



creative mentoring

Addressing personal and emotional challenges
from a creative distance

Information pack 2021

the **mighty** creatives
mentoring

the challenge

The educational attainment gap is increasing.

Education offers protection. Where education is disrupted by school exclusions or simply missing education, children and young people, particularly those who are care experienced or children in need, are **at greater risk** of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), experiencing ongoing social disadvantage, and possibly experiencing a cyclical impact into the next generation.

Children and young people that we work with are often referred into the care of a Local Authority having experienced some degree of loss or trauma, either by virtue of their home circumstances (for example neglect and abuse), or through secondary factors (for example separation, loss or bereavement). This loss and/or trauma, **affects children and young people's engagement in education and wider society**, depending on their personal resources and degree of resilience to manage this.

These experiences can lead to a combination of multiple vulnerabilities, from **low-self-esteem** and difficulty in regulating emotions, to **becoming disengaged** in education, seeking attention often through **risky/illegal behaviour and low levels of resilience**.

This is where Creative Mentoring can help.





angelica's story

Angelica is 5 years old. She was referred to the Creative Mentoring programme to help support her with her changes in placement and imminent move across the country and to a new school. Angelica's language was extremely limited when she started her Creative Mentoring journey and struggled massively with new people and surroundings, a concern for her teachers.

Angelica worked with her Creative Mentor for 1-2 hours a week, where they explored the "make believe" through arts processes. There was a clear structure to each session and the Creative Mentor ensured they were being fluid, flexible and adaptive in their approach. Overtime, Angelica developed more trust with the Creative Mentor and creative activities they would do together.

In a time where everything was uncertain for Angelica, her Creative Mentor has been her constant. Her confidence with her language has come on leaps and bounds, especially when developing key social skills and understanding politeness and social cues correctly. Teacher's have shared that Angelica runs back to her classroom and excitedly shares what they've done with their Creative Mentor with their teacher and friends.

The school valued this intervention so much that Angelica continued to work with her Creative Mentor across the transition period of the academic year.

what is creative mentoring?



'Creative Mentoring' was pioneered by **Derbyshire County Council's Virtual School** and **The Amber Factory**, a model and approach to working with looked after children and young people aged 4-19 who struggle to engage in education – or who are at risk of exclusion, social isolation or disaffection.

A Creative Mentor is commissioned to work with the child or young person and is briefed jointly by social care professionals and schools. They get to know the individual and introduce creative activities such as film, drama, music, poetry, photography and stories to help them safely explore the world around them, learn new skills, communicate and **address personal and emotional issues from a creative distance**.

the story so far



In the Autumn of 2020, The Mighty Creatives launched their regional Creative Mentoring service for children and young people in and leaving care and children in need who are disengaged from education and struggling to find a solution or next step.

This tried and tested Creative Mentoring model has been **pioneered in partnership with Derbyshire Virtual School and The Amber Factory**, a partnership who have been transforming the lives of children and young people aged 4-19 for over a decade through work with Creative Mentors. The model has since been supported by numerous funders including Children in Need, What Works for Children's Social Care, Arts Council England and the Swire Charitable Trust, and has now been launched across the East Midlands and wider.



martin's story



Martin is 18 years old. When Martin joined the Creative Mentoring programme, he was living in semi-independent accommodation. He was serving community service and was often in trouble with the police and Youth Offending Services. He demonstrated very low self-confidence which impacted his communication and self-belief.

Despite initially struggling to engage with new people, including his Creative Mentor, Martin slowly started to develop trust with his Creative Mentor through joint moments of learning.

Coming towards the end of his community service, where Martin had grown fond of, Martin and his Creative Mentor decided to make masks for people working in his community service setting. Through this way of working, Martin felt a huge sense of purpose. He was very excited about making these masks, even going home early so he could make more masks to help out other people. This gave Martin a sense of purpose and deeper connections in the community.

This way of working helped Martin open up to his Creative Mentor, where he instigated a conversation about finding a job with his Creative Mentor, showing a huge increase in decision-making skills and motivation. As a result, Martin found a job serving tables at a local café.

In their last session, Martin talked about how much happier he was and how he felt he was able to move on from his negative behaviours to make more positive decisions. Martin is no longer serving community service.



how does it work?

The **collaborative model** is an approach to working with children and young people who are struggling to engage in education, at risk of exclusion or social isolation. When a child is disengaged, resistant to support, and professionals are struggling to improve the situation, a Creative Mentor can be commissioned to work with the child or young person one to one.

A Creative Mentor works in what is called the '**Third Space**': a **person-centred, informal, and reflective** 'space' where Creative Mentors build trusted relationships using creative practice to refocus efforts away from negative preconceptions of education, to identify what it is the child or young person needs to help them become 'unstuck'.

Creative activity is introduced as a practical way to explore feelings about themselves and world around them, learn new skills, communicate, address social and emotional issues, and **find a sense of purpose and agency**.

