

# YOUTH WORK AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP



## STONELAW HIGH SCHOOL, SOUTH LANARKSHIRE

### CONTEXT

The Pathfinder Programme was established in 2019 at Stonelaw High School and supports around 40 young people. Every year, 2 youth workers are employed full-time within the school and support is offered at school, at home, and in the community. Social work, ed. psych and other partners support the project. It's funded 50% through central Education budget and 50% by school PEF funding

### WHAT WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN?

The programme was developed as a collaboration between Education and Social Work and has been piloted in 3 secondary schools in South Lanarkshire - with another 5 schools joining the programme in 2022-23. The aim of the programme is to provide effective early intervention for young people facing multiple barriers to learning whose health and wellbeing are at risk - and to consider how best to build resilience and support young people 'on the edges of care'. Two youth workers are based full-time in school who offer tailored, flexible support to individual young people, based on evolving needs they identify together - and connecting families with wider support services to address financial, housing or child protection issues.

### WHAT IMPACT HAS THE WORK HAD?

The programme aims to tackle the attainment gap by offering holistic support to young people and their families to address barriers to learning. Progress is measured based on a set of 'progressive indicators' that focus on self-esteem, health and wellbeing, social skills and participation in school. These are triangulated based on youth worker observations, feedback from young people and feedback from parents.

### QUANTITATIVE FEEDBACK

Within Stonelaw, 46 pupils have conducted Progressive Indicators analysis:  
66% of young people have acknowledged an increase in their attendance and participation at school

69% have recognised they have adapted their behaviour

57% have acknowledged they have had a reduction in negative influences

40% have stated an increase in confidence/self-esteem

33% have acknowledged an improvement in their mental health

### QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK

#### Young People

"Working with pathfinders has helped me believe more in myself. I used to think I was a nobody and that nothing I had to say was important to anyone. I am now starting to tell teachers when I don't understand something."

"They helped me to work with CAMHS, which helped me come into school. Before I would never come into school now I am in every day"

".....they gave me the support to work out what the best decisions were for me, like going to classes even when I didn't feel like it."

#### Teachers

"Very often we can see young people who we know would normally give up and refuse to go back to school now have the ability to see the benefits through the relationship with Pathfinders. Often this is the experience of their parents so it is breaking that cycle."

"When you look at young people in 3rd year who have been supported since 1st year you can see them reaching their potential because of the relationship. Often these kids would have been lost in the past."

#### Parents

"P helped my daughter realise she had decisions that she could make. In a way, she woke my daughter up to let everyone in the community outside of the house see her real self."

"The difference [the youth worker] made to our whole family has been lifechanging. They understand our whole life situation. There has been individual support for my daughter in school, getting me financial practical support and advice, involving a housing officer....I could talk forever too about the help [the youth worker] gave me with my mental health difficulties."

