

# Gaining Ground



Making progress on our strategy



Annual Review  
**2022/2023**



**Think  
Forward**

Coaching  
Connecting  
Inspiring  
Young People

# Welcome



**We're delighted to welcome you to our 2022/23 annual review.**

In 2022/23 we entered the third year of our five-year strategy. The strategy has three aims: to grow both in terms of numbers of young people supported and income; to sustain our programmes and to be able to demonstrate the impact of our work. We are pleased that despite the first years of the strategy being disrupted by the pandemic, we can report positive momentum against all three aims.

We also continued the equalities journey we initiated in 2020 when we focused on race and equality staff training. We have introduced the concept of an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) framework against which we intend to measure our progress. We have begun to glean more insights from our diversity data to build an EDI strategy with supporting governance and policies. We have implemented a de-biased recruitment process to improve our talent management, address any disproportionality and to explicitly consider our diversity and representation. This journey will gain momentum in 2024.



**Ashley McCaul**  
CEO, ThinkForward



**Charlie Green**  
Chair, ThinkForward



**We can report positive momentum against all three aims.”**

**Ashley McCaul,**  
CEO, ThinkForward





**5%**

we worked with 5% more young people in **2022/23**



**9%**

our income grew by 9% in **2022/23**



**Positive partnerships with multiple stakeholders are key to the momentum we have built over the past year.”**

**Charlie Green,  
Chair, ThinkForward**



**Youth participation continues to be at the heart of all we do.”**

**Ashley McCaul,  
CEO, ThinkForward**

We worked with 1,356 young people in 2022/23, 5% more than the previous year. We are on track to achieve our target of working with 1,500 young people by 2025. We also made progress on our income growth goal with an increase of 9% year on year. Additionally, we began evaluating both our DFN-MoveForward and Future Leaders programmes and are looking forward to publishing reports on these in 2024.

In September 2022, we launched our Future Leaders programme delivery, supporting young black men in London who have been excluded or are at risk of being excluded from mainstream education. After one year of delivery, we're delighted that 85% have transitioned into post-16 destinations in further education or employment.

2022/23 marked the last academic year of delivery of our five-year DFN-MoveForward programme. We will continue to work with young people with learning disabilities and autism to support them to transition into paid employment and are working on plans for new programmes which will come to fruition in 2024.

Youth participation continues to be at the heart of all we do. We were pleased to launch a new youth-led research

project in partnership with The Blagrove Trust. You can read more about this on page 15.

Positive partnerships with multiple stakeholders are key to the momentum we have built over the past year. We are grateful to our funders and donors for investing in our work. Our corporate partnerships are some of the most enriching and multi-faceted relationships we are fortunate to hold. Over 100 businesses support us by providing our young people with invaluable insight days into the world of work, offering work experience opportunities or volunteering as mentors on our business mentoring programme. Finally, we are indebted to our partner schools and colleges who continue to support us to work with their students to improve their chances to make positive transitions to new destinations.

We have also been completing a piece of work surrounding language. We would like to invite you to engage in a new way of using language to describe the young people we work with. Throughout this report, and in all of our communications, you will not see us talking about 'disadvantaged young people', as we prefer to use positive, asset-based language. You can read more about this in our asset-based language guide on our website.





## The young people we work with



**The young people selected for our programmes face a number of challenges in their lives that can impact their transition from school.**

We employ a rigorous selection process to ensure we work with young people who will benefit most from our support. The process involves using a Risk Of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Indicator, which includes criteria such as low school attendance, pupil premium eligibility, having a special educational need and having English as an additional language. Young people are ranked on these criteria, and we invite young people ranked in the middle of the risk scoring to join our programmes. This is based on the rationale that these young people will engage with the programme to the level that will lead to success.

Statistically, young people who meet these criteria have a higher risk of becoming NEET. However, our work demonstrates that with the right interventions and opportunities, they can reach their full potential.



**ThinkForward has helped me a lot. I used to get in trouble at school, but my coach helped me see right from wrong. He explained the different options for my next steps like apprenticeships, sixth form, college. If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be in college.**

If I have any problems, I can call my coach any time and he'll pick up, he's always there. Everyone's seen a change in me and it makes me really happy. My friend told me he's proud of me for staying out of trouble. My family would now describe me as someone who is confident, humble and intelligent."

**Elias, FutureMe Student, London**





There is an extremely high level of intersectionality within our cohorts of young people. Our students face a multitude of challenges such as living in poverty, having a learning difficulty and facing discrimination due to their race, gender or class. Our FutureMe programme works with young people who face challenges such as having additional learning needs or receiving free school meals; our DFN-MoveForward programme works with young people with learning disabilities and autism and our Future Leaders programme works with young black men who are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded from mainstream education.

