

matrix

with young people, for young people

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News Update **Summer 2023**

NHS Digital reported that from 2017 to 2020 the number of 5-10 year olds with a probable mental disorder increased by 5%. Our experience backs that up, with the team receiving regular requests to help children as young as 8 who are struggling with their mental health and anxious thoughts.



To help reduce the likelihood of this occurring, we recently expanded our Emotional Wellbeing outreach to Year 6 students with various projects across Guildford primary schools, providing them with the tools they need to look after their wellbeing and the space to talk and let off steam.

Primary School Drop-ins

This term we have been piloting regular lunchtime drop-ins at two Guildford primary schools. In response to an identified need, these sessions create a safe space to make friends and have fun, improving their wellbeing. These sessions have been well-received by the students, and we have seen a significant increase in their participation.

**All names changed for identity purposes*

Monthly Hubs

These are designed to provide a safe and welcoming space for the young people to engage in various sports, crafts and games. Giving them an opportunity to interact with other children and chat with youth workers helps to build their confidence and social skills.



Move Up Monday

Over 25 young people now attend 'Move Up Monday' at Youth Hideaway (our daily youth drop-in at The Hideaway Café) each week. These lively sessions see young people from a variety of primary schools playing games on the green or crafting inside, enjoying the Youth Café cut-price menu and chatting through their worries with youth workers.



These projects complement our school transition coaching and workshops that help Year 6s adjust to a completely new school environment.

Parent

Feeling Happier at School

Jed* started attending our Schools Transition Project last year. By providing a safe and welcoming space for students to express their worries, we help build their confidence

and the resilience they need to overcome obstacles they may encounter at secondary school. In the sessions, students like Jed learn how to manage their anxiety, make new friends, and develop the social skills they need to succeed.

Finding the move to secondary school worrying, his mum also had concerns about his lack of maturity and whether he would cope with lunch breaks and moving between lessons. She was aware he'd been leaving books in classrooms and was concerned about his ability to adjust to the new environment.

Fortunately, Jed started attending a number of 1-2-1 transition sessions, as well as our lunchtime drop-ins, Youth Hideaway and Hubs. Over time, he began to benefit from the support and guidance provided by our team.



In particular, he built a strong relationship with his Transition Coach and found the sessions to be a safe and welcoming space to discuss his worries. He learned how to manage his anxiety and not panic when at school. He also

acquired the skills to talk and play with people who were not yet his friends.

Jed expressed his appreciation for the project and said that he “now feels happier at school”. He can also “talk about his worries with more confidence and make better decisions”. After attending the sessions for a year, he has matured a lot and made friends in the process.

“

Thank you for all your work and the difference this has made to our students

Headteacher

Wellbeing Tips

Bumblebee Breathing

If your mind is buzzing and you're feeling anxious, try Bumblebee Breathing.

Sit comfortably.

Close your eyes.

Breathe in through your nose and count to 4.

Breathe out slowly making a humming sound.

The vibration of the humming produces a calming effect.



“A genuine guiding light for the children” - we recently sat down with two long-standing friends of Matrix to hear why they love working with us and how they see Matrix inspiring young people.



Steve Smith

Headteacher
Guildford County School

What do you love about Matrix?

We've had a long-standing relationship with Matrix, they are a great benefit to us as a school, supporting the children with their mental health and the day-to-day challenges that they face.

The green hoodies are famous in school, it's a really friendly, supportive signal of what Matrix has to offer. The children love that! The children recognise it and are really keen to work with the team.

Do Matrix just support your students in school?

The great thing is, they aren't just about provision in school, they're also about

provision beyond the school, providing pastoral support for some of our harder to reach children and indeed their families.

When The Youth Hideaway opened its doors a couple of years ago, it became a firm base for young people outside of school provision, recognised by members of the local community. I think that was a sea change for what Matrix has been trying to offer. Many of our children will visit the café outside of school and that speaks volumes about what Matrix offers to Guildford.

Why is partnership with Matrix so important to you?

Matrix is a genuine help, a genuine guiding light for the children and they help us to focus on our primary function, which is to provide a great education. Working in partnership with Matrix we are able to work together to deliver a bright future for the children and young people we serve here in Guildford.



Zoe Franklin

Liberal Democrat
Parliamentary Candidate
for Guildford

What do you love about Matrix?

I first got involved many many years ago through their Ready 4 Action project, clearing community spaces and gardens.

A LITTLE WAY TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT

Can you support us
with just **£1** a month?

By giving a little, you're able to do a lot. Here's how you can help:

Your **£1** will fund a free meal for a young person to eat with their friends at the Youth Hideaway.
Your **£12** over a year will fund a conversation with a Youth Worker around a pool table!

I love the fact that whatever Matrix does, they always involve young people, whether in schools or getting them involved in the community. And alongside The Hideaway Café they provide a wide variety of things all with a focus on helping young people thrive.

How has Guildford Liberal Democrats engaged with Matrix?

Through Matrix, we've had 2 work experience students at our offices and have loved giving an opportunity to young people in the workplace. It's amazing, because it helps the young person find what they want to do with their life and gives them a window into what it's like to be working. Work is so different from school - it's a really valuable opportunity.

Would you recommend partnership with Matrix to others?

Yes. As well as supporting young people, hosting work experience students can benefit any business. It gave us a new perspective and we've even changed the way we work in some areas of our business as a result.

I would absolutely encourage any business or organisation to talk to Matrix about having a work experience student. You don't know what door this will open for that young person, and it's great to have given them something really valuable in their life.



