

Fraser* - oldest mentor in the bunch. Takes in newspaper cuttings. Fraser was very volatile but responded SO well to mentor and always turned up, even if not attending school that day. Positive safe space to support and nurture Fraser.

Group Work sessions for younger pupils: concentrate on nurture and building relationships. Focus on health and wellbeing, resilience and team building activities. Focus on skills for the future, including for work and social skills. A safe space.'

Victoria Fleming
Principal Teacher of Guidance

'In my short time in this role, the MCR programme has been an essential resource for the most vulnerable children in my House group. The programme has helped to build a bridge to help pupils return to education when they have not been engaging. It has been crucial in allowing pupils with multiple aces to build a positive relationship with a trusted adult who can support them. It has allowed pupils who are struggling in school to build confidence and resilience. This has led to tangible improvements in attendance and attainment which we can evidence through our tracking and monitoring system, including helping pupils with the transition to positive destinations after school. For pupils who are struggling to access support for mental health conditions related to their aces, it has been a comfort and a support. A significant number of the pupils who have benefitted from MCR also have additional learning needs, and MCR helps them to feel a positive connection to school and to begin to feel more included when they have been struggling with various challenges.'

The relationships that each of these pupils have built with Gail and their Mentor are central to everything - anything which unexpectedly took these relationships away from these pupils, many of whom already have attachment conditions due to important figures in their life withdrawing support or breaking their trust, would be catastrophic for their wellbeing and education.'

Paul Docherty
Guidance Teacher

Dyce Academy

'Since MCR came to Dyce Academy we have seen positive outcomes for all pupils that have been involved with the school PCs for 1:1 and groupwork and we are now reaping the rewards of the mentor programme. Although Dyce is not a traditional MCR school in that we have low numbers of Care Experienced pupils we have been able to make full use of the resource to support a number of pupils in both Categories. This has been evident since our return to school post COVID as our PC was able to assist with mental wellbeing input and support the pupils coming back to school following home learning.'

Our PCs work in close partnership with PTGs, PEF PT, SfL and SLT as well as our feeder primary schools to identify pupils who would benefit from MCR input. The mentor programme has been hugely positive and has helped our young people with their confidence, resilience and with future planning. Mentors have organised trips to potential employers and beyond. For Dyce Academy, MCR is an integral part of our support packages for our young people and the PC in school is well known and trusted amongst pupils, staff and mentors. Losing MCR at Dyce Academy would leave a large gap in the support provision we are able to provide for our young people.'

Lynda Strachan
Depute Head Teacher

Northfield Academy

'I have been working with MCR on an occasional basis over the years, however, since June 2022, this working relationship has become more robust and regular. The MCR mentors and the pupil mentees are meeting in the school library; a calm and relaxed area where both can sit, relax and spend time communicating. As a school librarian I have known a high proportion of the pupils involved in the scheme for a number of years. I am able to see first-hand the positive relationships built between mentor and mentee and the improvement in the young people's positive behaviour and outlook on life.'

Karen Shaw
Librarian

Impact - Views From Our Young People & Mentors

Dyce Academy:

"Mentoring has made a big difference in my life and has given me ideas for after school. It has opened my eyes to all the options out there for me. I've gotten a huge confidence boost and I don't feel so worried about leaving school."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"My mentor is making me feel more confident and less worried about college and work. They are easy to speak to and make me feel more confident in myself."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"I'm getting on really well with my mentor and she arranged for me to go to the police to see what that job entails and is also trying to get some time with a chef to see what happens in that job."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"I find mentoring helpful. I am learning more about what career opportunities there are for me. My mentor has helped me work on my CV and college applications."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"Speaking with my mentor has helped me decide to try and stay in school longer. He has also increased my confidence."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"I feel that she has helped with my confidence and in coping with school life. She is easy to talk to and listens and encourages me. I can talk to her about anything."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

Harlaw Academy:

"MCR is supportive, happy and I really like it because I get to talk with people and I can be myself and I get support."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"MCR is a very supportive and safe programme and they're good at matching people with their mentors."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"I think group work is fun. I made friends in group work."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"MCR is a really great programme as it matches young people to great mentors and it's a safe place to talk about people's feelings."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"MCR is an amazing programme because they match the mentors perfectly and it feels safe to talk to that person with a lot of interests together."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"Really good programme, I don't have to go to class. I like a break away from school even if it's only one period. Can talk about pretty much anything and you won't be judged."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

Hazelhead Academy:

“MCR Pathways is a really helpful thing to have in schools, they can help with a whole range of things from: mental health, building confidence, meeting new people, helping with applications for college, giving advice, having someone to speak to and so much more.

