

MCR Pathways

PATHFINDER

CORPORATE GIVING

Helping young people who've had an unfair start find their way

**When you've had
the most unfair
start in life,
you can lose
your way for the
rest of your life.
You need someone
to help you find
your path.**

Pathfinder is a profound opportunity to invest in young people in your community

I succeeded in business by turning failing corporations around. But, after improving the financial state of dozens of children's homes and residential schools, I realised just how unfair life was for so many young people.

When a young person is born into a life of poverty or addiction? It's just not fair. When their parents are imprisoned, or a child is orphaned? It's just not fair. And a young person who ends up in care is more likely to leave school early, to end up homeless, to face addiction, mental illness, to end up in prison - or even face an untimely death. It's just not fair.

In short, when you've had the most unfair start in life, you can lose your way for the rest of your life.

In 2007, I founded MCR Pathways to apply a business approach to this heartbreaking problem. Trial and error. Test and learn. Until we found and refined the simplest, most powerful, most human solution there is.

One trusted adult, an MCR Mentor at the time when they need it most, can change it all.

The decisions you make as a teenager will shape the rest of your life - for good or ill. Nobody should have to face this alone. MCR Mentors are recruited, matched carefully with the right young person, and trained thoroughly with the help of supporters like you. They commit for a year at least, and the results are dramatic. Studies show that not even six-in-ten young people who have been in care go on to what's called a 'positive destination' after school. That's further education, training, apprenticeships or employment. Analysis by The Robertson Trust shows that, for MCR-mentored students, this increases to more than eight-in-ten.

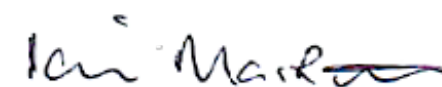
MCR-mentored young people are more likely to stay in school. More likely to get a qualification. More likely to fulfil their potential and live their dreams. The evidence is clear. That's seismic impact on young lives that you can make possible - and massive impact for society.

And when you hear a mentored teenager tell you what it means to them, you'll see the person behind these impressive numbers. Often stuck, afraid, lost and alone... crying out for someone to help them find their way. We now work in 132 schools and with over 7000 young people a year across Scotland and England.

But, as poverty increases and government and council budgets and services are cut, this puts MCR's school programmes at risk.

We can't fail. Their futures matter too much.

So, I invite you to become an MCR Pathfinder and help the young people who need it most in your community. Please invest in young people through MCR Pathways, and help them find their right path. We can't do it without the help of peers like you who have the heart and the ability to make sure every one has someone to help them find their way.



Dr Iain MacRitchie
Founder and trustee, MCR Pathways



From 'A's to 'F's - Aaron's life was in freefall

"I felt as if I wasn't worth enough. As if I wasn't meant to be there. My relationship with my friends had broken down." Mental health issues, neurodivergence and an ADHD diagnosis had taken such a toll on Aaron's young life.

"Not only was I losing my relationship with my close friends, but I was also starting to breakdown the relationship with my family. My mother."

Aaron's grades plummeted from A's to F's. One day the teenager bought himself a coach ticket and moved out. Left school. Left it all behind. *"It was a very sad time. I felt as if I was missing something. That sparkle. I was missing my education. I was neglecting myself even more."*

Aaron returned to school and started to rebuild his life. But he needed help.

"I thought, 'what can this random mentor possibly do for someone like me?' And I was wrong, by the way. I'm happy to say that."

When MCR coordinator Jessica helped him fill out the paperwork, he shared his love for words, film and the performing arts. Before long MCR had found his perfect match. Retired journalist David.

"Someone I've managed to connect with on a very deep and personal level. He allowed for me to share my own love for these particular experiences and art forms. But I was also able to talk about my home struggles and how I felt around the place, you know. My struggles with my mental health."

"I managed to pass every subject but one in my 6th year and a lot of that is down to what I would do on a Thursday morning after my second period of English with David."

"We would talk and discuss how we can think strategically, which became our motto for the year. And it still is on my phone. It's 'Think strategically 2024 to the end'. And it's going to stay that way no matter how many times people ask me to change it because it's what matters to me."

"And I just can't thank MCR enough for opening my mind to a different way of life and a different way of thinking."

Aaron is now studying film at university - and loving it.

"I'm happy. I'm in college excelling. I've managed to get into a relationship. Because I had somebody there who encouraged me to go out and do better. It means a lot, it really does."