A hidden café with a big heart!

Just a step away from the high street where giving back to the community has never tasted better.



The Hideaway is also available to hire for special occasions, workshops and business meetings.



GET IN TOUCH

hello@thehideaway.cafe

Profits from every purchase are fed back into Matrix projects across Guildford.

By giving a *little*, you're able to do a *lot*.



The Hideaway Café, Eastgate Gardens, Guildford, GU1 4AZ

Through a grant generously provided by a Surrey County Councillors Members' Allocation we were able to purchase a new pool table for The Youth Hideaway. It may seem a simple thing, but this pool table plays a pivotal role during all our sessions.

The pool table provides a central meeting point for young people who attend. It allows young people to connect with others when they arrive, creating a space for them to get to know each other and make friends. It also gives a safe space for them to get to know the team.

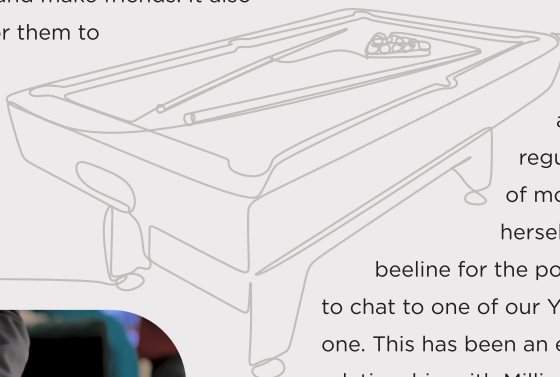
Here is a peek into some of those pool table moments:



Billy* arrived for the first time with his mum, he was feeling anxious as he's never been to The Youth Hideaway before. The team invited them to join a game of pool, which immediately helped him feel comfortable stepping into the room. Soon the game was in full swing and with Billy noticeably relaxed, his mum left. Billy is now a regular at the café and feels confident enough to invite others to play pool too.



Jack and Robert* arrived at the same time, but hadn't spoken to each other before as they are from different schools. Feeling slightly anxious to chat with each other, the team encouraged them to play a game of pool, hoping it would break the ice. It wasn't long before they began chatting and laughing together as they had the distraction of the pool table to take the focus off themselves.



Millie* has been attending the café regularly for a number of months. She arrives by herself, but always makes a

beeline for the pool table if she wants to chat to one of our Youth Workers one on one. This has been an easy way to build a relationship with Millie and she knows it's a safe place she can open up when she needs to.

Through additional funding from the Surrey County Councillor, Fiona Davidson, The Youth Hideaway has recently been able to purchase even more new equipment, including table football and cricket set, which allows us to create more space for conversation.



THE *Boost* PROJECT

According to a 2018 Prince's Trust survey, 29% of young people think 'one of the biggest challenges in pursuing a career is getting the right work experience'. The Matrix Boost Project provides a variety of routes for 16-24 year olds to engage with work, giving them hope for their future in the world of work.

Through volunteering, work experience placements and traineeships at The Hideaway Café, Boost:

- 1. Builds young people's self-confidence**
- 2. Increases young people's transferable work-based skills**
- 3. Helps young people make progress towards reaching their personal goals**

Since its inception in 2021, Boost has continued to grow, and this year alone we've supported 50+ young people into local work experience placements and another 20 have completed work experience in The Hideaway Café, through traineeships or volunteering.

By engaging with and supporting both the young people and the business they are placed in, young people are finding these

placements motivate them and build their confidence.

Tom, who was placed with local accountancy firm Alliotts, told us that until he contacted Matrix he'd been finding it hard to find suitable work experience. After speaking to

the team, we found him a local placement in the field of finance - his main area of interest. Afterwards he told us that "Going into (work



experience) I was a little confused, but coming out of it I realised what I wanted to do when I was older".

Teachers tell us that the placements we arrange through Boost are 'potentially the most significant contact with the world of work that some young people will have before entering employment' - they give young people a chance 'to develop 'soft skills' such as communication, organisation, focus, common sense and situational awareness.'

We're extremely grateful to all the businesses who work with us to support young people in this way.

*If you are able to offer a work placement, please contact **paulsharpe@matrixtrust.com***



I'm pleased to announce that, following the departure of Misty Bower our long-standing CEO, Dan Setterfield (Deputy CEO) has been appointed to the role of CEO starting 1st July. We believe this appointment will enable a sustainable future for Matrix.

Simon Slater - Chair of Trustees



Dan joined Matrix as Head of Youth Work almost three years ago overseeing our youth work delivery team and all of our projects in schools and across the community. Dan is passionate about providing young people with opportunities that meet their needs enabling them to make the most of their lives. We sat down with Dan to help you get to know him better.



Tell us 3 things about yourself

I am married with 2 young kids.
I serve as part of the Leadership Team at Emmaus Road Church in Aldershot.
I have been a DJ since I was 15, and played in various places around the UK.



Why Youth Work?

I struggled with my mental health at school due to bullying and family breakdown which led me to make some poor choices as a teenager. Years later, I wanted to support young people struggling in similar situations and have now been working with young people for nearly 20 years.



What are you looking forward to and what's your vision?

I am really passionate that every young person has the opportunity to realise their own unique potential and are equipped with the tools they need to help them thrive in life. We do this best by working together in partnership with other organisations, churches, stakeholders and services in order to play our part in delivering the best experiences for all young people across Guildford Borough. We have seen a lot of growth and demand for our work in the last couple of years and I am keen to explore ways in which we can develop and build on this in the future ahead.



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