



Leo's story

Find out how Creative Mentoring supported Leo* to step outside of his comfort zone by exploring new creative activities and inspiring places.

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

"She is just what we were hoping for from a Creative Mentor and they are a perfect fit. I just wanted to let you know how much her support is valued and how great we think she is."

Leo's Carer

"It's been a joy to watch Leo's confidence grow throughout his time with Nina. I hope it continues to do so!"

Georgia, TMC Programme Coordinator

"Leo, you're trying hard to ask me questions too when we chat, and you are kind and nice to spend time with".

Nina*, Creative Mentor

social justice for young people

through arts, culture and creativity

the **mighty** creatives



This showed what a kind and thoughtful person Leo is, and Nina knew they would get along. Leo had lots of energy from the get-go; he was keen to do lots of activities, but once he was focused on a task he stuck at it and persevered with Nina's help. Soon, with encouragement and support from his carer, Leo and Nina started to go on some exciting trips out and about. This included a climbing centre, a farm and a sculpture park. They also made several visits to a local community space to make some structures out of wood which they also painted. Leo went home to show these to his carers proudly. Leo was occasionally anxious about being further away from home, but Nina communicated clearly with him and his carers to ensure that he felt safe and happy, while also pushing him gently out of his comfort zone.

what was a key moment?

A special moment in Leo and Nina's time together was a trip to a local woodland area armed with a hammock, camera and binoculars. They tried to do some birdwatching too! Leo loved going in the hammock and playing with Nina's digital camera, taking some beautiful photos. Nina valued this outing with Leo and felt it was great to see him explore his environment.

what progress has been made?

Leo has shown "significant progress" in **Motivation** and **Confidence** (both improving from a 2/5 to 4/5). "Moderate progress" has been recorded for **Idea Generation** and **Teamwork** (both improving from a 4/5 to 5/5) and **Problem Solving** (improving from 3/5 to 4/5).

Through Nina and Leo's Creative Mentoring journey together, it's clear that she was able to support him to navigate things he found challenging. Progress can be seen in their interactions with one another, as well as in Leo's progress scores.



background

Leo was 12 when he was referred for Creative Mentoring by Derbyshire Virtual School. Leo had found the transition from primary to secondary school challenging and was adjusting to the changes this move had brought. Both Leo's carer and the referrer hoped that valuable time with a Creative Mentor might encourage Leo to step outside of his comfort zone, explore new activities and engage with the local area and community. It was shared that Leo worked brilliantly in a 1:1 setting and that he loved being outdoors, climbing, taking things apart and rebuilding them, as well as a variety of creative activities!

who was Leo matched with?

Leo was matched with Nina, a very experienced Creative Mentor who knew the local area well. TMC staff felt that Nina's calm but outgoing nature would match Leo perfectly. Nina had worked with similar young people in the past and knew how to approach Leo with clear boundaries, as well as compassion and understanding.

what happened next?

On their first meeting, Nina and Leo played the game Uno to get to know each other better. Nina was incredibly pleased that Leo asked her lots of questions.