



## **Annual Impact Report 2023-24**

### **Overview**

This year has been another year of growth across most of our projects and whilst we have experienced some challenges in recruitment, our team has continued to provide quality support and youth work for a growing number of young people across Guildford Borough.

Our work within primary schools has continued to develop and grow. This year we have seen an increase in group activities across 8 primary schools as well as the successful appointment of an Early Intervention Practitioner to provide both group work and 1:1 support with children in these settings.

Delivery in both secondary schools and in community settings has also continued its growth year-on-year and this year we have worked with over 193 unique young people 1:1 in primary and secondary schools as well as in the community by a Matrix worker.

Throughout this year our long term goals from our 5 year strategy have steered and guided our work. These are to:

- Improve young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Help young people discover their potential
- Reduce social isolation & connect young people with their community
- Equip young people to be confident active citizens

These aims are achieved through the variety of projects and activities that we provide for young people to engage in. Some are planned one-to-one and group sessions that focus on early-intervention support, whereas others are open-access drop-in style activities based in the community, that aim to enable young people to connect with each other, form friendships and reduce social isolation. Our work is guided and led by young people who have the choice to participate and we will work with them in order to achieve their desired outcomes and goals.

## Summary

In 2023-24 we worked with **2114** different young people across **15** projects. Each year about **40%** of our projects don't require a referral for a young person to attend, meaning that they choose to come along to our activities. This accounts for **47%** of the total different young people we worked with.

In schools this year we met with **1777** young people working across **16 schools** (**8** secondary and **8** primary). Our work in each of these looks different with us providing a mixture of one-to-ones, group work as well as one-off workshops and lunchtime drop-ins. In addition to the **7** state secondary schools that we work with, this year saw us launch fortnightly lunchtime drop-ins at **1** private school - Guildford High. Our work in primary schools has continued grow this year, and as well as our transition project which has now been running for a number of years and our regular lunchtime drop-ins in **2** primary's, we have expanded our group work offer successfully running a number of friendship workshops in the Autumn and then a number of Transition workshops in the summer term. We have also successfully begun our offer of one-to-one support for children through the launch of our Early Intervention Practitioner for primary.

Alongside all of our work with young people this year, a total of **28** volunteers joined the team. We had **12** community-based volunteers at both the Youth Hideaway and Bushy Hill Youth Hub, **10** supporting young people in schools one-to-one and at our lunchtime Drop-ins, **1** providing additional admin support to the finance team and **5** volunteer baristas in the Hideaway. In addition to these brilliant volunteers, there were many others who supported us in governance and back-office support as well.

### Total Participant Attendances (across all of our projects)

Project	No. CYP
<b>Community Projects</b>	
Monthly Hubs (Bushy Hill)	162
Youth Steering Group	39
Community Led Workshops	138
Youth Hideaway (Youth Café)	1404
Boost: Traineeships/Work Experience Placements/young volunteers	456
Community Workshops	138

School Lunchtime Drop-ins*	3323
<b>School-based Projects</b>	
Secondary School Youth Support Sessions (1:1)**	1175
School Transition Coaching (1:1)	49
School Transition Groups	445
Primary School Youth Support Sessions (1:1)***	13
Primary School Group Work****	97
Reflective (prayer) Spaces	200
Social / Emotional workshops (Primary Friendships)	244
Social / Emotional workshops (Secondary Young Carers)	75
<b>School and Community Projects</b>	
Wellbeing Team (1:1)	746

\*School lunchtime drop-ins held in 4 secondary schools and 2 primary schools.

\*\*Schools 1:1 Support Sessions includes EIC 1:1 number of attendances as well. A breakdown of this is: EIC 1:1 (across 6 schools) - 804 / Schools 1:1 YSS (GCS & GAB) - 371.

\*\*\*EIP 1:1 support across 3 primary schools.

