



with young people, for young people

News Update **Summer 2022**



School Transition Coaching

Matrix has seen growth across much of our work this year - projects, the team, and in our connections with young people across Guildford Borough.

One of those projects, after a slow start coming out of covid restrictions, is our School Transition Coaching project, with the team of volunteers now supporting nearly double the number of young people.



This project provides personalised support for Year 6 students while they adjust from leaving primary school to starting secondary school. Our fully-trained and supported volunteer coaches meet them for an hour a week, firstly in their primary school and then moving with them to their secondary school - providing continuity and a friendly face in a new

Fuel the Conversation - For just £5 a month

Research documents the power of young people having a trusted adult to talk to - from improving their mental health, to increasing

environment. Our programme builds young people's emotional literacy and resilience, as well as supporting them through the practical aspects of the change they are experiencing.

Over the next 12 months we'll be working in partnership with 5 primary and 4 secondary schools to give these students a full year's support, relieving anxiety and stress caused by the transition process.

Story

Benjamin was referred to the School Transition Project. His old friends all went to other schools so he wasn't talking or making eye contact with anyone at his new school. During our first session he began to relax, he felt supported and was gradually able to have limited conversations. The continuity of support into his secondary school and the kindness and persistence of his Coach, meant that after a few months he had begun to make a few friends at school. Things were looking up.

Benjamin told his Coach that the sessions had helped him feel a lot more confident within the school environment.

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I think Benjamin has definitely benefitted from these sessions

Teacher

school attendance and improving career prospects. **But not every young person has someone they can trust or that's ready to listen.**

Anxiety Workshops

Exams can be a very stressful time for young people, and have a tangible impact on friendships, as well as their wellbeing, social life and mental health. This year we worked in partnership with Christ's College to run Anxiety Workshops for Year 11 students who were about to start their GCSE exams.



We ran back-to-back sessions with two groups of 10 students. Given the proximity to the start of their exams we covered a lot of ground in a short period of time, equipping them with a broad range of strategies to try. Two thirds of the students said that following the workshops they felt less anxious or more able to manage their anxiety about their upcoming exams.

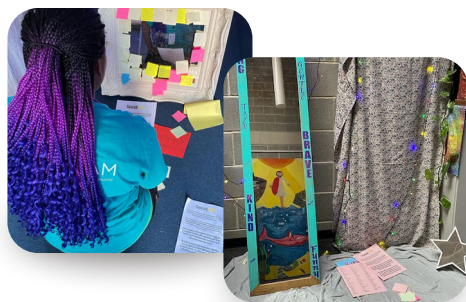
Reflection Spaces

Throughout the exam period it can be hugely beneficial for students to stop, reflect and pause amidst the chaos. As a result, in partnership with St Peter's School we ran some reflection days to encourage students to stop and reflect on the bigger questions of life.



Using the 'Prayer Spaces in Schools' model, the team transformed a classroom into an interactive space that facilitated pause and reflection. Young people were guided around 5 interactive activities which took them on a journey, allowing them to reflect and think about forgiveness, whilst giving the students a space to be still and explore what prayer is.

These two days were an extremely positive experience for both the team and the young people, with our youth workers witnessing young people taking time to slow down and be still. There was a real excitement and gratitude exuding from those who took part who were really thankful to have something like this available to help them. We chatted to students afterwards who told us how it helped them: **"It made me feel like I deserve to be here"** and **"I love how there was a variety of spaces that allowed us to be calm and express our thoughts"**



Your gift of just £5 a month will give an unheard young person a safe space to talk.

BACS : Metro Bank
Sort Code: 23-05-80
A/c No: 33689896

"I feel better about myself and my life since I started talking"

Ollie, Year 9

THE HIDEAWAY

Youth Café

This project provides a fun, safe social space that inspires change in young people's lives. Young people 'love the space and love the people here' telling us 'it's a calming place', 'a space to retreat to after school and have some fun before they go home'.

When Andrew started coming along, he was reserved and tended to be in an irritable mood. He has now been a regular for 9 months and we've seen a huge difference in attitude even encouraging others to get involved when they're feeling reserved themselves.