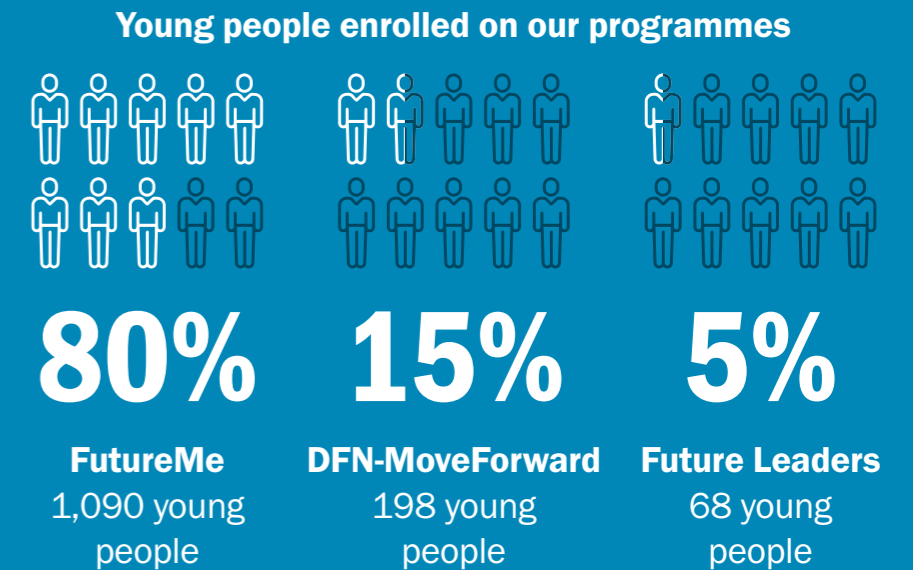
We have selected to work in schools in London, Kent, Nottingham and the West Midlands due to the prevalence of particular challenges that young people can face in these regions. Research has shown higher levels of income deprivation and youth unemployment, and fewer opportunities, in these areas.

We embrace opportunities to work with new, increasingly tighter cohorts who particularly benefit from extra personalised and specialised support to navigate the challenges they face. One of our strategic goals is to refine our FutureMe programme and develop new adaptations of it. We were pleased to be awarded a grant from City Bridge Foundation to refine and expand our work with young women on our FutureMe programme. Research has shown that young women are more likely than men to be NEET, to work in low-paid jobs and to have unpaid caring responsibilities. Girls living in poverty, disabled workers and those facing racial inequality in particular face structural barriers and higher unemployment rates. Starting in 2023/24, our new project will support women facing these issues over three years. They will receive one-to-one coaching, gender-based group coaching and take part in employability activities involving female volunteers working in a wide range of industries.



**One of our strategic goals is to refine our FutureMe programme and develop new adaptations of it.”**

**Charlene Theophile,  
Director of Programmes,  
ThinkForward**





## Ehtesham's story



**“Before ThinkForward, I felt quite lost and wasn't sure what direction I was heading in. I had a fixed mindset, and my emotions could get the better of me.**

At school, I didn't like being told that I was wrong and wanted things to be my way, this meant I sometimes shouted at teachers and flipped out.

Now, I'm on the right track and have more of a growth mindset and I have become more resilient. I am in better control of my emotions. I still have a bit of a way to go but I am getting there.

My recent achievements have been winning a STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths) competition at school and doing 1 day of work experience at Hoares Bank during half term.”

**Ehtesham, Year 10, London**



**When I started working with Ehtesham his behaviour could be impulsive and get him into unnecessary trouble. However, Ehtesham has always been receptive and took to coaching really well.**

Ehtesham started taking a leadership role in our group sessions and is constantly looking for opportunities to grow. He has excelled at our Ready For Work events and has got positive feedback from our partner CBRE IM.

In a recent coaching session Ehtesham and I looked at his progress over the last couple of years, his attendance has gone up by 10% compared with his Year 8 report, and he has not been placed in the internal exclusion unit since starting Year 10.”

**Coach Phoebe**



**Phoebe**  
Ehtesham's Coach



# 10%

increase in Ehtesham's attendance since last year



# WIN

Ehtesham recently won a STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths) competition at school



## Jordan's graduation story



**“I believe that being a part of ThinkForward has really influenced who I am today. When I first joined the programme in Year 9, I was getting into lots of trouble in class.**

For me the programme came at the right time in my life. Being a part of a team and especially with Coach Julian's help, I overcame these issues and began to look to the future at what I really wanted from life.

ThinkForward and Julian gave me opportunities that a girl from a low-income background would not normally have. I took part in many things, such as CV workshops and mock interviews, at large and well-established corporations, such as JP Morgan. The mock interviews, although scary at the time, have made me much more confident in interviews now as an adult.

ThinkForward allowed me to gain confidence in areas which I was lacking and helped me to decide what I wanted from life and how much I could achieve if I put my mind to it. I don't believe the programme would've been the same without Julian, he really put his all into it and wanted each child to do their best and achieve to their full potential. I always felt like I could talk to him about anything and there was no judgement and he would always help me if he could. He helped me decide what I wanted to do in the future, although this changed a few times. He made work experience available to me that was suitable for the career I wished to follow, for example at the time I wanted to be a Vet and I was able to get work experience in London Zoo which was an amazing and a once in a lifetime opportunity.