\*\*\*\* EIP group work across 3 primary schools

***"I feel like I can cope a lot better now. I feel more confident"***

## **Nurture: Individual Support**

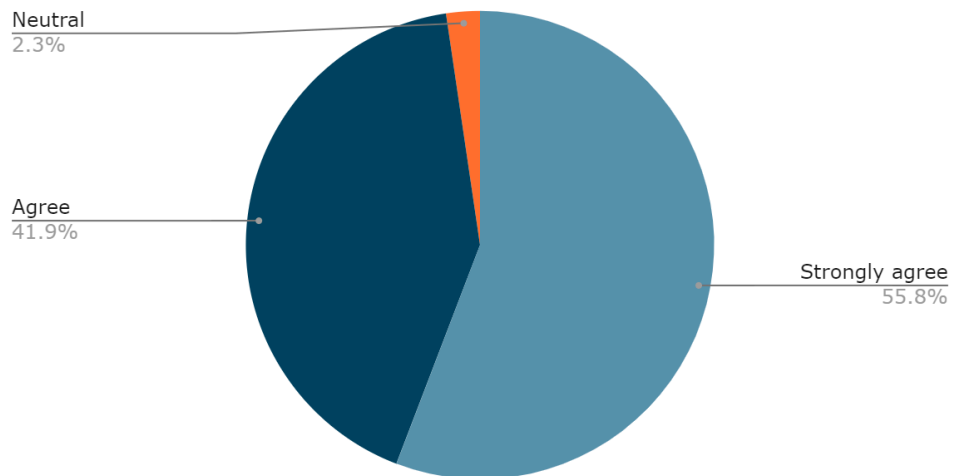
This year we provided one-to-one individual support sessions to **193** young people. We also supported **964** through targeted social and emotional wellbeing workshops that included a series of **10** friendship workshops in **5** primary schools, **17** schools transition workshops in **8** primary schools, a workshop for young carers in George Abbot and a series of prayer and reflective spaces across 2 days in St Peter's Catholic school.

Like most years there have been a variety of issues that young people have been referred to Matrix for, some of these included anger management, self-confidence, family issues and bereavement. The most common problem though continues to be their mental health and emotional wellbeing and specifically some form of anxiety. In most cases this is caused by another issue that is happening in their life, in some cases this is related to family problems and other traumas that they have experienced, and in other cases has at times been related to some form ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition).

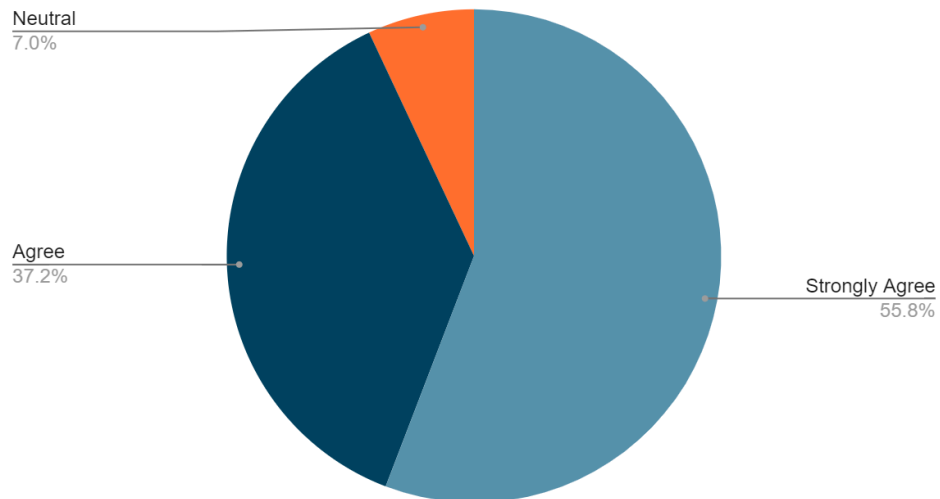
***"I tell my youth worker everything, she knows more about me than anyone in school, including my friends, because I can be honest with her."***

Through our youth workers in schools, Early Intervention Coordinator, Community Wellbeing Team, Early Intervention Practitioner and our Schools Transition Coaches we held **1983** sessions last year, this equates to **1178** hours working face-to-face with young people in one-to-one settings. Across our teams we also gain feedback from the children and young people they are working with, through our feedback survey. Those who completed the survey this year told us again what the main reasons for having 1:1 sessions with Matrix were and whether or not the sessions helped them. Almost **98%** of young people who had sessions with a Matrix Youth Worker agreed or strongly agreed to have built a good relationship with their Matrix Youth Worker and **93%** of these agreed or strongly agreed that their sessions have helped them in the area they specified.

