

The Accompanying Project (Pilot)

Introduction: Bath Youth for Christ is a Christian faith based youth organisation that has worked in Bath for over 30 years. Our current target group is for the most part those aged 11-19 years. We have three main areas of work:

- Schools work – over the last couple of years Bath YFC has worked in eight of the secondary schools in Bath and currently works weekly in five of the schools in the state sector (Culverhay, Beechen Cliff, St. Mark's Hayesfield and Ralph Allen schools). Bath YFC is involved in the delivery of curriculum (lessons, enrichment activities and assemblies) and extra-curriculum work (lunch, after school work and one to one work)
- City centre work – Bath YFC has consistently had a focus on working with young people coming into the city centre and currently run projects to provide space for young people on Wednesday and Friday nights, as well as detached youth work
- Positive activities – Bath YFC has over the last few years developed a portfolio of professional and well respected activities for young people including the One Eighty skate project, Motus Dance Academy, Football projects, an art academy and Graffiti diversion project (some of these cross over with schools work).

Bath YFC works in partnership with local churches, local schools, the local authority and police.

Context: Over the last year working in Culverhay School it has become clear through our one to one work that several of the young people we work with would have benefitted from support at an earlier age. This initial thinking has been backed up by conversations with school staff who have offered similar conclusions and also assessing the current mentoring support available, which is for the most part focused on the secondary school sector. Furthermore, our ongoing work with young people where they have been able to develop positive and meaningful relationships with youth workers and connected them with a local community group. E.g. youth club, has been shown to make a significant difference in the lives of the young people involved.

With this in mind Bath YFC is looking to pilot a project working with older children in the primary/junior school sector, which we are calling *the Accompanying Project*. It would run between September/October 2010 to November/December 2011.

The vision: To see children and young people be all they can be

The Aims

- To build positive and meaningful relationships with children and young people that make a difference
- To help children and young people connect with their local community
- To provide consistent support to the child through times of transition and challenge in childhood

The Outcomes

- To build the sense of self-worth of the child
- To build the confidence of the child
- To help create greater equality of opportunity for the child
- To help children have opportunities to socialise and build relationships with peers and the local community

- To support the child during the transition from primary to secondary school

Indicators of Success

- Expanded friendships – increased confidence in existing and new friendships
- Increased self esteem and self confidence
- The child having less concerns about life in and outside school
- The child causing less concern to parents and teachers
- The child showing a greater interest in school
- If they have done through the primary/secondary transition; that they are adapting well to new routines

How it could work in practice: In consultation with the local school and parents/carers a worker would be appointed to work with the child, which would involve a one to one session each week, and could involve supporting the child in linking with a local community activity such as an after school club, supporting transition process and secondary school visits and other events as negotiated between the child and the worker, e.g. attending to watch the child play in a school football match. The proposal is for a one year project initially, with a view, subject to the pilot project and resulting research, making it sustainable longer term.

From here to accompanying – the plan for October 2010 start

1. Identify and have initial meeting with possible schools
2. Identify the workers and link with the school – before summer holidays 2010
3. Workers to meet the appropriate school staff e.g. SENCO – before summer holidays 2010
4. School to identify the children for accompanying – before or early as possible after summer holidays 2010, those in year 6 from September 2010 regarded as vulnerable
5. Accompanying interest meeting for youth workers outside Bath YFC – before summer holidays if possible
6. Workers to identify potential local community/church children's projects to link children with
7. Accompanying briefing/preparation meeting for all workers involved in the process
8. Worker to meet pupil for first time – October 2010

From October 2010

9. Initial meeting between worker and child and initial evaluation of the child using SDQ and blob drawings
10. Worker to meet with the child's parent(s)/carer(s) if possible and appropriate
11. Termly review meeting with the school contact
12. Worker review meeting hosted by Bath YFC for all youth workers involved in the pilot to share experience and stories (x3 in the academic year)
13. Further meetings between worker, child and parent(s)/carer(s) during the year as arranged if possible and appropriate
14. Worker to accompany child on any transition visits if possible
15. Pilot to finish in October 2011
16. Report to be written for early 2012