As I progressed onto sixth form, I was asked to use my previous experience with some of the younger children on the programme. My role was to help the children to feel more at ease and open up and talk about their aspirations. I was there to listen and to give any advice I thought was useful. This was good experience for me as I am currently training to become a social worker and I believe that experience allowed me to gain trust and make children open up which is very important for my future career. The programme benefitted me in many ways, it allowed me to grow and build confidence in things that were important for success in the future, it encouraged me to set goals and meet them and always pursue my dreams. I am currently training to become a social worker.”

**Jordan, FutureMe Graduate, Kent**



**It is significantly harder to have a voice as a young person, and to be taken seriously – we deserve the opportunity to voice our thoughts and opinions to support ourselves both now and in the near future.”**

**Vicky, Year 11, Kent**



**By us doing this research I hope to spread the results so adults have more understanding of the young people’s struggles.”**

**Sofia, Year 11, Kent**



# Youth Participation



**Our youth participation strategy encourages young people to use their voice and develop their leadership skills.**

This commitment is demonstrated through our programme design, evaluation of our programmes and the inclusion of young trustees on our board involved in decision-making. One strand of this work focuses on empowering young people to articulate their views to advocate for issues that are important to them. This year we have provided a number of initiatives to amplify our young people’s voices including a youth-led research project and our Ambassador programme.

## Youth-led Research Project

**In 2023 we launched a new project, funded by The Blaggrave Trust.**

ThinkForward post-16 young people in Kent are leading a research project into the various barriers young people face in securing positive employment opportunities.

Young people have been trained and supported to collect data through surveys, focus groups and interviews, and will be presenting their findings to The Blaggrave Trust and ThinkForward, helping youth and employment organisations to refine their programmes and opportunities for young people.

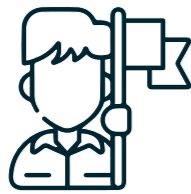
We are excited to see our young people use this platform to share their experiences and use their voices to initiate change.



## Ambassador Programme

In 2022/23 we were delighted to deliver our annual Ambassador Programme in all of our FutureMe schools.

137 Ambassadors across 15 schools delivered some inspiring social action projects, choosing issues that they felt were prominent in their local areas, including knife crime and youth violence, sexual harassment, mental health and wellbeing, and racism.



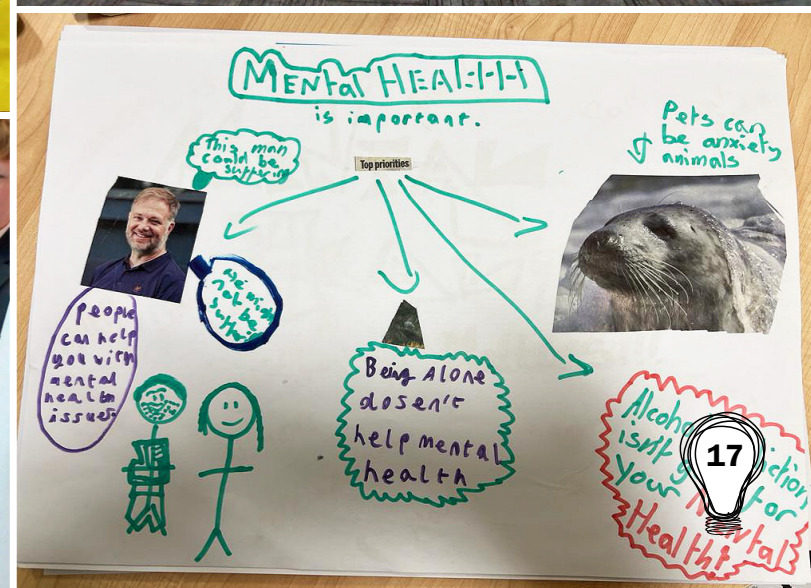
# 137

Ambassadors delivered social action projects in 2022/23



# 15

schools engaged with the Ambassador Programme in 2022/23



“ We organised a football tournament in school as it is a way to support your mental health and as football is popular it might encourage people to talk about mental health. We are proud that we worked well together, learnt more about mental health and gave other students a fun experience.”

Ambassador at George Green's School



# Our work with young people facing multiple barriers to employment

## FutureMe Programme



### Coaching

**Our qualified coaches build trusted relationships with young people and work closely with them for five years from Year 9 to Year 13.**

Our coaches support the young people to gain the independence, skills and confidence to develop their career aspirations and transition into their chosen post-16 destination.

Our coaching methodology is strength-based in its approach, recognising and nurturing the individual strengths, capabilities and vast untapped potential that each young person has. Young people are guided to make the most of the programme of activities we offer, which opens their eyes to future opportunities and provides a pathway into the community and world of work. Coaches and young people co-construct a clear plan for the future and follow-up to ensure it happens.



# 4,249

1:1 coaching sessions delivered in 2022/23



# 264

group coaching sessions delivered in 2022/23



**My coach never gives up on me and makes me want to succeed. Even when I went abroad she kept checking in with my mum to make sure I had a place to study when I got back.”**

FutureMe Student, London



**You always make time for me when I need to talk.”**

FutureMe Student, Nottingham



## Business Mentoring

All Year 10 students on our FutureMe programme participate in our six-session Business Mentoring Programme and are mentored by volunteer employees from one of our corporate business partners.