Aaron needed someone to help him find his right path and David was the perfect guide, just when it mattered most.

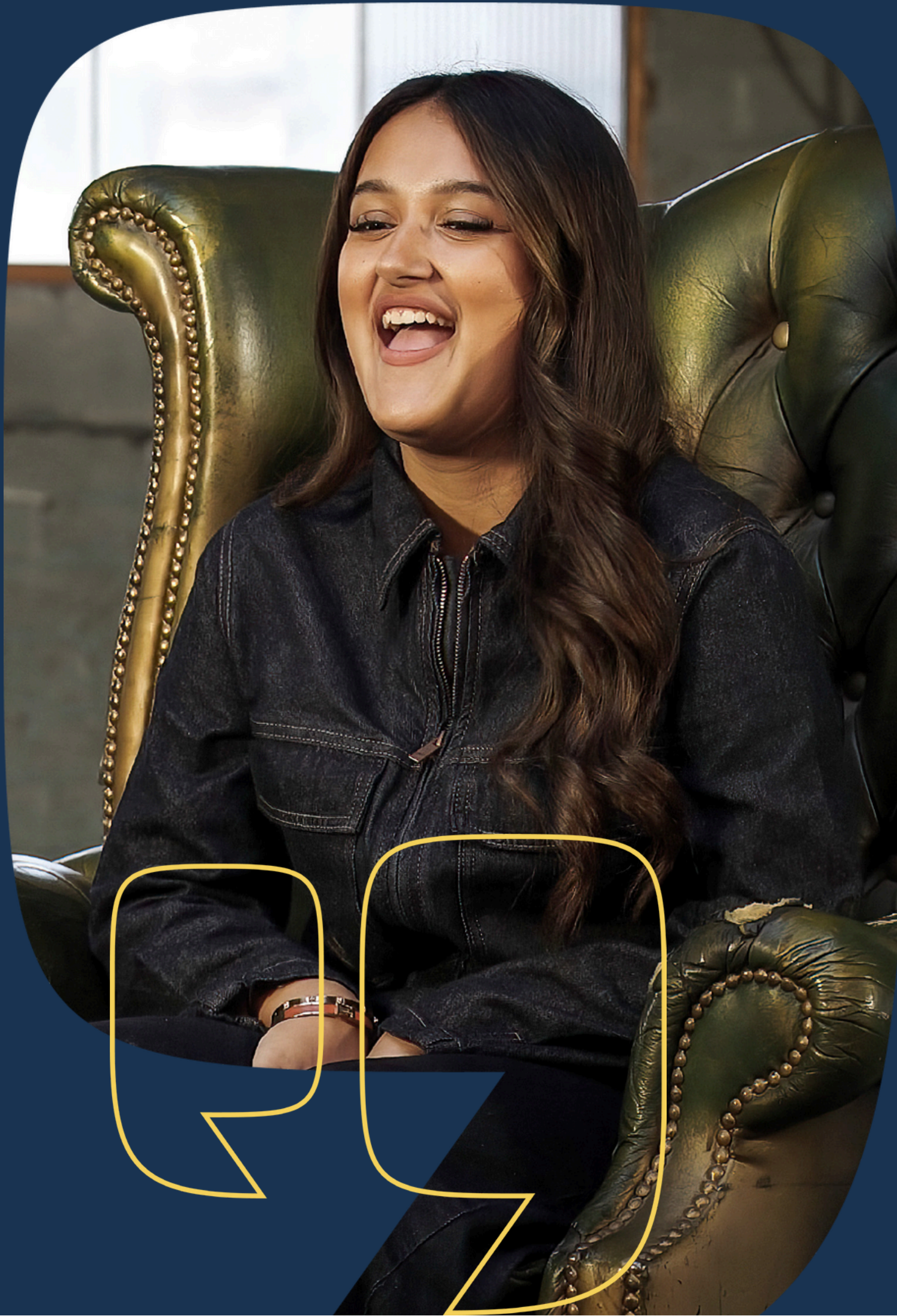
"Personally, I developed a friend which is something I was really lacking to begin with. I felt as if I was alone for a good part of my time."

Aaron

"I felt as if I wasn't worth enough. I felt as if I wasn't meant to be at school. I'm already a lost cause am I not?"

Aaron





It's hard to imagine what Mia went through

The atmosphere on the ward was one of sheer terror. For the patients. For the staff. All anyone knew was that a deadly virus was taking over the world.

