

**How to talk to
funders about:
*Group Mentoring
Impact***

**The Group Mentoring
Toolkit**

1. Introduction

This guide explains how small charities and mentoring organisations can describe their impact clearly and consistently in funding applications. It focuses on the types of questions funders commonly ask about outcomes, evidence, and change, and shows how mentoring organisations can respond using structured outcome frameworks, monitoring data, and evaluation evidence. The guide is intended for small charities, delivery managers, and bid writers who need to explain what difference their work makes and provides practical examples of how to describe outcomes, how to distinguish outputs from impact, and how to present monitoring and evaluation evidence in a way that matches funder expectations. In funding contexts, ‘talking about impact’ means explaining the areas of change your work supports, how those changes are produced through your delivery model, and what evidence you will return to the funder to demonstrate progress. Rather than listing activities, organisations are expected to describe outcome areas such as emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging or community belonging and connection, learning engagement or engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour, and to show how these changes are measured through surveys, monitoring data, mentor observation, and participant reflection over time.

2. How to Use This Guide

This section explains how the guide is structured and how the sections that follow should be used.

The guide is organised around common areas where funding applications ask organisations to describe their impact. Instead of presenting impact as a single statement, the guide separates these areas so that organisations can respond clearly to different types of impact-related questions across an application form.

Each section that follows begins with one or more typical funder questions in a particular area. These questions are included to show where the guidance applies within funding applications. Each section then presents a short funder scenario explaining what the funder is likely to be asking for in practice, including what information is relevant to include and what information is not required at that stage of the application. Sections conclude with example wording showing how organisations can describe their outcomes, monitoring approaches, or evidence of effectiveness in a way that matches funder expectations.

This guide is intended to offer a structured way to prepare responses across the main areas where funders request impact information. This allows organisations to develop consistent outcome descriptions and evidence statements that can be adapted across multiple funding applications rather than written separately each time.

3. Understanding Outputs, Outcomes and Impact

Relevant funder questions addressed in this section:

- *What difference will your project make?*
- *What difference do your services make for the people you support?*
- *Describe the impact you expect to make with individuals and communities and the difference your work will make to them.*

Funder Scenario: Explaining the Difference Your Project Makes

This asks grantees to describe what changes for young people as a result of group mentoring and what outcome information the funder will receive back as part of the data return. Applicants therefore need to describe change using the relevant group mentoring framework for the setting in which delivery takes place. In school settings,

this means using the pupil framework and interpreting progress alongside wider school data, such as attendance, exclusions, behaviour incidents, safeguarding concerns, and participation in learning, because change is understood within the wider school environment pupils return to. In community settings, this means using the young people framework and describing impact more directly in relation to young people's change, with wider community data used alongside this where relevant.

Grantees should therefore:

- describe change using the relevant group mentoring framework for the setting in which delivery takes place
- for school settings, describe change using the pupil framework and interpret progress alongside attendance, exclusions, behaviour incidents, safeguarding concerns, and participation in learning
- for community settings, describe change using the young people framework and interpret progress alongside relevant community-level data
- distinguish clearly between outputs and outcomes
- explain how change develops through peer interaction, facilitated dialogue, relational safety, reflection, and mentor judgement over time
- show that, in schools, pupil change is understood within the wider school environment pupils return to
- describe the data return the funder will receive, including baseline and follow-up surveys, session-level indicator tracking, mentor observation, and participant reflection

Template Answer: Describing outcomes and expected change (Schools) [219 words]