### CYP who felt they had built a good relationship with their Matrix youth worker



### The support I received helped



*"1:1 sessions are a good place to talk and let out my emotions."*

## **Case studies**

### **Billie**

*Billie began sessions with Matrix due to family issues and anxiety. Initially they seemed friendly, in control and pleasant. Through conversation it became apparent that she was struggling with home life, with her brother who has Autism and especially with his behaviour because of his Autism.*

*Billie also had issues with her dad and his past behaviour and this was causing anxiety and distress. It was particularly affecting her ability to get homework done in time as well as affecting her sleep. She was struggling to know how to deal with her relationship with dad when he visited because of the past issues they had had as a family and how he had behaved, and more recently he had been found to be lying again as well.*

*Billie and her youth worker talked about boundaries and how it's ok, when people have hurt us to have stronger boundaries with them. Billie met with her Matrix youth worker for 10 sessions at her school and together Billie and her youth worker discussed ideas and strategies to help with sleep issues and not getting homework done in time. With support she set goals to help her change her behaviours in order to help herself manage things better, and by the end of the sessions she felt in control of both issues, able to get homework done well before it was due as well as managing to get to sleep and get enough sleep regularly.*

*Billie is pleased to have more control over her homework and as a result is feeling less stressed and more in control of life in general and especially her sleep. She seems happier in managing her boundaries with her dad, more resilient and confident to make her own choices.*

### **Hannah**

*When Hannah began sessions with Matrix, she was quiet, shy, had very low self-esteem and looked down a lot. she would often use self-deprecating language when talking about herself and in all she said she seemed to only see the negative first in everything - friendships, school subjects, 'never' being allowed out or to have fun etc. She was very anxious and anything that went wrong in her life was huge for her. She was really worried about exams and what sets she was in. She was worried about her family's finances and was very conscious of her weight and was controlling her eating in an unhealthy way. She also felt that her parents were very over protective and was feeling trapped.*

*Her Year Head mentioned to our Matrix youth worker that when Hannah first came to them she was pale, unsure and withdrawn.*

*Hannah had 20 1:1 sessions with Matrix at school. During which she with her youth worker on building confidence, self-esteem, being compassionate to herself and raising her resilience. Her youth worker provided a non-judgemental atmosphere which meant that she was able to open up and begin to be real, open and honest with herself.*

*Hannah and her youth worker celebrated the small wins, some of these included not having a panic attack during a test or being allowed to go to the library by herself by her parents. Together Hannah and her youth worker started to focus on what she could control instead of those things that she could not.*

*Her negative comments about herself and life in general began to become less and less as she started focusing on the positives.*

*Hannah's attitude and resilience has improved significantly and she now has a better group of friends that look out for each other and don't drag each other down. She gets on better with her family as she has a better understanding that her parents' rules for her are to keep her safe and she appreciates any freedom that she is given. She is more confident in herself, in charge of a sports*

*team for school and able to manage and encourage others in it. She is much less anxious about exams, tests and studying and has learnt tools to help her manage her anxiety as well as her fear of judgement from others. She puts much less pressure on herself but still tries her best and her eating is not even a concern to her anymore,*

*Hannah now catches herself automatically when thinking negative thoughts about herself and uses the tools she has learnt to adjust her own thinking.*

*Her Year head mentioned to me that when Hannah first came to me she was pale and unsure and withdrawn but now looks confident and positive.*

*Hannah said **"thank you so much for the sessions" and how it's been really helpful."***

## **Young people told us:**

### 1:1 support:

"I went into it and thought I can't be bothered and don't want to speak to anyone but I recommend it and tell anyone to go in with an open mind."