During the sessions, mentors facilitate students' exposure to a professional workplace environment, practise mock interviews with them and provide guidance on CV writing. Drawing from their own wide range of personal experiences and career paths, mentors offer valuable advice and insights.

At the end of the programme, mentors reported seeing increased confidence, openness and focus from young people. Young people reported that they felt they had improved their communication skills the most.



**I think every Year 10, in every school should get the opportunity to do Business Mentoring, it really helped my confidence.”**

Emma, Year 10, Kent



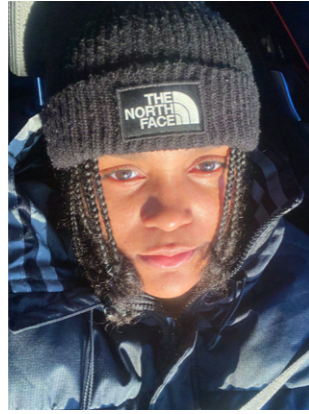
**The business mentoring I received was something special. I learned many things that I hadn't known before and it left me inspired.”**

Aqueel, Year 10, London



**The ThinkForward programme has been an immensely rewarding experience. Working with the students and witnessing the growth in their confidence has been truly gratifying. Helping with their CV and interviewing skills reminded me of my first-time interviewing and how I wish I had a programme like this to help me with the foundational skills.”**

Antonia, 17Capital mentor



## Rihaana's story



**“Before meeting my coach, I had a few challenges in school, such as with teachers, friends and other things like not knowing what to do with spare time at home or at school.**

After starting to work with my coach, I became more involved and confident in taking part in things and got better in school with my behaviour and problems. I am now a better communicator and can share my ideas better when working in a group. I am now more involved in things in college and class discussions about things. I feel more confident in being a strong character in group discussions or meetings. I improved on my behaviour massively from the beginning of ThinkForward and I have become a more outgoing person in a positive way instead of negative.

Insight days showed me what it was going to be like when I left school and I started doing big things such as job interviews or group discussions. It helped get rid of a lot of my nerves and made me feel more comfortable to have a voice. I was lucky to have the opportunity because I'm more creative and talkative than I was before. I got a



really good understanding of what life outside school was like through work experience and community projects and had a good reason to get up and come to school in the morning to look forward to doing something new.

Without ThinkForward, truthfully I probably wouldn't have done a lot of things. I would probably still be nervous about a lot of things and would be less confident in being the best version of me. I feel a lot more motivated now than I was before because I know I have the support there and I'm lucky to have it.

In the future I hope to be a youth worker to help young people who need the extra bit of motivation to be the best version of themselves and to maintain a healthy positive lifestyle.”



**I improved on my behaviour massively from the beginning of ThinkForward and I have become a more outgoing person in a positive way.”**

**Rihaana, Year 11,  
Nottingham**

# Interview with Habs

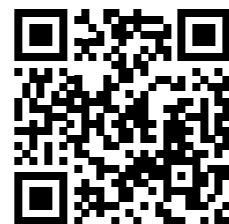


**“At the start of the programme I wasn’t very committed to things, but as I developed through the programme once I found something I really wanted to do I would stay very consistent and not miss out on good opportunities.**

After I finished my GCSEs, I was very strong on the football path... but after the football didn’t work out, I thought about everything I had done during the programme and all the activities I did. I finished college where I studied business and went into university to study sports coaching. After a month, I realised that course wasn’t for me, it wasn’t something I enjoyed.

Before I joined university I was working with young people and I really enjoyed that. Being able to help the youth and let them see there's better things to do in the future instead of this gang environment I saw growing up in my area. That led me to ask if there was an opportunity at ThinkForward where I could work.”

**Habs, FutureMe graduate and Youth Work Apprentice at ThinkForward**



**This programme has been life-changing for my daughter, and I am so grateful for Coach Sarah and the work that she does.**

I’ve seen such a difference in my daughter since they have been working together and it gives me great hope for her future.”

**Vicky, FutureMe Student’s Parent**



**I would like to thank ThinkForward for the positive impact their work has had on my son.**

He became more responsible, more focused on his studies and more confident. I am very happy to see the positivity in my son’s behaviour. Thank you for the great work.”

**Mariam, FutureMe Student’s Parent**



**I left the apprenticeship due to racism and I am going through a complaints process now.**

What I am proud of is how I handled the situation; the younger me would have been very explosive, but those sessions with Coach helped me to reflect and improve how I react to conflict.”