My coordinator Gail Officer is excellent and very supportive. I feel as though she just ‘gets it’ and understands me. I have autism so she helps me when I am struggling with school by just being there and having someone to go and talk to about how I am feeling and what is going on in school and life out with school.

My mentor is also amazing, I look forward to meeting with her every two weeks and we chat about a huge range of different things such as: hobbies, school, future plans, friends, family, pets, etc.

They both make school life easier and knowing they are there, helps me feel a bit more confident with what I face on a daily basis.”

Young Person, Hazelhead Academy

“I enjoy meeting with my mentor, he is really easy to talk to, he is very kind and thoughtful and I have enjoyed building the projects he has brought in for us to do.”

Young Person, Hazelhead Academy

Lochside Academy:

“I couldn’t smile the rest of the day after meeting my mentor for the first time, my face was sore with laughing so much with her.”

Young Person, Lochside Academy

Cross Section of Mentor Views:

"I moved cities in the summer but have been able to manage a virtual relationship with my mentee over the last school year. Having offered her an option of an in-person mentor, she was keen to stay paired with me. Even though virtual meetings can be awkward, we built a good relationship in person prior to me moving and it's been great to keep our relationship going.

When we first met, my mentee had a lot of anxiety about how behind she was in school. In a few sessions I was able to bring her around to the idea that adults in school are all trying to help her do her best. What previously would have been her ignoring poor grades and attendance turned into her developing relationships with teachers, asking for help, and seeking advice on material. She also used to be much more focused on what other people need and want, and through our time together I've tried to focus on her meeting her own needs. I see this in her confidence and the friendships she is holding on to."

Mentor, Harlaw Academy

"It's been such a joy getting to know my young person - being there for them, having a laugh, realising we all have shared interests and experiences regardless of our age or background. It's heartening and encouraging to realise and have it further emphasised that we can all find commonality with each other. It's improved my relationships with others, built my confidence and I hope the same has happened for my mentee. I feel a real sense of pride for her hard work, how she is applying herself and becoming more confident."

Mentor, Northfield Academy

"My young person has started a small business related to their hobby and he is now trying to change his diet and do some exercise."

Mentor, Dyce Academy

"My young person began to appear without hood up, and looking more cheerful! They would willingly describe how the week had gone, and could sometimes admit that staff, parents and peers were not the ones at fault. They got pleasure out of describing interests, e.g showing me a snao of a favourite game on phone, trying to teach me how to play chess and beating me at games. They appear to be looking forward to the future."

Mentor, Hazelhead Academy

“What is the best thing about being a mentor? Seeing the joy in her face when we meet and chat. Watching her confidence grow. Gaining her trust and listening to her talk freely. Feeling like you’ve done something good every meeting.”

Mentor, Dyce Academy

“The school lunch system changed in school, from a card to buy lunch to a pin number. A mentor had been chatting to his young person when he discovered that he wasn’t having lunch that day as he had no money, the same conversation was had the week after so the mentor let me know. The young person is entitled to free school meals but did not realise it as his grandparents had never mentioned it. All he needed to do was put in the pin number and he could get his lunch. He has not had school lunch for 2 weeks and if it hadn’t been picked up by his mentor it could have been longer.”

Pathways Coordinator, Lochside Academy

“I love the mentoring programme; it is one of the most meaningful things I have done. I think it makes a difference with my young person and there is a lot of good evidence to suggest this - attendance, eye contact, jokes and smiles, planning sessions, future scoping, etc.”