"It was really easy to bond with the Matrix worker. She made me feel like I wasn't being judged. She made emotional activities fun so it wasn't too overwhelming."

"Feels like a weight lifted off my chest"

### Prayer & Reflective Spaces:

"I feel relieved and the best station was the bubble prayer corner."

"I liked the pebble station."

"Sensing happiness - my favourite was the obstacle course."

"It made me feel good."

"I loved the sensory station and I loved the whole experience."

"It reminds me of my childhood."

### Transition Project:

"You have been amazing and C has only ever said great things about you. Thank you for all you and your colleagues do to help support kids like C. I feel you go unnoticed sometimes and I just wanted to say a huge thank you for all your support and help making C's transition so lovely. The Matrix crew really are the heroes without capes."

(Parent of a Transition mentee)

"The workshop made me feel less worried for year 7."

(Transition Workshop attendee)

"It made me feel safe and happy."

(Transition Workshop attendee)

"I feel positive and ready for secondary school."

(Transition Workshop attendee)

### Parents Feedback:

"Mark who goes to St Peter's has been so good supporting my eldest daughter at school, and for me it's been such a relief that she trusts him. The change (confidence) in her since she started her sessions with him has been remarkable."

"Thankyou for all your continued support. It doesn't go unnoticed and you have been a rock for my son and I am truly thankful for you being there to help him transition into secondary school."

### **Schools have told us:**

"I just wanted to say what a pleasure it has been to work with you over the past 3 years. Thank you for all the support and encouragement you have given me and especially our students. I have always appreciated your kindness and wisdom particularly with some of our more challenging characters! It has been so good to work with Matrix and I wish it every success as it navigates caring for our young people through the choppy waters of these days. I am sure our paths will cross as I am very much Guildford based. God bless you and do pass on my thanks to all the Matrix Team. Your work is vital!"

(Rev Sarah former chaplain at Christs College)

"Thank you for all the amazing support this academic year. I know the students really value your support. You make such a difference to them."

(From Kim McMillan at St Peter's)

### **Inspire**

On Wednesdays During term-time we ran **35** Community Workshops welcoming **60** different young people to these sessions at the Youth Hideaway this year. We hosted a variety of different activities and sessions to help young people engage with themes such as quilling, painting, archery, an introduction to book binding, drumming, pyrography art and creative journaling, as well as a 4 week set of social action workshops in the summer term.

This year saw some further development to our Youth Steering Group (YSG). Whilst this group remains focussed on its 3 core values - to Investigate, Influence and Innovate, we wanted to increase the representation of young people from a wider number of Matrix projects. This year YSG met each month and had a core group of **11** different young people. The group has representatives from 8 Matrix projects and is made up of 6 male and 3 female participants and also includes one young person who identifies as non-binary. A couple of the group also identify as being a part of the LGBTQ+ community.

### **Case Study**

#### **Artem**

*Artem is Ukrainian and has not been living here all his life, only recently coming to the UK a couple of years ago. When he started coming to Youth Hideaway he was shy and reserved but arrived with some school friends for the workshop Wednesday doing pyrography. We created a welcoming space for Artem to help him feel comfortable and at ease, providing him with a free milkshake for his first visit.*

*This workshop Wednesday was very exciting and busy! Artem was especially eager to try Pyrography. We made sure to make Artem and his friends feel important and comfortable by finding a space for them to participate. We made sure to welcome the family when they arrived to collect Artem, introducing them to the youth workers and going into detail about what the Youth Hideaway provides*

*Artem felt so welcomed and thoroughly enjoyed the workshop, taking the work he made home with him. The following week, during the Easter holidays, Artem felt confident enough to come back on his own. Initially, he played with the youth workers and made a new friend during the club sessions*



*where they began playing games together, teaching one another new tricks and assisting each other when help was needed.*

*Artem's mum came back and said thank you, and kindly gifted the youth workers cadbury creme eggs!*

## **Connect**

### **School Lunchtime Drop-ins**

Our lunchtime drop-ins in schools have continued to develop and grow this year and our team has welcomed **640** young people across **6** schools (**4** secondary and **2** primary) into these critical safe spaces.