Through school-based group mentoring, the project supports measurable change for pupils across key outcome areas including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging, learning engagement, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. Group mentoring is delivered through small, facilitated

groups within school settings and works by creating a relationally safe space in which pupils can participate without fear of judgement, hear alternative perspectives, and reflect on behaviour, emotions, and choices through facilitated dialogue and peer interaction. The difference this project makes will be reported to the funder through a structured group mentoring data return over the course of delivery. This includes baseline and follow-up surveys measuring change across the pupil outcome areas, session-level indicator tracking, mentor observation of group dynamics and engagement, and participant reflection explaining how change develops through discussion, peer exchange, and facilitated reflection during the programme. In school settings, this change is also understood in relation to wider classroom conditions, teaching practice, and school functioning, as pupils' regulation, peer interaction, and engagement can influence the environments they return to beyond the group itself. Wider school data, including attendance, exclusions, behaviour incidents, safeguarding concerns, and participation in learning, can also be reported alongside mentoring evidence to show how progress in pupil outcome areas relates to wider school patterns over time.

Template Answer: Describing outcomes and expected change (Community Settings) [215 words]

Through community-based group mentoring, the project supports measurable change for young people across key outcome areas including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, community belonging and connection, engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. Group mentoring is delivered through small, facilitated groups in community settings and works by creating a relationally safe space in which young people can participate without fear of judgement, hear alternative perspectives, and reflect on behaviour, emotions, and choices through facilitated dialogue and peer interaction.

The difference this project makes will be reported to the funder through a structured group mentoring data return over the course of delivery. This includes baseline and follow-up surveys measuring change across the young person outcome areas, session-level indicator tracking, mentor observation of group dynamics and engagement, and participant reflection explaining how change develops through discussion, peer exchange, and facilitated reflection during the programme. This allows the project to evidence change in how young people manage emotions and behaviour in group settings, relate to peers, participate in structured activity, reflect on choices and consequences, communicate more constructively, develop confidence and agency, strengthen community belonging and connection, and show clearer motivation towards positive pathways over time.

4. Using Outcomes in Funding Proposals

Relevant funder questions addressed in this section:

- *What changes do you expect for the young people you support?*
- *What impact do you expect the grant to have?*
- *What outcomes do you expect the project to achieve?*

Funder Scenario: Identifying Outcomes in Funding Applications

This asks applicants to describe the main *differences* they expect the proposed group mentoring to make for young people and how those differences relate to the priorities of the funding programme. They are concerned with intended areas of change rather than delivery activity, satisfaction measures, or counts of sessions provided. In practice, this means identifying the outcome domains where group mentoring is expected to support progress and explaining why those areas are appropriate to the needs of the young people being supported and the setting in which delivery takes place. In community settings, this will mainly concern young

people's change within the group itself. In school settings, this should also be understood in relation to wider classroom dynamics, teaching conditions, and the functioning of the school environment. Using a group mentoring outcomes framework, organisations can describe expected change across areas such as emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging or community belonging and connection, learning engagement or engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. These domains describe developmental change rather than service delivery.

Applicants should also indicate what progress within these outcome areas is expected to look like in practice by referring to indicators such as participating more confidently in group discussion, reflecting on behaviour and consequences through dialogue, responding differently to peers, managing emotions more effectively in group settings, developing clearer future motivation, or showing reduced harmful behaviour over time. In school settings, applicants should also explain how learning developed within the group is expected to transfer into wider school relationships, classroom dynamics, staff practice, and the functioning of the school environment more broadly.

Funders are not asking here for evidence of previous performance, satisfaction feedback, or monitoring data on outputs such as numbers of sessions delivered. Instead, they are asking applicants to describe what will change for young people and why those changes are expected to occur through group mentoring as an interaction-led intervention. In group mentoring, change typically develops through the creation of a relationally safe group space, engagement through facilitated dialogue, peer interaction, shared reflection, and shifts in how young people interpret behaviour, emotion, identity, and choice over time. Describing this process

shows how the proposed outcomes follow from the mechanisms through which group mentoring operates.