Mentor, Northfield Academy

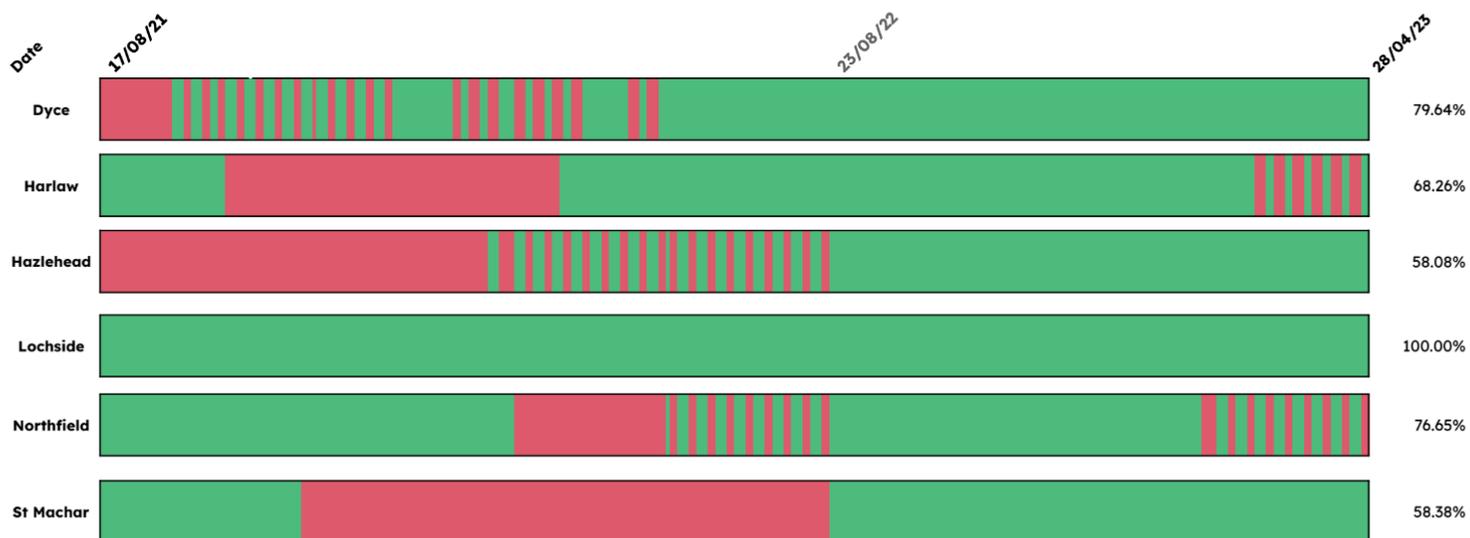
Staffing Overview 2021 - 2023

For the academic year between August 2021 - July 2022 there was significant PC instability in five of the six schools. In summary only **57.2%** of the academic year was covered by ACC employed PCs. At a school level this has a major impact on our ability to deliver the programme given the essential relationship building focus. This is best illustrated in the number of young people supported in Lochside with 100% PC coverage was 48, in comparison with St Machar who with 27.2% PC coverage was only 20. During this academic year of PC instability the number of young people involved in St Machar decreased by 8 young people. During the academic year of 2022-2023 when a PC was in place in St Machar the number of young people participating increased by 80% to 36.

During the current academic year (from August 2022) there has been a significant improvement in PC coverage across the schools with **95.5%** of the academic days covered up until the end of April 2023. The impact of this has been more young people getting involved in the programme. In the period from March '22 to March '23, 95 young people joined the programme, an increase of 67% and until present that number is 129 more young people. The PC role is a vital part of our programme design, young people engage with the programme when they build a relationship with the PC and with the unreliability of the PC cover during 2021-2022 it is little surprise that the number of young people involved was lower.

Another important role within the programme is the role of Programme Manager (PM). From 2021-2023 there has only been a period of two months in which Aberdeen City Council has not had a dedicated PM, during this period it was supported by the Aberdeenshire PM to ensure consistency of cover. The PM role provides oversight, support and guidance to the PCs. During 2021-2022 the PM was stretched to support schools without a PC but thankfully during 2022-2023 they have been able to add greater value to the programme in their designed capacity.

PC Cover by School 2021 - 2023



Summary of PC Cover 2021-2023

