



Aaliyah's story

Find out how Creative Mentoring supported Aaliyah* to develop her independence and confidence when she was referred to the service through our Department for Education funded project with Rutland Virtual School.

*Names have been changed to protect the young person's identity.

"Since mentoring my young person, I have seen her really flourish from someone who was so eager to please and just say okay to everything to someone who is voicing her opinions and making choices."

Jessica*, Creative Mentor

"I've realised I can actually take really good pictures! I have learnt new things like how to book trains and get around visiting cities and places which is super exciting. I have built up confidence in myself to be able to explore more."

Aaliyah, Young Mentee

"Lovely reading about Aaliyah's voice and that she feels her opinion is consistently gained throughout sessions."

**Thank you.
Supporting Adult**

social justice for young people

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what happened next?

The sessions started off positive, with discussions between Aaliyah and Jessica about what they would like to focus on. Aaliyah wanted support becoming more confident when exploring. So, while Aaliyah was waiting to start her college course, they looked at going on different trips around the country and using photography to document it.

Some of the sessions took place online, since Aaliyah expressed an interest in learning more about how to navigate different programs such as Teams – working in IT is an ambition of hers.

“I asked if she felt okay with it now and she said, ‘Yes it’s easy!’. It was lovely to see her grow in confidence over the session.”

Jessica worked very adaptively in her Creative Mentor role, exploring different photographic techniques and planning exciting trips to Birmingham, Kenilworth Castle, the Space Centre and London. Aaliyah documented all of these outings through photographs and, with Jessica, learned to edit and add them to a video slideshow application called Canva.

“As always, Aaliyah engaged so well for the whole session - she is a sponge just wanting to learn and explore things.”

background

At the time of referral, Aaliyah was 17 and had been living in the UK for approximately 10 weeks. She was slowly starting to understand the culture of an unfamiliar country but was still having new experiences all the time. She was also looking to secure a college place. It was felt that a Creative Mentor would support Aaliyah to learn more about the new world she found herself in, to help her during an overwhelming time, and to develop her confidence, especially when travelling to new places.

who was Aaliyah matched with?

Jessica was the Creative Mentor we matched with Aaliyah. Jessica is a singer and songwriter, as well as a very talented Creative Mentor with a variety of skills including music and crafts. We felt Jessica would be a great match due to Aaliyah’s love of music and singing. Jessica has a great knowledge of the surrounding areas and opportunities that would support Aaliyah with her next steps.



“I was so proud of her in the meeting as well, as she raised her concerns about what she was worried about and asked questions! A real milestone!”

what progress has been made?

From the baseline assessment compared to the mid-point assessments:

“Moderate progress” has been made in **Relationship Building** (3/5 to 5/5).

“Some progress” has been made in **Participation and Engagement** (4/5 to 5/5) and **Communication** (3/5 to 4/5).

Currently, progress has been maintained for **Confidence** (4/5), **Motivation** (5/5), **Teamwork** (4/5), **Ideas Generation** (4/5), **Problem Solving** (4/5), **Self-belief** (5/5) and **Planning and Budgeting** (4/5).

The service deliveries from this referral show that Aaliyah has really gained confidence in herself and is able to speak out more about what she wants. She has grown from not being able to plan a journey and travel alone to planning an itinerary and taking the train to London independently. These scores began and remained at 4/5 or 5/5.

As sessions progressed, it was clear to see that Aaliyah maintained a high level in these areas and continually demonstrated how good she was when incorporating these skills during creative activities in sessions.



what was a key moment?

A stand out moment was Aaliyah and Jessica’s trip to London, where Aaliyah was confident enough to take public transport by herself and meet her Creative Mentor there - something that she would not have done before their sessions.

“Aaliyah navigated getting to London so well in the morning - she was texting me with updates and arrived looking confident and ready for the day.”

Together, they visited many of the London landmarks, taking photographs along the way. A lot of firsts were experienced, such as Aaliyah eating her first ice cream in a cone and Aaliyah being able to open up to Jessica about some of her worries for the future, which Jessica was able to support with. Aaliyah’s confidence to speak out and ask questions has really been a key moment of her Creative Mentoring journey, as before she never would have had the confidence to do this.