

ELEVATE MENTORING REQUEST TO RENT PARCEL OF KNOWLE PARK

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Council considers the request put forward by Elevate Mentoring to hire a parcel of land at Knowle Park for outdoor learning mentoring as set out in attached **Appendix 1**.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Elevate Mentoring, a group of self-employed qualified mentors, who offer education and care provision for children with special educational needs, approached the Council for hire of a small parcel of land to enable them to host outdoor learning activities.
- 2.2 A site visit was undertaken, and several sites were shown as possible options. Knowle Park was determined to be the best suited site for their needs.

3. REQUEST

- 3.1 Elevate mentoring's request and background details is set out in full at Appendix 1. The basic requirement is a small parcel of land, to host outdoor learning for a maximum of 4 children at a time during the term time.

4. FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- 4.1 Should the Council be minded to grant this request, a formal agreement will need to be drawn up, requesting relevant insurance, safeguarding and health and safety policies.
- 4.2 The Council will need to consider a fee for this arrangement. The Council's site maintenance would need to be considered in determining this fee.
- 4.3 Elevate Mentoring work with local schools and have a recommendation from the Headteacher at Wyvern College.
- 4.4 The Operations Manager would need to liaise regularly with Elevate and undertake site inspections to ensure that the land is being used appropriately.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council could receive a marginal income from this request.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Elevate mentoring will be responsible for storing any tools/materials they use either near or off site. It will not be the responsibility of the Council.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 A request has been made by Elevate Mentoring to rent a small section of Knowle Park (near the compound) to host outdoor learning opportunities for local children with special needs. It is for the Council to determine whether they wish to meet this request.

For further information:

Melanie Stephens, Parish Clerk
clerk@fairoak-pc.gov.uk

Background papers:
None.



Our programme of engagement and support intends to offer young people a substitute to negative behaviour, isolation and disappointment. We focus specifically on their Social and emotional responses as well as their practical needs. We are able to tailor our programmes to each individual and their needs.

We offer each young person a bespoke, flexible, individual mentoring programme to meet specific contexts and targeted outcomes.

Who are we?

Our self-employed mentors have over 20 years' experience working across the Social, Emotional and Mental health sector within education provisions and care provisions for young people with Special educational needs. All of our team have worked in very challenging settings involving working with a range of children across Hampshire with complex needs.

Our team recognised the need for wider support for children with additional needs and formed together 18 months ago in order to look to provide a service for these young people. Our hope is to grow even further once we are able to provide other services. Our Mentors are fully insured and have Enhanced DBS checked.

Our Aim

We understand that some young people can face difficulties within education due to their home context, mental health needs, learning needs and social experiences. As a result this leads to poor choices within their education and the local community. Our aim is to support and educate our young people through mentoring, promoting positive social interactions, understand their emotional responses and well-being, creating positive therapeutic experiences and building trusting relationships and independent skills. Promoting positive outdoor learning experiences and social opportunities reduces the risk of anti-social behaviours.

What work do we do?

We work closely alongside schools and educational provisions with young people within their settings. Our programs are very bespoke to the individuals needs which will be carefully discussed during an initial meeting with professionals. We work with many individuals who are currently struggling to access education or are currently awaiting specialist placements.

Our mentoring service with young people struggling to access education includes:

- Liaising with staff in schools to identify current needs
- Discussing and helping decide how the identified needs will be addressed through a program of support for their Social, Emotional and Mental health or SEN needs
- Implementing strategies and supporting learners in self-esteem and confidence-building activities
- Implementing outdoor therapeutic programs that incorporate positive social engagement and independence in the community
- Weekly communication with schools and termly reviews of needs and program in place
- Supporting school and young person into next academic transition

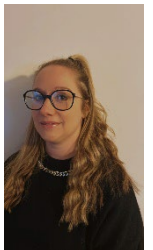
Our mentoring service within schools includes:

- liaising with staff to identify learners who would benefit from mentoring
- discussing and helping to decide how identified needs will be addressed
- implementing strategies and supporting learners in self-esteem and confidence-building activities
- helping learners who are underperforming in their subjects, either on a one-to-one basis outside the classroom or within lessons
- listening to learners and help them resolve a range of issues that are creating barriers to their learning
- drawing up agreed action plans with learners, setting goals, and monitoring their progress
- On site outdoor learning therapy

Our team

Becky Davis

Becky has worked within the SEMH sector for the past 15 years as a qualified teacher. During this time, she spent 5 years managing the Autism resource provision within a Hampshire mainstream school. She developed a strong passion for autism throughout her time working in SEMH and mainstream schools, and went on to complete her masters in autism. Her current work involves overseeing the provision of some of our most vulnerable autistic pupils, working alongside the local authority assessing the needs of the most complex autistic pupils. She provides outreach to numerous schools across Hampshire through providing autism training to staff and working with individual autistic pupils who are at risk of being or have been permanently excluded. She has run various workshops for schools, parents and work establishments across Hampshire. Throughout her time working in both mainstream and specialist education settings she has developed a clear understanding of the challenges that autistic pupils face within each setting and the importance for schools to have a clear understanding of what autism is and how that may manifest into challenging behaviour.