Creative Mentoring activity takes place at home, school, and community settings in around 2-hour sessions, once a week over varying lengths of time, averaging 3-9 months. Virtual Schools and other referral partners can commission Creative Mentors for at least 24 hours per child or young person.

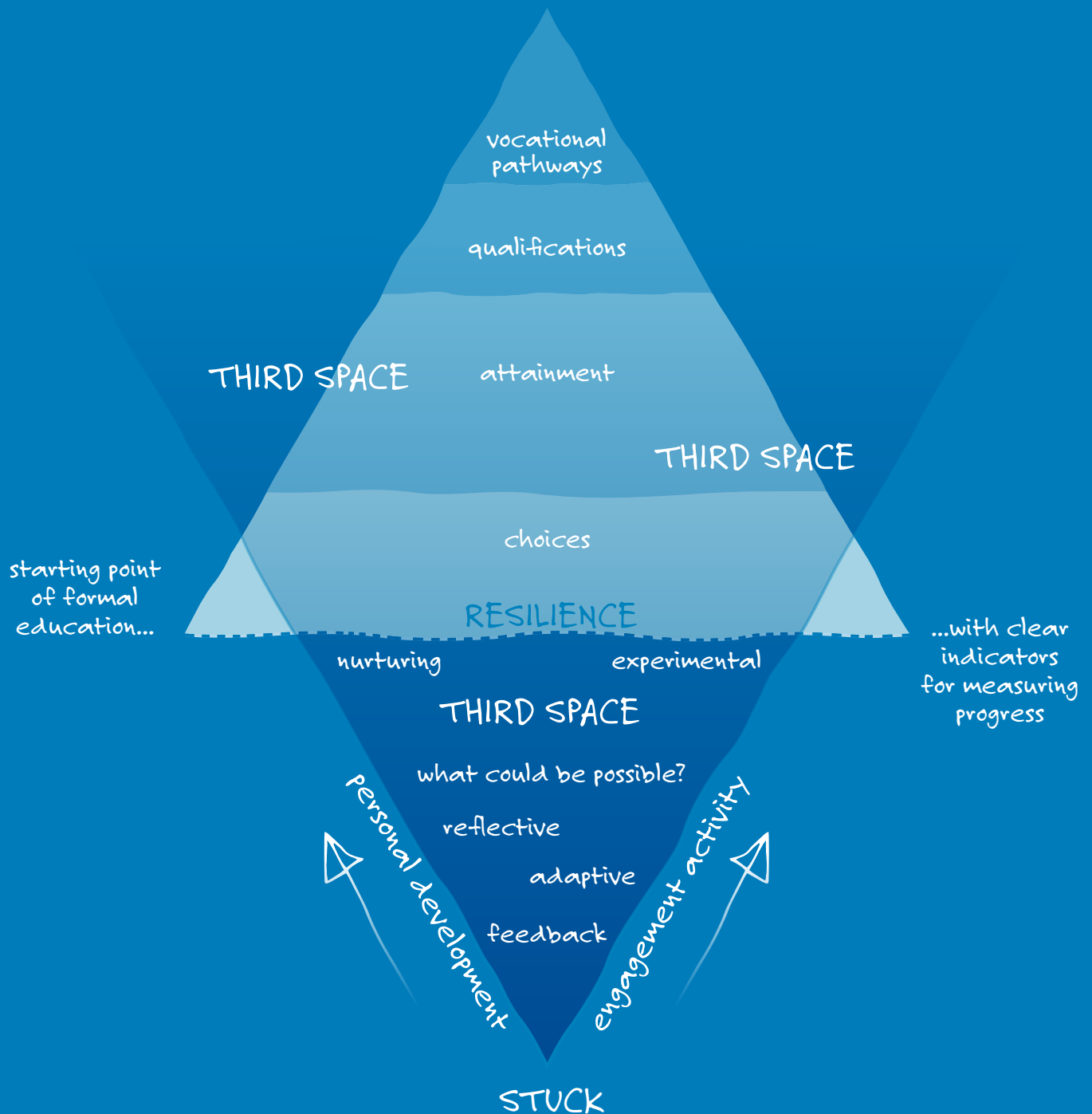
Creative Mentors start their sessions with one simple question:

"What shall we do together today?"



the collaborative working model

Working in the Third Space



creative mentoring process

From the point of referral to the point of delivery.



building partnerships

Partners are identified and agreement put in place.



child or young person identified

School / Partner identifies CYP who is struggling or at risk of exclusion. Other options have been exhausted.



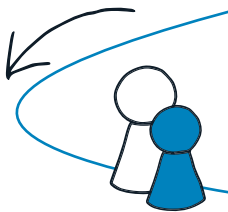
referral

In partnership with key support staff, the Creative Mentoring Service is identified as a route of support for CYP and a referral is made to TMC.