**Rumaiyah\*, FutureMe Student**

\*pseudonym has been used to ensure anonymity



## FutureMe Impact



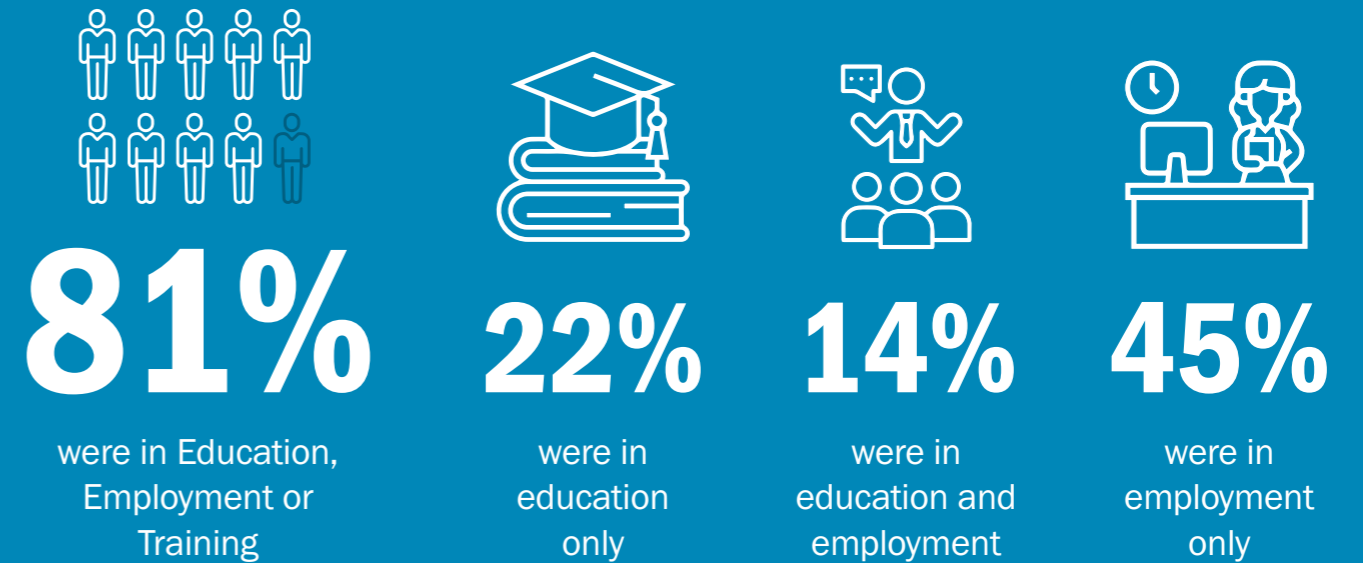
**We have always reported our EET (in Education, Employment or Training) figures based upon what young people tell us about their destinations when they have graduated from our programmes.**

There are always young people we are unable to contact and we previously excluded them from our statistics. The sector terminology for this group are 'Unknowns'. Government youth EET figures include Unknowns, so to ensure we are in line with their statistics, we are now including Unknowns in our figures.

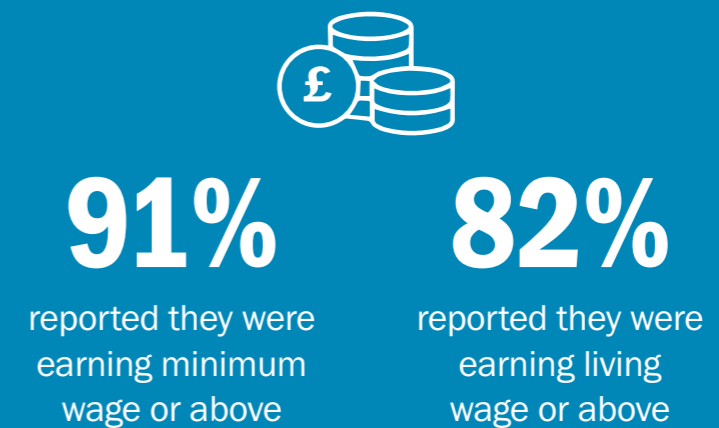
We want to be consistent both with previous years' reporting and in line with government classifications. So this year's annual review includes both figures.

The percentage of FutureMe graduates whose destination we know for the Class of 2022 graduates was 81%. When we include the Unknowns for this same year group the figure was 58%.

The breakdowns by education and employment opposite are based on known outcomes only from the Class of 2022. In September 2023 we conducted 12-month follow-up calls with the Class of 2022 graduates. Of the 148 graduates, we were unable to contact 42 of them.



Of those in employment:



All figures are based on known outcomes of 106 out of 148 FutureMe Class of 2022 graduates.

# Our work with young people with learning disabilities and autism

## DFN-MoveForward Programme



**2022/23 marked the final academic year of delivery of our five-year DFN-MoveForward programme.**

We are immeasurably proud to have served and supported over 280 young people during the lifetime of the programme. Over three quarters of young people enrolled have completed 4 or more Ready For Work activities to date – giving them the opportunity to be exposed to unique employer networks. Over half of our current cohort (53%) who are work-ready have secured education, employment or training status. We continue to support work-ready young people on the programme to secure sustained employment until March 2024.

We are using our learnings to inform the next evolution of a supported employment programme which will work with young people with learning disabilities and autism who are NEET or at risk of being NEET as they transition into paid employment.



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**Vinny De Falco, Head of Programme – Supported Employment, ThinkForward**



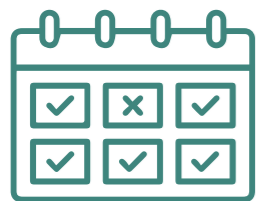


## Coaching and employability activities

# 857

1:1 coaching sessions delivered in **2022/23**

Our DFN-MoveForward programme, funded by the DFN Foundation and Life Chances Fund, and supported by Big Issue Invest, works with young people in London, Kent and the West Midlands who have mild to moderate learning disabilities and autism to support them to transition into employment.