Template Answer: Describing outcomes in a funding proposal (Schools) [223 words]

We support pupils to address challenges in their lives through a school-based group mentoring model delivered in small, facilitated groups. The programme is designed to support change across outcome areas including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging, learning engagement, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. We also examine how change transfers into wider classroom, pastoral, and school conditions. Our group mentoring model works by creating a safe and structured group space in which pupils can hear other perspectives, test out interpretations of experience, and reflect on behaviour, emotions, and choices through facilitated dialogue. Peer interaction is treated as a central mechanism of change. Through repeated participation, pupils are expected to develop stronger communication and reflection skills, improved emotional regulation, clearer decision-making, and more constructive responses to peers and future challenges. Together, these describe the forms of change the project is designed to support during engagement. Our group mentoring does not expect immediate results, but change over time. Outcomes are expected to develop as trust, participation, and peer exchange strengthen within the group, allowing pupils to reinterpret experiences, language, and behaviour in ways that can transfer beyond the session itself. As the group stabilises, pupils increasingly use the space to reflect, respond differently to challenge, and act on new understandings in school contexts beyond the group.

Template Answer: Describing outcomes in a funding proposal (Community Settings) [220 words]

We support young people to address challenges in their lives through a community-based group mentoring model delivered in small, facilitated groups. The programme

is designed to support change across outcome areas including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, community belonging and connection, engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. Our group mentoring model works by creating a safe and structured group space in which young people can hear other perspectives, test out interpretations of experience, and reflect on behaviour, emotions, and choices through facilitated dialogue. Peer interaction is treated as a central mechanism of change. Through repeated participation, young people are expected to develop stronger communication and reflection skills, improved emotional regulation, clearer decision-making, and more constructive responses to peers and future challenges. Together, these describe the forms of change the project is designed to support during engagement. Our group mentoring does not expect immediate results, but change over time. Outcomes are expected to develop as trust, participation, and peer exchange strengthen within the group, allowing young people to reinterpret experiences, language, and behaviour through facilitated dialogue and reflection. As the group stabilises, young people increasingly use the space to reflect, respond differently to challenge, and demonstrate more constructive communication, behaviour, and decision-making within the group setting.

5. Explaining How You Measure Change

Relevant funder questions addressed in this section:

- *How do you monitor and evaluate the work that you are delivering?*
- *How are outcomes measured?*
- *How will you measure the success of the project or service?*

Funder Scenario: Explaining Monitoring and Measurement Approaches

This asks applicants to explain how they will measure change during delivery and what tools they will use to generate outcome evidence for the funder. Funders expect organisations to describe a clear monitoring approach that links outcomes to indicators and indicators to data collection methods. For group mentoring, this normally involves baseline and follow-up outcome surveys, session-level indicator tracking, mentor observation, and structured reflection with young people. Where direct survey completion is not possible or appropriate, anonymised case-level evidence can also be used to show how change develops across the programme. In school settings, organisations should also include evidence on how pupil change is reflected in classroom conditions, staff practice, and wider school functioning, because school-based group mentoring is expected to operate across these connected levels.

Funders are also asking about methodology, not just tools. In most group mentoring programmes this means a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative methods such as surveys with qualitative approaches that use structured reflection, group discussion, interviews, or case-based evidence. When reported together, the combined data shows change over time, with qualitative evidence explaining how that change develops through participation in the group, peer interaction, and facilitated dialogue. Here, funders are looking for a credible and proportionate evaluation approach that shows how progress will be tracked systematically across the mentoring period.

Importantly, this is not a request for delivery monitoring alone. Counts of sessions delivered, attendance figures, or satisfaction feedback do not demonstrate outcome measurement on their own. Funders expect organisations to explain how they will collect evidence of developmental change for young people and how different

sources of data will work together to show whether group mentoring is making a difference.