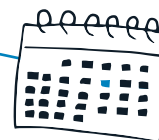
service secured

Youth Programme team to follow process to ensure CYP is eligible. If they are, funding and hours of provision are agreed and a Service Level Agreement is issued.



matching

Youth Programme team follow the matching process to match the CYP with a suitable Creative Mentor. An offer is made and contract agreed.



contract and intros

Youth Programme Coordinator to coordinate introductions to key partners and Creative Mentor. Creative Mentor then liaises with partners to plan initial set up such as times, where and when. This is fed back to TMC.



delivery & monitoring

Creative mentoring is delivered to agreed timeframe and monitored over time. Child regains confidence and may transition back into lessons or alternative provision. TMC will have regular contact with Creative Mentors to monitor and evaluate the intervention and progress made.

criteria for accessing support



Creative Mentoring is available to Children and Young People with a Social Worker who are:

- in Care aged 4-11
- in Care aged 11-16
- leaving Care aged 16-19
- a registered Child in Need aged 4-16

Children and Young People with a Social Worker who presents one or more of the following characteristics. The child or young person:

- Is at risk of school exclusion.
- Has been excluded from school.
- Is frequently truant.
- Has a family member with criminal convictions.
- Is at risk of gang membership/ and or in a gang.
- Has low levels of educational achievement.
- Has diagnosed mental health issues.
- Has suffered abuse / early childhood trauma.
- Has been a victim of crime.
- Displays antisocial behaviour.
- Displays high impulsivity/hyperactivity.
- Has a history of weapon possession (e.g. knife, gun).
- Has a criminal conviction.
- Is receiving services from a Youth Offending Team or similar.
- Has a history of alcohol and/or substance use.
- Other (detail to be provided).

If the young person is "stuck" and presenting other characteristics, your referral form should share further detail, qualifying why you feel they should be considered for support.



leah's story

Leah is 14 years old. When she was referred to join the Creative Mentoring programme in 2020, she was going through a period of significant challenge at home, in education and within their social group. Leah had experienced severely traumatic events in her life that have impacted her confidence, self-belief, behaviours and attitudes. This presented itself in destructive behaviours that have resulted in disengagement, violence, police intervention, exclusion and severe mental health needs. According to other professionals, Leah could "have derailed at any point".

A Creative Mentor was commissioned to work with Leah to encourage them to positively re-engage in education and develop trust in adults and peers around them.

Leah was matched with a Creative Mentor and their weekly 1 and a half hour sessions initially focused on understanding how their trauma has impacted their life through visual arts.

Through working with their Creative Mentor, despite having experienced loss within the family and significant relationship challenges over the same timeframe, Leah has since returned to school and is regularly engaging, so much so that she used the time she would have spent with her Creative Mentor to do extra revision and preparation for her GCSEs. Leah said to her Creative Mentor before her last session that she now understands that staff and professionals are working for her best interests and has better relationships with them because of this.

traded services

Creative Mentoring is a great way to provide a service that we know works for children and young people. It is commissioned at an hourly rate of **£65.00 per hour**, at a **recommended 24-hours per child or young person**. Total cost £1,560 inclusive of VAT and expenses per child or young person. For this fee we will provide:

- 21 hours of one-to-one Creative Mentoring for your referred child or young person.
- 3 hours of support time for the Creative Mentor, including time for planning, monitoring, evaluation and possible attendance to PEP meetings where appropriate.
- Professional supervision for the Creative Mentor provided by Educational Psychologists across the region, including:
 - One-to-one bespoke support.
 - Group supervision and networking sessions.
 - Access to CPD and development opportunities.
- Coordination of the matching process as well as monitoring, evaluation and ongoing communication with professionals.
- CPD and training opportunities for Creative Mentors themed around.
- Ongoing coordination of a Creative Mentoring monthly e-news, sharing insights into Creative Mentoring across the region and opportunities for children and young people.

Whilst we suggest 24-hours as the optimum time for one child or young person to receive Creative Mentoring, referral partners can ask for more hours where needed, subject to funding.

get involved

The Mighty Creatives have funding to provide a limited number of fully and part-funded Creative Mentor opportunities, subject to funding and review. However, we offer the opportunity for referral partners to commission Creative Mentors via their own funding streams, such as **Pupil Premium**. This is a great way to embed Creative Mentoring within your existing provision for the children and young people you support.

Become a referral partner

You can become a referral partner to the programme by getting in contact with **creativementoring@themightycreatives.com**. You will be asked to **complete a Partnership Agreement**, and from this point you can refer to the programme via our referral and reporting form, where the service will be assessed and secured.

want to know more?

Contact us at creativementoring@themightycreatives.com or call 0116 261 6834.

The Mighty Creatives

LCB Depot, 31 Rutland Street, Leicester, LE1 1RE

For more information contact 0116 261 6834
or creativementoring@themightycreatives.com