He told us **"I feel a lot calmer coming to the Youth Hideaway".**

Since April 2021 we've had nearly 100 young people visit The Youth Hideaway, with an increasing numbers now coming regularly. Lockdown meant that, as some young people described that had 'stopped regularly talking with others' and it's therefore taken them time to join in, but having taken the leap they have found themselves 'talking to people in groups' which has really improved their self-confidence. Open to all young people in Years 7-13. Just turn up!



ROOMS
AVAILABLE
TO HIRE



A hidden café with a big heart!

Revolving around its core values of encouraging people to retreat | connect | create, our social enterprise café has seen huge growth in popularity since we opened. Everything that happens at The Hideaway supports Matrix projects, but we love the fact that it supports the community too!

Retreat

Customers find The Hideaway to be a retreat from the busy town centre:

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*Great service in a tranquil location.
Definitely going to make this a regular spot.*

Tripadvisor Review



Connect

Every Thursday a 'new Mums' NCT group meet for support and we also host regular business networking events. As well as the community connecting with each other, we've also made some great connections with local people and now one of our customers, Mads, runs a comic book workshop at The Youth Hideaway.

Create

The Hideaway is fast growing a reputation as a creative space, hosting weekly creative collectives, providing craft activities for children in the holidays, not to mention our exhibition space for local artists, each with a focus on the current season.



OPENING HOUSE: Monday - Friday 8.30am - 3.00pm • Saturday 10.00am - 4.30pm • Sunday Closed

www.thehideaway.cafe



Drop-Ins

130 students have connected with us at drop-in sessions across 3 local schools.



Comic Book Workshop

12 young people were taught to draw by a professional cartoonist at our comic book workshop.



Sign Language Workshop

8 young people have learnt valuable life skills at the sign language workshop.



Silent Disco

Our first monthly Youth Hub in Bushy Hill with young people that we hadn't met before joining us for a Silent Disco!

Young Leaders Course

This term we coached several students through our Young Leaders Course. The programme builds confidence, as well as equipping and empowering young people to thrive and reach their full potential in the future.



One of the group had expressed interest in joining the course, but didn't feel confident enough to enter a busy room and join in at first. Following interactions with the team and gentle encouragement they joined a session. Whilst shy at first the activities and group work gave them easy ways to interact and they quickly began engaging in both conversations and activities. They later told the team that they felt they had really grown in confidence from attending.

THANK YOU

We want to thank YOU for connecting with us this year too - whether you attended our **Charity Dinner Night**, played in a 4-ball at the **Golf Day** or

popped in to say 'hi' at the **Farmer's Market**. There's plenty more coming up, so keep an eye out through our website and social media!



Work Experience Project

During two years of lockdown, many businesses offered online work experience, which enabled some young people to get a small taster of what work looks like. However, schools are clear that this



is no substitute for real in-the-workplace experience, as many young people have not had the opportunity to access part-time jobs either during this time.

Work experience does much to help students' confidence. After one placement with us a student told us **"I now feel more confident and comfortable about going into a work environment"**.

A huge milestone in finding work.



Over the last 12 months we have placed students with Guildford Liberal Democrats, St Luke's Doctors Surgery and Thirst Films, to name but a few. We have also made connections with businesses in fields as diverse as accounting, photography, law, insurance and fine art. The Careers Assistant at George Abbot School told us "I am so very grateful for all your support and help and so far" in supporting young people who are struggling to find these vital opportunities.



In August 2022, we will be running the Matrix work experience week. This is for any students unable to book a placement during the week designated by their school or who have not been successful in finding something off their own back. Anyone interested in hosting a student or looking for work experience should contact:

paulsharpe@matrixtrust.com

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A hidden café with a big heart!

**Did you know you can hire The Hideaway Café
for your own private function?**

You can also hire our private meeting room which adjoins the café. This is a flexible space for hosting workshops, business meetings or training sessions.



"Not only does this give our team a break from the office, but it also allowed us to give back to the community."- Aristar Financial Consulting LTD

**Profits from every hire and purchase
are fed back into Matrix Youth Projects.**

Enquire about the hire at **bookings@thehideaway.cafe**

📍 **The Hideaway**, Allen House Pavilion
Eastgate Gardens Guildford, GU1 4AZ

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