Template Answer: Describing monitoring and measurement tools in a funding proposal (Schools) [181 words]

We measure change across core school-based group mentoring outcome areas including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging, learning engagement, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. We also collect evidence on how these changes shape classroom conditions, staff responses, and wider school functioning. We collect baseline and follow-up surveys at the start and end of the programme to track change over time across these outcome areas. During delivery, session-level monitoring data are recorded against indicators linked to the outcomes framework, while mentor observation is used to record engagement, group dynamics, participation, reflection, and emerging shifts in how pupils respond to one another. Structured reflection with young people is used to explain how change develops through discussion, peer exchange, and facilitated interpretation within the group. Where survey completion is not appropriate or possible, anonymised case-level evidence is used to describe how pupils move through the programme and what changes are observed during engagement. Wider contextual indicators are then interpreted alongside group mentoring progress, including attendance, exclusions, behaviour incidents, safeguarding concerns, and participation in learning.

Template Answer: Describing monitoring and measurement tools in a funding proposal (Community Settings) [149 words]

We measure change across core community-based group mentoring outcome areas including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, community belonging and connection, engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced

harmful behaviour. We collect baseline and follow-up surveys at the start and end of the programme to track change over time across these outcome areas. During delivery, session-level monitoring data are recorded against indicators linked to the outcomes framework, while mentor observation is used to record engagement, group dynamics, participation, reflection, and emerging shifts in how young people respond to one another. Structured reflection with young people is used to explain how change develops through discussion, peer exchange, and facilitated interpretation within the group. Where survey completion is not appropriate or possible, anonymised case-level evidence is used to describe how young people move through the programme and what changes are observed during engagement.

6. Presenting Evidence of Effectiveness

Relevant funder questions addressed in this section

- *Please provide outcomes evidence from work either you, or others, have delivered before to demonstrate that the work you do is effective.*
- *What difference do you make; how do you measure success; and how successful were you in meeting last year's objectives?*

Funder Scenario: Demonstrating Evidence from Previous Delivery

This asks applicants to present evidence from previous delivery showing what difference their group mentoring has already made for young people. Funders expect organisations to describe outcome-level change using results from earlier monitoring or evaluation activity, typically drawn from baseline and follow-up surveys, indicator tracking across outcome areas, mentor observation, and structured feedback or reflection from participants.

In most group mentoring programmes cohort sizes are relatively small and group composition and engagement may vary across participants, so funders do not

normally expect formal statistical testing. Instead, they expect clear descriptive evidence showing patterns of improvement across the outcome areas you measure impact against (if you use the outcomes frameworks in this toolkit, these will be: emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging or community belonging and connection, learning engagement or engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour). Where delivery takes place in school settings, organisations should also report how these changes relate to classroom stability, staff practice, and wider school functioning.

Where previous evaluation cycles do not yet exist, organisations should still present structured evidence showing how change develops in practice. This can include indicator-level monitoring data, repeated patterns observed across groups, anonymised summaries of learning and change across participants, and evidence about how engagement, reflection, and behavioural change emerge through peer interaction and facilitated dialogue over time. These forms of evidence demonstrate emerging effectiveness while programmes are still building a longer-term evidence base.

Individual case studies on their own are usually not sufficient to demonstrate effectiveness, because they describe isolated examples rather than patterns of change across participants. This is also a practical issue in funding applications where response limits are often short. Funders are therefore looking for concise summaries of change across groups of participants rather than standalone stories.

Template Answer: Presenting evidence from previous delivery (Schools) [273 words]

Our most recent evaluation showed measurable progress across pupils participating in school-based group mentoring, particularly in areas such as school belonging, learning engagement, communication and reflection, peer relationships, decision-making, emotional regulation, and managing behaviour. Survey and monitoring

