

Telephone: 07807 267280

Email: info@trailblazersmentoring.org.uk

Website: www.trailblazersmentoring.org.uk



Hello and welcome to Trailblazers

Thank you so much for getting in contact to enquire about voluntary mentoring opportunities within Trailblazers.

As a pioneering charity we reduce re-offending among young people by providing volunteer mentors. Established in 1998, we were the first and are the best established charity providing support both inside youth offending institutions and on release into the community. At Trailblazers, we believe each young person has the potential to lead a life free from crime and be a positive member of society. We reduce re-offending in young people by helping them to change their attitude, thinking and behaviour through intensive mentoring, advice, advocacy and targeted specialist support. We are based in various youth offending institutions in England these include HMYOI Aylesbury (Buckinghamshire), HMP Brinsford (Wolverhampton), HMP Wandsworth (London) and HMP/YOI Isis (London).

We train and match suitable volunteer mentors with young people who have asked to be mentored. Before being matched, each young person will have been interviewed and risk assessed.

We enclose some background information on Trailblazers and a role description which I hope you will find informative. We are a very special charity, creating new chances for young people and making a significant contribution to their future. This critically important work is already supported by almost one hundred volunteer mentors and we hope you choose to progress your application.

We look forward to hearing from you. For further up to date information please visit our website and join our social media feeds.

Application process and timeline

You can submit an application to join Trailblazers at any time. Once we receive a completed application form, we will acknowledge receipt normally within two weeks. As part of our commitment to Safer Recruitment, all application forms will be carefully assessed for suitability and so we would encourage you to read the application guidance with care.

Should we choose not to progress your application, you will be notified within four weeks and where possible we will signpost you to other volunteering opportunities.

Information meeting

If your application identifies you as a possible mentoring candidate, we will invite you to a two hour informal information meeting. We will facilitate a couple of these meetings at different times to enable full.

We would hope that you would be able to attend an information meeting, however if this is not possible you will be asked to attend a one to one interview with the relevant Project Manager as an alternative. We do not encourage this as a valuable part of this meeting is designed for you to meet other potential mentors.

The information meetings are designed to give you the opportunity to meet Trailblazers staff, explore the role in more detail, find out further information on Trailblazers and meet other possible mentors before committing to the initial training programme.

Initial Training programme

The initial training programme consists of three days initially taking place over a full weekend and a further one weekend day. All course materials are provided and reasonable travel costs can be reimbursed once you are matched to a young person.

Upon completing this initial training we will be able to discuss whether this voluntary opportunity is for you. The training is comprehensive, fun and delivered in a very supportive environment. It will cover all aspects of mentoring, give you a thorough understanding of the mentoring role and enable you to meet other experienced mentors and potentially some mentees that we have worked with.

As part of this training course, we will begin your DBS enhanced disclosure and the HMPS Shared Services disclosure.

Becoming a mentor

Once you have completed the initial training and been security cleared to work within the relevant young offending institution, we will begin matching you to a suitable mentee. At every stage of the matching process you will be consulted and the final decision will be yours before any match is confirmed.

At the majority of the institutions in which we work, volunteer mentors are also able to 'draw keys' – giving you freedom of movement around the prison. If you are based in a project where keys can be drawn, you will need undertake a HMPS half day training to enable you to do this.

While you are mentoring a young person, you can claim reasonable travel expenses. We can reimburse train or bus fares and if you are using your car, mileage can be claimed at 40p per mile up to an agreed amount. All volunteer mentors are asked for a minimum commitment of twelve months - with weekly, one hour visits to their mentee whilst they are in prison and fortnightly initially and then monthly meetings once they have been released. Most of our mentors work with young people for between three and six months inside prison and continue that relationship for up to nine months in the community. In considering your application to join Trailblazers, we would ask you to give particular thought to this commitment and whether you can maintain it. All our current mentors do and often they have worked with us for many years. It is normal for you to mentor one young person during your first year and this may be extended to two young people if we both feel you have the time and capacity to do this.

As a mentor you will be fully supported and supervised by an experienced Project Manager who you will have regular support meeting with to discuss the match and identify any additional needs. We facilitate regular mentor group meetings (in the evenings) to give all mentors the opportunity to listen to guest speakers and to share best practice. In addition to the initial training programme, you will also attend a further two days of training during your first year to get an understanding of the 'Tool Kits' we use to structure our mentoring programme.

As you can see, we ask for a very serious commitment from you. Many of the young people with whom you will come in to contact, have spent their lives being let down by a variety of individuals so it is vital that you are committed to your match for as long as the relationship lasts. Our recruitment and training programme is intensive and the commitment required can be demanding – but it is very rewarding and when you become matched everything often falls in to place. If you genuinely want to make a significant change in a young person's life, and support them to live a life free from crime then this is without a doubt the opportunity for you.

Role description & person specification

Main purpose: To support young people (mentees) inside prison and, after their release into the community to enable them to live responsibly and purposefully without re-offending.

Supported by: Project Manager

Agreed responsibilities:

- Meet with a mentee on a weekly basis whilst they are in prison.
- Provide support after the mentee's release and maintain regular contact, where possible, meet with the mentee. Contact can also be maintained by phone, text and email.
- Deliver Trailblazers' structured mentoring programme by using the Tool Sets during mentoring sessions.
- Provide the mentee with practical support and encouragement.
- Ensure that the mentoring boundaries are adhered to at all times.
- Supported by the Project Manager, ensure the mentee is aware of the additional support services available to them and how best to utilise them.
- Supported by the Project Manager, undertake research into facilities and opportunities for the mentee, which may include housing, education and employment.
- Communicate with other agencies such as Probation and Youth Offending Team as and when required.
- Making prison staff and Trailblazers aware of any occasion where harm to others or harm to the mentee is either taking place, planned or suspected.
- Completing and submit recording sheets after each mentoring session.
- Keep accurate records of any expenses incurred.
- Attend and participate in mentoring training sessions.
- Follow all Trailblazers policies and procedures in the delivery of the role.
- Abide by all prison rules and regulations.
- To remain accountable to the Project Manager returning visit reports, attending support meetings and being willing to receive supervision as required.

Person Specification

Factors	Desirable (D) / Essential (E)
Qualifications	<p>You must be aged 21 years or over (E).</p> <p>No specific educational qualifications are required.</p>
Experience/knowledge	<p>Some knowledge or understanding of youth offending (D).</p> <p>To be willing to gain knowledge and experience of the youth justice system and needs of young offenders (E).</p> <p>A willingness to undergo training and commit for a period of at least twelve months (E).</p>
Skills/Abilities	<p>An ability to communicate effectively with young people (E).</p> <p>To communicate with a variety of professionals to broker and support the best outcome for your mentee (E).</p> <p>To be committed to empowering young people (E).</p> <p>To support and encourage the young offender to participate fully in the mentoring programme (E).</p> <p>To maintain an attitude of tolerance and acceptance to young people whose values and behaviour may be different to your own (E).</p> <p>To receive support and guidance as required, remaining accountable to project staff (E).</p>