Remember what those first weeks of the pandemic were like. Now imagine being on a Covid ward in the very first week of lockdown.

"This was when there were no tests, no nothing, no one knew what was going on," Mia says. She found herself on an isolation ward with three others. Surrounded by boxes covered in terrifying symbols and the names of scary diseases she'd never heard of before. But Mia, aged only 14 at the time, had a virus nobody had ever heard of before.

Lapsing in and out of consciousness, she thought she was going to die. Her family thought she was going to die. Imagine internalising this terror and then, when you finally get out, facing two years of isolation and lockdown. So many young people suffered during Covid, but Mia was at the eye of the storm.

"I suffered really badly with anxiety and just being around people in general. I'd consider myself a really social person. I love to chat and yap about rubbish. But when I came back from Covid I wasn't my usual self.."

"I was unable to leave my house and I was unable to go into social spaces."

Mia

Because of lockdown, her journey through school felt like a lifetime.

"I really used to love school. So, after Covid when I was unable to come back it really was upsetting for me. It was a really hard time for me and I went from really enjoying education and being around my friends, to no longer being able to step into a classroom. I'd convinced myself I was ready to leave," she says.

But then she met her mentor Marjorie. A retired schoolteacher. Warm, patient, understanding.

With Marjorie at her side for two crucial years, Mia found her way back.

When Mia needed someone to share her trauma with, Marjorie listened. When Mia needed to cry, Marjorie was the shoulder she needed. When Mia felt anxious, Marjorie was the calm in the storm. When she just needed to talk about her hair, or yap about rubbish, Marjorie was a friend.

"She helped me fall back in love with education again," Mia says.

Now the bright bubbly girl is back - and Mia is at Stirling University studying sociology and politics.

We can't wait to see where life takes her.



"To be honest, I feel like I've always known you"
Mia to Marjorie

Benefits of your investment to young people

Teenage years are a time when the choices young people make, good and bad, will shape their future. Many of the young people we work with have had the most unfair start in life. So, with no one they can trust or turn to, they must make these choices alone.

Through MCR Pathways, each young person is paired with a mentor - one trusted adult - who can help them navigate their difficulties, see a path forward and make better choices. **Giving them:**

Self-belief

Someone to believe in them so they can believe in themselves.

Self-esteem

Someone to help them succeed and see their own worth.

Direction

Someone to help them dream big and plot a course towards those dreams.

Stability

Someone to show them they're not alone.

Connection

Someone who'll always be there.

When a young person who's had the most unfair start in life loses their way, the consequences can be dire. They're more likely to end up unemployed, ill, homeless, or struggling with mental health and addiction. More likely to end up in trouble with the law or to face an untimely death. The ultimate cost to a life and to society.

Your support will allow us to recruit, train and match committed mentors with struggling young people - and change their lives for good. With your help, a mentor can be in each young person's corner for years to come.

You will change so many young lives - and our society, cities and neighbourhoods - for the better. Your investment through

MCR Pathways will help struggling young people have someone to help them find their right path.

How many young people is up to you.

Benefits of your investment to your business

Local Focus

You can choose to be a programme sponsor in a local school or community area where you operate, fostering stronger local ties and demonstrating direct investment in the places you're part of.

National Reach

If you have a nationwide presence, you have the opportunity to sponsor schools across key Scottish and English cities and regions, allowing for consistent visibility and engagement across a greater area.

Recognition and Reputation

Enjoy recognition on the MCR Pathways website, social media channels, and at MCR Pathways events, plus bespoke Pathfinder badges and stands for display on your premises and media channels.

Strategic Employee Engagement

We offer your employees meaningful volunteering opportunities, such as mentoring programmes and community events, boosting their morale and loyalty. We'll invite staff to share personal stories and messages of encouragement with young people, to inspire and motivate them. And take up your exclusive invitations to conferences, networking and celebration events and engage staff in fun days, coffee mornings and immerse them in the stories of the young people whose lives they will change.

Targeted impact and measurable results

Receive tailored reports that provide data-driven insights into the impact of your contributions, highlighting stories of change and student success that you have helped make possible.

Build community and market presence

Strengthen ties with local communities, enhance customer loyalty, and engage directly with key stakeholders to further enhance your company's reputation.