# 313

attendances to Ready For Work events in **2022/23**

Employment coaches provide one-to-one coaching to help young people to develop their career goals and aspirations. Exposure to workplaces encourages young people to develop their work readiness skills and prepare them for the world of work. In 2022/23 young people enjoyed a variety of work insight visits to a range of sectors, including construction, hospitality and animal care. These young people face challenges getting into the workplace, with just 4.8% of adults with learning disabilities and autism known to adult services in paid work. In comparison, 46% of young people on our programme who were work-ready secured paid employment.



# 283

young people have been enrolled across the lifetime of the programme



# 46%

of DFN-MoveForward young people who have left school are in paid employment



# 4.8%

of adults with learning disabilities are in paid work





## Extended Recruitment Programme

**We have been working with our employer partners to support them to recruit young people with learning disabilities and autism.**

We are pleased to have piloted our first extended recruitment programme for young people on our DFN-MoveForward programme with DHL Parcel UK in Kent.

Employment rates for people with a learning disability or autism are lower than for people with any other form of disability. Our extended recruitment programmes aim to tackle this issue by working closely with employers to broker bespoke opportunities for young people with learning disabilities and autism, to support them in the workplace and empower them to transition into paid employment.

We are grateful to DHL Parcel UK for partnering with us on our first extended recruitment programme, which has been a huge success – with two DFN-MoveForward young people being offered permanent roles with DHL Parcel UK at the end of the placement.

We are pleased to be expanding this programme and opening conversations with other business partners. In Warwickshire, we supported Pickering Perforated Products to run a similar scheme, with great success as the student secured a job offer at the end of the placement.



“I’ve seen development in my team and I’m so proud of them. I’m also proud of the young people. It’s been a wonderful experience and I’ve seen the benefits in the four young people and in everyone working on the DHL site.”

Peter, DHL Parcel UK

“It feels good coming to work here every day – getting to meet new people and seeing a new environment, and you just feel like part of the team because everyone’s friendly and approachable.”

Jake, DFN-MoveForward Student, Kent

“When Jake first walked into the office he was very shy and a bit down, but watching him now when he walks into the office, he’s opened up, he’s smiling, he’s happy. He’s always constantly asking for a task to do and is even now debriefing drivers on the radio. His confidence has skyrocketed, which is amazing to see.”

Joe, DHL Parcel UK



# Pacer's story



**“One lesson I learned during the programme is that things don't come easy, they happen over time. You're not going to jump into something straight away, it will take time.**

I've learned to be more mature and social and getting out there more. If I was ever worrying about something or needed someone to talk to I could always talk to my coach, she would put my mind at ease. She taught me that even if you're doing something and you don't enjoy it, it's good experience. Now when I'm talking to people, I'm not shy like how I was before.

Before I joined the programme I didn't really know what I was going to do when I left school. I had so many things going through my head, I wanted to be a plumber, a baker, a mechanic, but ThinkForward helped me decide I wanted to be a teaching assistant and that's the current path I'm doing now. At the moment I have a job as a teaching assistant. In the future I hope I develop to a higher level teaching assistant. Having a job means I have my own independence and getting paid and working hard to earn the money makes me think more about how I spend it.”

**Pacer, DFN-MoveForward Student, Warwickshire**



**Pacer said he initially joined the DFN-MoveForward programme as it allowed him to get out of lessons!**

However, he explained he soon realised he had made the right choice as it provided him with new opportunities. He enjoyed interacting with employers at insight days and taking part in community projects.

When in college, he decided his career ambition was to be a teaching assistant and so he needed to get some work experience. Initially, Pacer was apprehensive about completing a work placement at a mainstream school and adapting to a new environment. However, with my support he was soon attending independently. The children there loved him, and he undertook one-to-one work with an autistic child. Pacer was the only teaching assistant who this child felt comfortable working with, which demonstrates Pacer's natural ability to excel in this career path.

Following his placement, he is now a teaching assistant at the school he attended as a student and is thoroughly enjoying working there. Pacer has many opportunities awaiting, he is confident, capable, conscientious, and caring.”

**Claire, Pacer's Coach**



**Claire**

**Pacer's Coach**





# Our work with young black men who face exclusion from mainstream education

## Future Leaders Programme



The Future Leaders programme supports young black men who are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded from mainstream education and are in receipt of free school meals.

68 young people have been engaged across 13 institutions including external alternative provision and internal exclusion units within schools. In London, black students are more likely to be excluded from school than white British students and young black men experience high unemployment rates. We used our expertise in coaching, mentoring and employability to develop the Future Leaders programme to tackle these issues and inequities.

# Jacob's\* story



**“One of the skills I was lacking before I came to the programme was my organisational skills.**

I remember we used to have these sort of meetings with me and [coach] Patrice, and we were talking about timetables that I would need for GCSEs and just setting out the foundations for what I'm trying to achieve or my end goal. And another thing was my communication with other people as well, because the programme itself, it just really facilitated these sort of exchanges with people where you'd have to actually be able to articulate yourself in a great way for you to be able to be understood.