Amy Ryder

Amy is currently undertaking a psychology degree at Winchester University, with the aim of then progressing on to a Doctorate in Educational Psychology. She was previously the Head of Care within the residential unit in a SEMH school, where she achieved an Outstanding judgement from OFSTED. Amy has worked at the SEMH school for 7 years in a variety of roles, across both the boarding house and the school. Amy has completed her Level 5 Apprenticeship and Diploma in Leadership and Management in Residential Childcare as well as Level 3 Child Care and Education, and Level 3 Supporting Learning in Schools. In addition to this, Amy has completed Level 2 Safe Administration of Medication and Level 2 Supporting Mental Health. Amy is DSL trained and is the DLS lead at Elevate.



Kerri Why

Kerri has worked in the mental health sector for over 13 years. Working with adults and young people with significant SEN and mental health needs and those who are at risk of offending. During those years Kerri has been part of a team at a SEMH school where she achieved an Outstanding judgement from OFSTED. Throughout this time, Kerri has also worked at other provisions leading a team whilst working individuals with challenging behaviour. Kerri has completed her NVQ 3 in Health and Social Care, and Level 2 in Behaviour that Challenges. Kerri has also completed Level 2 Safe Administration of Medication and Level 2 Supporting Mental Health. Kerri is a qualified level NCFE level 2 Bushcraft instructor with a wealth of experience of working with young people in the outdoors.



Linda Howard

Linda has worked within mental health for most of her adult life, spending the past 10 years working in an SEMH school, supporting children and young people in the role of Head of Care where she received an Outstanding judgement from OFSTED. Before this, Linda worked for over 25 years within hospital settings and care homes to provide support for both children and adults with both learning difficulties and mental health needs. Linda has also worked for Peter Symonds College during this time as an internal verifier and assessor for Health and Social Care up to Level 5. Linda has completed her Level 5 in Management in Health and Social Care, both Level 2 and 3 in Health and Social Care and Level 4 Prepare to Teach Lifelong Learning.



Feedback

I first commissioned the services of Elevate mentoring in September 2023 when I had concerns about the behaviour of a group of year 8 students. They were truanting, being defiant and had problems maintaining positive relationship with friends, family and staff. They also all had a background of trauma and were in need to some bespoke SEMH support from someone who was not a member of staff at the college. They had mentoring sessions with Elevate. At first these were twice a week and then they reduce to weekly. I was impressed with how quickly Elevate staff developed positive relationships with all the students. After the first session, the students felt they were able to talk openly about their issues. What followed was a series of sessions in which the students were helped to make sense out of their issues and the reasons for their behaviour. Elevate staff provided detailed notes for us, following each session so that we could deepen our own understanding of the students' needs and problems. As a result, we were able to adapt our own provision to be more effective. We have seen an improvement in the behaviour and attendance of these students. Elevate's plan of coming into schools to offer specialist support has filled a gap in the market for us. For students whose behaviour is a challenge but who do not meet the threshold for alternative provision, this is the service that we will be using and which all schools should consider using.

Mr B Rule

Headteacher Wyvern School

What are our next steps?

There is a vast amount of evidence that promotes outdoor learning and the positive outcomes that can be achieved through this. Many of our young people suffer from significant special educational needs such as autism and ADHD in which affects their ability to attend school or school has become a negative experience for them.

Our mentors are all fully insured with enhanced DBS. We have all relevant policies in place as well as risk assessments for all off-site activities. Amy Ryder is our designated safeguarding lead.

We would like to be able to offer onsite Outdoor therapy for these young people. Sessions that promote positive outcomes through positive interactions, social development and communication skills. But also allow us to create an environment where by our young people feel comfortable and safe. Our program would involve Horticulture activities as well as Bushcraft activities. Bushcraft and outdoor skills also teach valuable life skills, such as problem-solving, leadership, teamwork, and communication. These skills can help young people to become more independent, confident, and resilient, preparing them for future challenges. **Perhaps most importantly, practicing bushcraft and outdoor skills is good for mental health and wellbeing.** Studies have shown that spending time in nature can reduce stress and anxiety, boost mood and self-esteem, and improve overall mental health. Outdoor education provides an opportunity for young people to connect with nature, escape the stresses of modern life, and develop a sense of inner calm and peace.

In order for us to create this environment we would require a small piece of land where by we can create horticulture activities such as vegetable patches, exploring nature, growing herbs as well as an area where by we can create an area where by our young people can learn various Bushcraft activities in a safe and secure way.

Due to the complexity of our young peoples needs we would have small groups at a maximum of 4 per session in order to avoid overwhelming them however most sessions would be 1:1 based. We would like to be able to run our sessions between the school hours during term time. We would like to enter into an agreement with the Council to rent a small section of Knowle Park in the south east corner immediately behind the Council's workshop. This would be kept tidy and all items belonging to the organisation would be kept secure and not be left immediately on site. The rental would cover occupation during term time only between hours of 8-4pm.

We hope that we can extend our work to the local primary schools within the area as our understanding is that there is huge rise in not only secondary but also primary children who are currently not accessing education. Our hope is that for some of our young people, this may create a step towards moving back into education or even society for some.