

Launch of the National Mentoring Scheme (NMS)

Inspiring Scotland is delighted to be leading the development of Scottish Government's National Mentoring Scheme, initially for children and young people who are looked after at home. It is planned to open the fund to applications by late summer.

About the Scheme

The national programme will initially support young people aged between 8-14 years who are looked after by their local authority and living at home. The programme recognises a young person's need to have at least one long term relationship with a positive adult role-model. The disruption children face leading up to and on coming into the care system can make this difficult to achieve within a family setting.

Young people who choose to take part in the scheme will be carefully matched with a trained volunteer and together they will build a positive, trusting, supportive and secure relationship. Effective mentoring relationships have been shown to be long term, frequent and regular.

The quality of the programme will be critically important. For example, organisations which receive funding will be expected to have achieved or to work towards the attainment of either the Befriending Networks' Quality in Befriending Award or the Scottish Mentoring Network's Quality Award.

Funded organisations will receive on-going support from the National Mentoring Scheme and Inspiring Scotland across a range of issues, such as volunteer recruitment and training, and capacity building. They will also have the opportunity to take part in co-designing approaches to evaluation, and will be expected to take part in agreed evaluation and reporting processes, overseen by Inspiring Scotland.

New branding for the National Mentoring Scheme is currently underway. More information about the new brand, including the programme name and launch date, will be confirmed soon.

Eligibility for Funding

OSCR registered organisations interested in applying for funding to support 8-14 year olds who are looked after at home will be encouraged to apply for funding through Inspiring Scotland later this summer. Organisations should consider now what new mentoring support they can offer this group.

Whilst the term mentoring is used to describe the programme because the relationship is intended to have a goal orientation, it is recognised that many organisations deliver this to children and young people within a befriending service.

Applications are therefore encouraged from voluntary organisations with experience of working with vulnerable groups, particularly vulnerable children and young people, and/or providing mentoring or befriending services. Applications from a wider field will also be considered.

The fund is not intended to act as replacement funding for any current support provided to a particular group of young people. Applications should therefore be for new or expanded services, which attract new children and young people into mentoring support. Applications will be expected to demonstrate a need based on the Scottish Government statistics for children looked after at home and an understanding of the experiences of these children. Local Authorities and other public bodies will not be eligible to apply for direct funding. However, applications from voluntary organisations working in partnership with a public body will be considered.

The online application process is planned to open by late summer with funding expected to be awarded in Q4 2016.