After successfully launching these in Merrow Juniors and Sandfield Primary schools last year, as well as our already established drop-ins in Guildford County, George Abbot and Christ's College secondary schools, this year we launched a fortnightly drop-in at Guildford High School, which has begun to grow and establish new relationships within private schools.

Similar to most years, most of the young people attending drop-ins find that they serve a very practical purpose. Some examples include that they are a safe place to go to at lunchtime and or somewhere to go to meet others and make friends. Other examples include a place to play in the middle of the school day and a good way to let off steam.

One young person who was brought along by a friend for the first time was asked if he would come again and he said "yes, definitely, it was great fun."

### **Youth Hideaway (Youth Café)**

A key focus for Youth Hideaway this year was to build up repeat attendances of young people coming along to sessions. This year we welcomed **150** different young people to the cafe and through the programme of activities and themed days provided, we saw **1404** total participant attendances, meaning that the average number of sessions attended by each young person was just over **9** sessions across the year.

Since we opened in 2021 it has been great to welcome so many young people to our sessions, however it has been difficult to make sure that they come on a regular basis. However the work that has been done in this last year has been tremendous and it's good to be able to see the effectiveness of the sessions through repeat attendance.

### **Young people tell us that:**

*"I really love this place, there are my favourite things here"*

*"It's the place to go!"*

*"Today was my first day of this club, it was so much. I made some new friends and I loved coming along and I would love to come back again"*

## **Case Study**

### **Philip**

*On Philip's first visit to Youth Hideaway, he came along with his allocated youth worker from Surrey County Council (child protection team). Initially Philip found it hard to engage in conversation and would only give one word answers, he was very quiet and looked really shy.*

*On this particular day he was the only young person that had arrived so far and his council youth worker said that his hope for Philip was for him to make some friends and become more confident.*

*At Youth Hideaway the team welcomed him and made a point of speaking directly to Philip and not his youth worker. Philip eventually went to play on the Playstation with his youth worker. As more young people began to arrive, the team introduced him to them and suggested they may like to play a game together. The other lads kept it light but showed willing for when he'd finished his current game.*

*The council youth worker explained that Philip had not played before and that this was his first time playing on a Playstation. One of the other boys was the first to play against him, he was a regular at Youth Hideaway and was very good at the game they were playing. The council youth worker gradually moved out of the way and let them continue to play by themselves.*

*There were smiles and the game ended with Philip winning! The team made a bit of a thing of it and had some good banter with the other boys who had been super confident.*

*There were smiles all round and as Philip was leaving the session he was smiling and said he'd really like to come back and is looking forward to the following week.*

### **Empower**

Our Boost Project has flourished this year, supporting **83** young people into the working world. **59** of these were linked into a work experience placement across Guildford Borough. We worked with **13** young people through our 12 week Traineeship program at the Hideaway, helping them gain the skills needed to help them move on to employment in the future, and a further **11** in finding opportunities to volunteer at the Hideaway.

## **Case Study**

### **Claire**

*At her trial shift and interview for the role, Claire was clearly nervous and that showed itself in her speaking almost non-stop. It was mentioned that we are a dog-friendly Café and Claire shared that she is terrified of dogs. She also told us, in a busy Café, that she is very sensitive to sounds and lots of noise can distract and upset her. Rather a wobbly start!*

*Claire settled into the practical work incredibly well and is now very chatty and friendly to staff and customers alike. Claire is keen to take on new challenges and has the confidence to ask for help when needed, knowing that she is part of a team.*

*Through her weekly mentor time and support from the Café staff and volunteers, Claire was made to feel relaxed and at home, and is making great strides in overcoming her fear of dogs when they enter the Café.*

*It is very rare to see Claire without an enormous smile on her face. She shared recently that one thing she likes about herself is that she works hard, and whatever other challenges she faces, that cannot be denied. It comes from a very positive attitude. Indeed one Matrix staff member witnessed Claire leaving work one afternoon with her trademark big grin, shouting "Loving life!"*