In school, we're sort of guided quite a lot by teachers, independence isn't touched upon. With the [Future Leaders] programme, it really gave me the sense of more independence that I haven't really been in touch with in school or in other environments. Before this I procrastinated quite a lot in terms of like revision, I wouldn't be focused on it. Me and Patrice made plans where I'd write down specifically what I'd have to do on a specific day, I felt like it really helped my coping mechanism to actually tackle the problem.”

**Jacob\*, Year 11, London**



**Patrice**  
Jacob's\* Coach

\*pseudonym has been used to ensure anonymity



## Coaching and employability activities

Students benefit from one-to-one coaching, where they create an action plan that sets out goals and how to achieve them.

Young people also attended work insight visits to a variety of sectors including media, finance and tech, where they could explore possible careers and see people from similar backgrounds to them in professional, successful roles.



**The first couple of times I had meetings with [my coach] I was kind of sceptical about it because stuff like this has happened in the past. It's never really materialised. But I've had meetings with Patrice, and over time, I've become more comfortable being able to talk to him about stuff that I wouldn't really talk to other people about, as well as the fact that he's also giving me opportunities to help basically brighten my future."**

**Aaron\*, Future Leaders Student**

\*pseudonym has been used to ensure anonymity



# 683

1:1 coaching sessions delivered in **2022/23**



# 268

attendances to Ready For Work events in **2022/23**



## Black mentoring and role models

**In partnership with 7PK, a social mobility and inclusion consultancy, we adapted our Business Mentoring Programme to tailor it to our Future Leaders' needs.**

During the sessions, our Future Leaders young men met with their black mentors, covering topics such as race and identity, culture, values and personal branding.

We recruited 35 black mentors with successful careers in a range of professional industries to work alongside our Future Leaders young men and share their experiences and career journeys, particularly through the lens of navigating challenges that black people can face. These mentors provided strong, positive role models for our young men.

“**Seeing a lot of black role models specifically, it really inspired me because it showed me that I could be in that situation.**”

**Caleb\*, Future Leaders Student**

\*pseudonym has been used to ensure anonymity



“**My mentor has taught me that actions always have consequences, even though you might not be able to see it now, you'll see it eventually.**”

I think programmes like this need to exist for young people from my background because we don't get many opportunities, other than self-made ones. I believe that there should be more options than just music and sports for young black boys. If black kids my age learn how to function a business, that can help future generations and it's a more sustainable source of income.”

**Pharelle, Future Leaders Student**

“**I've enjoyed working with different young people and sharing my experiences in life, business and work, and being able to see that impact over the 12 weeks and seeing the young people develop and applying those different skills and experiences I've shared.**”

The impact I've seen is primarily a really strong growth in the young people's confidence and how they adapt in different environments and show pride in their own achievements.”

**Michael, Mentor**



## Parental engagement

A crucial element of the programme is parental engagement. A recent report by Impetus and Public First found that ‘there has been a fundamental breakdown in the relationship between the school system and parents across the socioeconomic spectrum.’

We believe parental engagement is the key to the success of our programmes. Our coaches foster positive relationships with parents and carers built on conversations about their child’s strengths and aspirations through their child’s coaching experience. Parental engagement at ThinkForward is a powerful tool for enhancing the relationship between a child’s parent/carer and school to support increased attendance and engagement, ensuring we are all committed to supporting their child to reach their full potential.



**I believe this has helped form his sense of self. His awareness is up, and due to being exposed to people in different walks of life, he is able to see past his current state and dream big and wider than what is normally expected.**

Isaiah has always been charismatic and a leader, so his journey has reinforced him and means that when it comes to choices, he thinks beyond and further down the road.”

**Future Leaders Student’s Parent**



# 840

parental engagements  
in **2022/23**



# Finance



**We are delighted to report that our income grew 9% on 2021/22 rising to £2.64m for the year ending August 2023. This is a testament to all those who believe in ThinkForward.**

Our team have worked especially hard to bring in new funders and diversify our income at a time when so many charities are under financial pressure. We have sustained our existing programmes and expanded new ones. To those funders, including corporates, central and local government, individuals, charitable trusts and foundations, we thank you for your continued and generous support. We also thank our partner schools for contributing to the cost of running our programmes whilst facing their own economic constraints.

Our total expenditure for the year was £2.57m and we invested 16% more on our charitable activities than the previous year. We invest 77% of our expenditure on highly qualified staff to deliver our high-quality programmes. Our free reserves were £1m at the end of August 2023 which translates to approximately four months of operating expenditure which is within our reserves policy. Our board of trustees are reassured that our financial position is secure.