evidence suggested that change developed progressively rather than immediately, with early improvements in participation, trust, and willingness to engage in the group followed by shifts in reflection, behaviour, and future motivation over time. Outcome-level survey data showed that average scores for listening to others' views increased from 3.1 to 4.8, thinking about consequences before acting increased from 3.0 to 4.5, and expressing views respectfully increased from 3.3 to 4.7 (on a 1–7 scale). Mentor observation and participant reflection further showed that group mentoring supported change by enabling pupils to hear alternative perspectives, test their own interpretations, and reconsider how they understood behaviour, emotion, and choice within a relationally safe group space. Evidence also indicated that learning developed within the group could transfer into wider classroom relationships, teaching conditions, and school functioning. Wider school data showed corresponding improvements over the same period. The average number of days lost to absence reduced from 10 days in the term preceding mentoring to 3 days during delivery and 1 day in the following term. Behavioural records showed a similar pattern, with average class exclusion incidents reducing from 5 prior to mentoring, to 2 during delivery, and 0 following completion. Together, these findings provide consistent evidence of developmental change across participants during the programme period and support the effectiveness of group mentoring as an interaction-led model in which peer exchange, facilitated dialogue, and mentor judgement contribute to change over time.

Template Answer: Presenting evidence from previous delivery (Community Settings) [219 words]

Our most recent evaluation showed measurable progress across young people participating in community-based group mentoring, particularly in areas such as community belonging and connection, engagement in structured activity, communication and reflection, peer relationships, decision-making, emotional regulation, and reduced harmful behaviour. Survey and monitoring evidence suggested that change developed progressively rather than immediately, with early

improvements in participation, trust, and willingness to engage in the group followed by shifts in reflection, behaviour, and future motivation over time. Outcome-level survey data showed that average scores for listening to others' views increased from 3.1 to 4.8, thinking about consequences before acting increased from 3.0 to 4.5, and expressing views respectfully increased from 3.3 to 4.7 (on a 1–7 scale). Mentor observation and participant reflection further showed that group mentoring supported change by enabling young people to hear alternative perspectives, test their own interpretations, and reconsider how they understood behaviour, emotion, and choice within a relationally safe group space. Evidence also indicated that learning developed within the group supported changes in how young people understood behaviour, emotion, and choice during participation. Taken together, these findings provide consistent evidence of developmental change across participants during the programme period and support the effectiveness of group mentoring as an interaction-led model in which peer exchange, facilitated dialogue, and mentor judgement contribute to change over time.

.Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Evidence

Relevant funder questions addressed in this section:

- *Please explain how you will collate, measure and report the benefits you describe.*

Funder Scenario: Explaining How Evidence Will Be Collected and Reported

This asks applicants to explain how different sources of evidence will be brought together to demonstrate change for young people. Funders are not looking for survey results or participant quotes presented separately, but for a clear explanation of how quantitative outcome data and qualitative evidence will be combined to

produce a coherent account of impact. This process is often referred to as triangulation. In this context, triangulation means using multiple types of evidence, such as surveys, session-level monitoring, mentor observation, and participant reflection, to confirm and explain the same pattern of change across participants. In school settings, this may also include evidence on classroom conditions, staff practice, and wider school functioning where relevant.

In practice, this usually means showing how baseline and follow-up survey findings are interpreted alongside session-level indicator tracking, mentor observation, and structured reflection from young people. Quantitative data shows the direction and scale of change across outcome areas, while qualitative evidence explains how that change develops through participation in the group, peer interaction, and facilitated dialogue over time.

Funders may also expect wider contextual indicators to be reported alongside group mentoring outcomes where available, with school-based programmes typically using attendance, exclusions, behaviour incidents, safeguarding concerns, and participation in learning. Bringing these sources together allows organisations to demonstrate not only that change occurred, but how group mentoring contributed to wider progress across participants.

This section therefore focuses on explaining how evidence is collated and interpreted as a single impact narrative rather than presented as separate datasets.