Recognition and Reputation

If you are passionate about helping young people become all that they can be, your values align with ours. If you have a CSR focus on alleviating the effects of poverty or promoting education, mental health or training, you can meet these goals through MCR. All by helping young people who have had the most unfair start in life to find their right path.

What the young people say...

Though the names are changed, each quote is from a real young person - many of whom have had the most unfair start in life. We have the solution - all they need now is you. As an MCR Pathfinder you will help dozens of struggling young people in your community feel like these young people.

"The best thing about having a mentor is having someone who doesn't let me down."

Alan, 13

"It's nice not feeling alone."

Kerry, 15

"Right from the start, we bonded really well and he's managed my health and stress really well which is all I can ever ask for."

Lewis, 16

"I was really shy, she has helped me build my confidence."

Logan, 13

"I love my mentor."

Emily, 15

"I didn't expect to enjoy this or benefit from this as much as I have. I'm not someone who trusts easily so I took my time. But I'm so glad I stuck it out."

Ryan, 15

"I love meeting with my mentor. She is awesome."

James, 12

"She is amazing, she has helped me so much. More than she would ever know. I can't thank her enough."

Tommy, 17

"My mentor has been a huge help to me and helped me get through very tough times when I have felt alone."

William, 16

"In my opinion, the best thing is having someone who can guide you through periods of uncertainty, who can give valuable tips, share their experiences, and help you to avoid making the same mistakes they did."

George, 17

"She has been consistent in my life when everything else has changed."

Ella, 15

"My mentor has helped me to improve my mental health and become a better person."

Grace, 16

"The best thing was having someone that's experienced in the industry that I want to go into."

Chloe, 17

"I wish more people could have a mentor, it has helped me a lot."

Joshua, 16

"If there was one thing I could change, I would have MCR in every school so everyone can have someone to talk to."

Amelia, 13

What adults say...

"Absolutely I'd recommend it having seen the program work and seen how seamless it is. How much it can change children's lives and how well structured it is. It's a brilliant way to invest in young people. It does work, and it does change individuals' lives. It also really helps change the atmosphere in the school."

Beth Honnor, Headteacher - Marriott's School.

"It's so nice to be able to walk through the school and see students thoroughly engaged with their mentors and having great conversations and doing lovely little activities that just build that relationship. So, for me if you can get somebody that is a trusted adult to a child who will take an absolute interest in their progress and their future. That's something that is priceless in my view."

Tony FitzPatrick, Executive Headteacher - Barnwell School.

"The rigor of Mentor training is second to none. I know how much time goes into recruiting mentors from all walks of life with a range of backgrounds and interesting experiences. But then they all go through the same MCR Mentor training program which gives me confidence and assurance."

Mark Ellis, Headteacher - Goff's Academy.

"The leadership team of MCR Pathways, they're all from an educational background. So, they really understand how schools work. They understand students and young people."

Beth Honnor, Headteacher - Marriott's School.

"We embraced the opportunity to get involved and we are really, really glad we did. It is already making a significant difference. We know that some young people need more help to achieve their dreams. They need time to talk things through, explore their ideas, explore the challenges they face. And this exploration needs to be in a safe space with someone they can make a genuine connection with, and with someone they know really cares. Their Champion. I recommend this programme. I can't recommend it highly enough."

Deborah Warwick, Headteacher - Goff's Academy Watford.

Until everyone has someone to help them find their way

If you are interested in Sponsoring the MCR Pathways programme we invite you to discuss your specific needs and objectives with us.

A dedicated partnership manager will work with you to create a bespoke engagement plan, ensuring that the support you give aligns with your corporate values and achieves meaningful impact for young people and for you.

By sponsoring the programme for one or more school or community areas, your company can help transform the lives of young people across Scotland and England, creating lasting change and leaving a legacy of positive impact that resonates far beyond the classroom.

Thank you!



MCR
Pathways

Contact

Caroline Purves or Mhairi Middleton

Phone: 0141 221 0200

Email: caroline.purves@mcrpathways.org

mhairi.middleton@mcrpathways.org

MCR Pathways
PATHFINDER
Helping young people who've had an unfair start find their way



MCR Pathways

Mitchell Library

Berkeley Street

Glasgow

G3 7DN

info@mcrpathways.org

Scotland: 0141 221 0200

England: 0330 133 4613

MCR Pathways is a SCIO regulated by OSCR, Scottish Charity Number SC045816