**Our team have worked especially hard to bring in new funders and diversify our income at a time when so many charities are under financial pressure.”**

Robert Posner, Deputy CEO, ThinkForward



**9%**

income growth in 2022/23



**16%**

more spent on charitable activities in 2022/23



**77%**

of expenditure invested on highly qualified staff



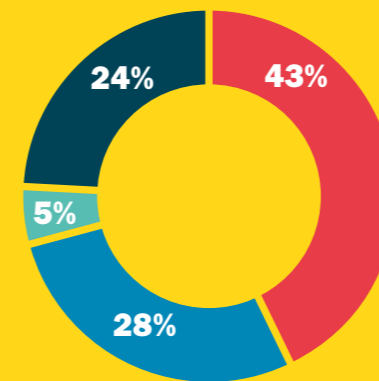
**£2.57m**

total expenditure for 2022/23

**£1m**

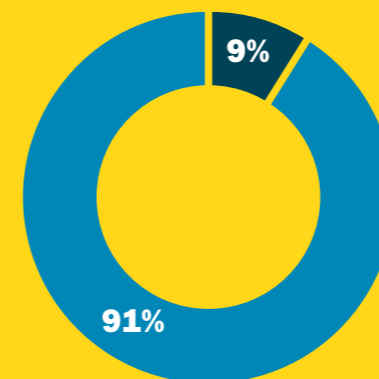
free reserves at the end of August 2022

## Where our income comes from:



- Donations from corporates
- Grants from trusts and foundations
- Donations from individuals
- Government grants, commissioned income

## Where our income goes:



- Raising funds
- Charitable activities

# Our Supporters



## Funders

Ardian*	Greater London Authority
Big Issue Invest	Garfield Weston Foundation
CBRE IM*	Henry Smith Charity
Charities Aid Foundation	ICG*
Chatham Maritime Trust	Immersion Capital Foundation
C. Hoare & Co*	Impetus
Citi*	John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust
City Bridge Foundation	Kennedy Wilson*
Clayton, Dubilier & Rice*	MariaMarina Foundation
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust	Pears Foundation
Credit Suisse EMEA Foundation*	17Capital*
DFN Charitable Foundation	Scoloudi Foundation
DHL UK Foundation*	State Street Community Support Fund*
Drapers Charitable Fund	The 29th May 1961 Charity
Ellis Campbell Foundation	The Blagrove Trust
Epic Foundation	

## Our schools

Bluecoat Beechdale Academy	Harris Boys' Academy
Bradfields Academy	East Dulwich
City of London Academy Islington	Harris Garrard Academy
City & Islington College	Hartsdown Academy
City of London Academy Highbury Grove	Hendon School
Dover Christ Church Academy	London East Alternative Provision
Education Links	Marsh Academy
Ellis Guilford School	New Directions Academy
George Green's School	New Line Learning Academy
	New Regent's College
	Nottingham Academy

The Bruno Schroder Trust  
 The De Laszlo Foundation  
 The Dulverton Trust  
 The Lawson Trust  
 The Life Chances Fund  
 The Nottingham Building Society\*  
 The Reta Lila Howard Foundation  
 Tides Foundation\*  
 TikTok  
 United Way  
 Warwickshire County Council  
 Wedlake Bell\*

*\*Also a Ready For Work partner*

Nottingham University  
 Samworth Academy  
 Robert Napier School  
 Samuel Rhodes School  
 South Quay College  
 Southfields Academy  
 Southwark Inclusive Learning Service  
 Swanlea School  
 The ArtsXchange  
 The Westminster School  
 Tunmarsh School  
 Welcombe Hills School  
 Wells Academy

## Pro bono and in-kind supporters

Nottingham Sustainability and Enterprise Hub	PwC State Street	University College London
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## Ready For Work partners

Arsenal	Itrac Recruitment	Rangam
Arriva Buses	Jenner	Reed Smith
ASK Apprenticeships	JobCentre Plus	Rivermead Inclusive Trust
Aspinall Foundation	John Deere	ROOTS
Barfection	JP Morgan	Salesforce
Baringa	Kaleidoscope Sabre	Samsung
BNP Paribas	Supported Employment	Scope
Bluewater Shopping Centre	KAMCOP	Shege's Barbers
Boston Tea Party	Kent Life	Sky
British Land	Kineton STEM Ambassadors	Soapbox Islington
Canary Wharf Group	Kings College University	Southeastern Railways
Canterbury Christ Church University	Kirkland and Ellis	Springpod
CC Cousins	Klarent Hospitality	Stratford Hospital
Chatham Finance	KPMG	Swiss Re
Chocolate Bear Café	Lil's Parlour CIC	Tesco
COOK	London City Airport	The British Army
Dataiku	London Zoo	The Gower School
Dentsu Aegis	Medway Maritime Hospital	Islington
Department for Work and Pensions	Microsoft	The Hideaway
DFN Project SEARCH	Moorfields Eye Hospital	Travelodge
DGP Logistics	Multiplex	UK Black Business
DPD	National Grid	United Trust Bank
Equifax	National Theatre	University of Kent
Faithful + Gould	NFU Mutual	University of the Creative Arts
Financial Times	NSL Marston Holdings	Wagamama
Forest of Hearts	Open Doors Construction	Westminster City Council
GIC	Pickering Perforated Products	WorkPays
Haven	Pizza Express	VOA (Valuation Office Agency)
Heart of England Forest	Price & Buckland	Volker Highways
Howlett's Wildlife Park	Proskauer	VIY (Volunteer It Yourself)
HMRC Nottingham	Queen Mary University of London	
Islington Council		



# Contact Us

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## Social media:

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 ThinkForward UK

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 @ThinkForwardUK



**Think  
Forward**

Coaching  
Connecting  
Inspiring  
Young People