Template Answer: Explaining how different sources of evidence are combined to report impact (Schools) [203 words]

Our evaluations combine baseline and follow-up outcome surveys with monitoring data collected across the group mentoring period and structured reflection from young people to produce a single account of developmental change across participants. Survey data identifies movement across outcome areas such as school

belonging, learning engagement, communication and reflection, peer relationships, decision-making, emotional regulation, and managing behaviour, while monitoring data is used alongside participant reflection to interpret how those changes develop through peer interaction, facilitated dialogue, and participation in the group over time. In our evaluations, these sources are brought together to examine change across a cohort of pupils participating in group mentoring. Survey findings are interpreted alongside monitoring data tracking engagement, behaviour, and wider school indicators, with participant reflection and mentor observation used to explain how the group supported shifts in confidence, interpretation, behaviour, and future thinking during engagement. Evidence on classroom conditions, staff practice, and wider school functioning may also be included where transfer beyond the group is part of the intended outcome model. This enables us to show how group mentoring supports consistent developmental progress across participants and how change develops through the interaction-led processes at the centre of the model, rather than presenting survey findings and monitoring data separately.

Template Answer: Explaining how different sources of evidence are combined to report impact

Our evaluations combine baseline and follow-up outcome surveys with monitoring data collected across the group mentoring period and structured reflection from young people to produce a single account of developmental change across participants. Survey data identifies movement across outcome areas such as community belonging and connection, engagement in structured activity, communication and reflection, peer relationships, decision-making, emotional regulation, and reduced harmful behaviour, while monitoring data is used alongside participant reflection to interpret how those changes develop through peer interaction, facilitated dialogue, and participation in the group over time. In our evaluations, these sources are brought together to examine change across a cohort of young people participating in group mentoring. Survey findings are interpreted alongside monitoring data tracking engagement, behaviour, and wider community

indicators, with participant reflection and mentor observation used to explain how the group supported shifts in confidence, interpretation, behaviour, and future thinking during engagement. This enables us to show how group mentoring supports consistent developmental progress across participants and how change develops through the interaction-led processes at the centre of the model, rather than presenting survey findings and monitoring data separately.

7. Explaining Scale and Reach

Relevant funder questions addressed in this section:

- *How many people are expected to benefit from the project or service? How will they benefit?*

Funder Scenario: Explaining Scale and Reach

This asks applicants first to explain how many young people are expected to benefit from group mentoring and then to describe the areas in which those participants are expected to experience change and how that change is expected to occur. Funders are not asking for activity counts such as the number of sessions delivered. Instead, they are asking organisations to link participant numbers to expected progress across outcome areas and to explain the mechanisms through which group mentoring produces that progress.

In practice, this means stating how many young people are expected to participate in group mentoring over the course of the year and how delivery is organised across groups or cohorts. Applicants should then describe the outcome areas in which participants are expected to benefit, such as emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging or community belonging and connection, learning engagement or engagement in structured activity, decision-

making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. In school settings, applicants should also explain where transfer beyond the group extends into classroom conditions, staff practice, and wider school functioning.

Applicants should also explain how change across these areas develops through the creation of a relationally safe group space, facilitated dialogue, peer interaction, and mentor judgement over time. Early stages of the programme are often concerned with engagement and trust-building within the group. As participation stabilises, the group becomes a space in which young people can reflect, respond to challenge, test interpretations, and begin to transfer new understandings into school, community, or peer contexts beyond the session itself.

Template Answer: Linking participant numbers to expected outcome-level change (Schools) [285 words]

We support small cohorts of pupils through group mentoring delivered in school settings, typically working with groups of six pupils per term. Over the course of a full academic year, this equates to approximately 18 pupils engaging in group mentoring, with some overlap between terms (around 20% of participants continuing across cycles). While this represents the direct cohort, the model operates through a cascading structure of influence. Change is first developed within the group itself, then carried back into the classrooms of referring teachers (typically three classes, representing an indirect reach of approximately 90 pupils), and over time contributes to wider shifts across the school environment. In this sense, group mentoring is not only an intervention for individual pupils but a mechanism for stabilising classroom and school environments through improved regulation, peer interaction, and participation. For an average school, this second-tier reach extends across the wider pupil population (typically around 700 pupils), as these changes diffuse through classroom dynamics and school systems over time. Group mentoring works by creating a safe and structured group space in which pupils can hear alternative

perspectives, reflect on their own experiences, and reconsider how they understand behaviour, emotion, and choice through peer interaction and facilitated dialogue. Monitoring and evaluation data collected across the programme are then used to track how far these forms of change develop across the cohort over time, alongside wider school data such as attendance, exclusions, behaviour incidents, safeguarding concerns, and participation in learning. In practice, this creates a tiered reach in which improvements in a small cohort contribute to wider shifts in classroom functioning and school conditions, with evidence drawn from both mentoring data and school-level indicators to show how these changes develop over time.