*"I'm loving it!"*

**Young people on our Boost Project told us:**

"It's a kind environment. It teaches a person to improve themselves. This is the first work experience that felt like being in a proper job."  
(Trainee)

"It's the perfect stepping stone to becoming a working person." (Trainee)

"I really enjoyed my time there and would highly recommend people to volunteer as it is an amazing experience and the people there are really supportive and kind."  
(Young Volunteer)

**Business partners that hosted students told us:**

"The student was a reliable team member, who helped ease the pressure on the rest of the team when the café was busy."

"Frank was wonderful to have around - he was polite, punctual, showed lots of initiative and was fully involved in all tasks he was set"

"We benefited from an outside perspective, support for daily tasks, and an opportunity for our trainee clinical psychologist to provide mentoring."

## **Targets**

At the start of the year we set targets for each project. The table below shows how we did against this target. Overall we saw a 14% increase on our numbers for delivery compared to 2022-23, particularly highlighting some areas for us to build upon in the coming year ahead. Some projects did not reach their initial targets, however this does not impact funding as most of these are set by SLT. Our work in primary schools has continued to grow, and we have been able to develop our group work offering this year which has meant we have been able to reach even more children and young people.

There are several reasons why numbers are lower than expected in some areas and similar to previous years, recruitment has had an impact on what we have been able to deliver. During the Spring and Summer terms we had vacancies for 1x Community Youth Worker, 1x Assistant Youth Worker and 1x Wellbeing Practitioner, this has had an impact on our 1:1 work and the amount of young people we are able to work with. This year we have been able to recruit some new volunteers for key projects, such as Youth Hideaway and our Youth Hub, it's been harder recruiting volunteers for our 1:1 youth support in schools, and whilst overall our work within primary schools has grown significantly, it took longer to recruit our Early Intervention Practitioner than we had hoped which has also impacted our 1:1 work.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Actual CYP attending project</b>	<b>Variance</b>
Monthly Hubs (Bushy Hill)	50	47	-3
YSG	10	11	1
School Lunchtime Drop-ins*	500	640	140
Youth Cafe (Youth Hideaway)**	150	150	0
WBP***	120	47	-73
GCS 1:1	25	16	-9
GAB 1:1	30	33	3
EIC 1:1****	60	75	15
Transition 1:1	15	14	-1
Transition Groups	250	445	195
Trainees	10	13	3
Work Experience	40	59	19
Young Volunteers	15	11	-4
Prayer Space	200	200	0
Social / Emotional workshops*****	50	319	269

*\*This year we ran lunchtime drop-ins in 3x secondary schools every week during term-time, 1x private secondary school fortnightly and 2x primary schools fortnightly. The following table gives a breakdown of how this looked in each school:*

<b>School</b>	<b>Actual CYP Attending</b>
GAB Drop-in (Weekly)	106
GCS Drop-in (Weekly)	239
CC Drop-in (Weekly)	179
GHS Drop-in (Fortnightly, Summer Term only)	25
BHJ Drop in (Fortnightly)	66
SFP Drop in (Fortnightly)	25

*\*\*Our numbers for Youth Hideaway also include our numbers for our Community Led Workshops, of which 60 different young people attended. Included in our Community Led Workshops, we also ran a set of Social Action Workshops (Ready 4 Action) across 4 weeks.*

*\*\*\*Numbers for our Wellbeing Team have been lower again this year, however this has been largely due to a long term vacancy within the team which we have now filled. Commissioners for this service look more closely at the number of interventions/sessions that we have with CYP, of which the wellbeing team have completed 669 interventions/sessions.*

*\*\*\*\*EIC (Early Intervention Coordinator) working in 6 different schools: Guildford County, George Abbot, Christ's College, St Peter's, King's College and Howard of Effingham.*

*\*\*\*\*\*Social and Emotional Workshops included a series of friendship workshops in various primary schools and our young carers workshop in George Abbot school.*