Template Answer: Linking participant numbers to expected outcome-level change (Community Settings)

We support small cohorts of young people through group mentoring delivered in community settings, typically working with groups of six participants per cycle. Over the course of a full year, this equates to approximately 18 young people engaging in group mentoring, with some overlap between cycles (around 20% of participants continuing). While this represents the direct cohort, the model is designed to influence how young people interact within their peer networks. Change is first developed within the group itself and is then reflected in how participants communicate, respond to challenge, and relate to others in their wider peer groups. Participants are expected to benefit across outcome areas including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, community belonging and connection, engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. Group mentoring works by creating a safe and structured group space in which young people can hear alternative perspectives, reflect on their own experiences, and reconsider how they understand behaviour, emotion, and choice through peer interaction and facilitated dialogue. Monitoring and evaluation data collected across the programme are then used to track how far these forms of change develop across the cohort over time. In practice, this includes evidence of improved peer interaction

within and beyond the group, such as increased ability to listen to others, respond constructively to disagreement, and consider the impact of actions on others. These changes are captured through outcome surveys, mentor observation of group dynamics, and participant reflection, including reported improvements in how young people relate to friends and peers outside the sessions. This provides evidence of how group mentoring supports measurable change in how young people operate within their peer networks during engagement.

Appendix 1 - Checklist: Are you ready to evidence impact in a bid?

1. **Outcome areas defined:** Do you have a group mentoring outcomes framework that clearly sets out the areas of change your work supports? This should reflect the mechanisms through which group mentoring works in practice, including emotional regulation, managing behaviour, peer relationships, school belonging or community belonging and connection, learning engagement or engagement in structured activity, decision-making, communication and reflection, identity and agency, future motivation, and reduced harmful behaviour. It should distinguish between community-based and school-based delivery, and in school settings it should be read in relation to wider classroom conditions, staff practice, and school functioning.
2. **Supporting evidence available:** Do you have baseline and follow-up survey data, monitoring records, or previous evaluation findings that show progress across these outcome areas? Funders expect to see evidence of change over time rather than descriptions of delivery activity alone. This may include outcome survey movement, changes in engagement, shifts in behaviour, and wider setting-specific indicators recorded through monitoring data, such as attendance and exclusions in school settings or police contact and participation in positive pathways in community settings.

3. **Examples of change identified:** Can you describe typical patterns of change observed across groups of participants rather than individual case stories? Funders are usually looking for repeatable evidence such as stronger participation, improved reflection, healthier peer interaction, clearer decision-making, or reduced harmful behaviour across cohorts.
4. **Beneficiary voice available:** Do you collect structured reflection or feedback from young people that helps explain how change develops through group mentoring? Participant voice strengthens outcome evidence by showing how peer interaction, facilitated dialogue, and the experience of the group contribute to change in practice rather than reporting survey findings alone.
5. **Delivery scale information available:** Can you state how many participants you support each year, how groups are organised, and whether delivery is school-based, community-based, or both? Funders use this information to understand how widely outcomes are expected to occur across your cohorts and whether wider school transfer outcomes are relevant.
6. **Reporting statements ready to adapt:** Do you have short impact summary statements that combine outcome areas, monitoring evidence, and participant experience and can be adapted for use across funding applications? Preparing these statements in advance makes it easier to respond clearly and consistently to common impact questions across different bids.

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