

**transitions uk**  
support that changes young lives



**Referrers**  
**Information Pack**

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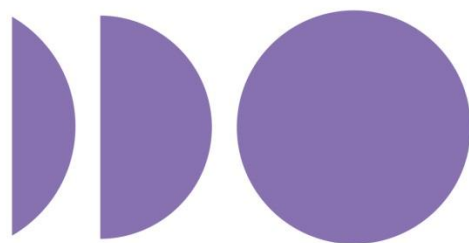
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## Transitions UK

**Transitions UK is a charity established in 2014, specifically focusing on supporting disadvantaged & vulnerable young people aged 14-25. We aim to support young people to make an effective and positive transition towards adulthood, maximising their potential, enabling them to have a productive and happy life thereafter.**

The Charity works across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire with key groups of young people, ranging from those with learning disabilities, behavioural, emotional and mental health issues, those at risk of exclusion and those at risk of (re)offending. These may coincide with many other issues these young people may experience, such as lack of employment opportunities, homelessness, substance abuse and those relevant in our society today.

The Charity board includes members who have extensive experience of working with young people with special needs and disabilities (and their families) and of working in partnership with mainstream and special schools and other agencies to support good transitions; including providing a balance of educational, employment, recreational and social opportunities to build self-esteem, confidence and personal development. Ron Overton, the Chair/CEO has run and developed successful circles-based support models over a number of years for several need groups.



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## Aspire Project

**The Aspire Project works with young people at risk of offending and who have been identified as such by Hertfordshire Police or by Early Help and Families First or by initial referral from schools or other relevant agencies.**

Situations include where young people are not attending school regularly, are repeatedly excluded, or where they or their families have been involved in crime or are getting into trouble.

It is clear that many young people fall into such problems by association with poor role models or by living in dysfunctional families and situations. It is further clear that many of them will be drawn towards crime, damaging their lives and future prospects as well as impacting negatively on their community. Consultation with Hertfordshire police has indicated the very real value of providing positive role models, alternative activities and positive opportunities.

The project is especially focused on working with young people at risk of exclusion and/or offending in the year or two before they leave school (however infrequently they may attend) and for the first year or two after they have left (14-17 years especially). The support will be ongoing: it is not a short-term intervention but depends, crucially, upon the quality of relationships developed over time.

The proposal has been developed in a consultative and strategic manner following discussions with Karen Potton, Children and Young People (CYP) team for Herts Police and Karen Dorney of Early Help and Families first. Advice and input has also come from Joanne Weller, Community Safety Manager, Herts Police; Sue Chapman of Herts Families first and from Richard Denton, Children and Young People's Development Officer, Bedfordshire Police. Stephen Hague of Hertfordshire Police, who has very relevant experience in mediation and offending, is also most supportive.

Aspire builds on that expertise and learning. Project staff will be recruited for their experience and expertise in working with young people at risk of exclusion and/or offending and supporting better life choices for them.

## Transitions UK Approach and The Aspire Project

For many young people with challenges and vulnerabilities, the transition experience comes to a major focus at the point at which they are about to leave school – but the issues may require tackling earlier.

Early and co-ordinated planning will considerably assist that process but the real issues are around how the process feels and is experienced at first hand. It can still feel like a cliff edge rather than a ramp into adulthood for all too many.

For young people already involved in unhelpful relationships and patterns of behaviour it is hugely important that they have the support and the opportunity of positive relationships and role models, if they are to be helped onto a better personal roadmap for the future.

Aspire wants to prevent young people gaining a criminal record which may have a detrimental impact on their future. Support from Aspire will taper off as the positive outcomes of that support - skills, confidence, positive behaviour reinforcement, support networks and inclusion – taper in.

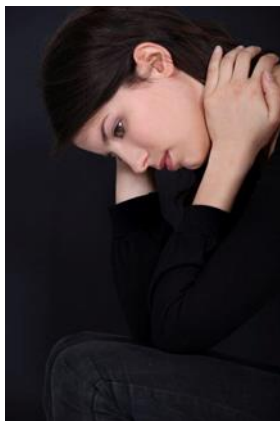
## What does it look like?

### Co-ordinated Volunteer-based Support Clusters

The main element of the Aspire model is to work with the CYP team, with schools and PRUs (Pupil Referral Units) to provide an integrated volunteer based cluster of support. We strive to help the young person move positively towards independence and adulthood and to become a responsible and contributing member of their local community. In the pilot stage we will work with around 20 young people who have been identified as being in need of support and who are likely to benefit from this approach.

We will work with young people from 14 years and up (or reach the age of 14 in that school year) through to those in their final year at school. This earlier age ahead of leaving school is at the suggestion of those working with this group in Hertfordshire Police, who recognise the preventative benefits of positive role models and alternative relationships before the young person is drawn too deeply into anti-social behaviours and less helpful relationships. However, where older school aged young people will benefit, the service is open to them too.

There is discussion to be had around the role of CYP Teams and particular schools – including SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental Health) schools – but in principle this project is likely to work with 8-10 schools/related agencies across the county.



The service will be co-ordinated by Transitions UK staff, working with partner agencies, but is essentially a volunteer based service. Volunteers will be carefully recruited, trained, deployed and supported by the Project Co-ordinator within a cluster of support. Importantly, each young person's volunteer support team will include a police cadet as part of a positive commitment to break down barriers and overcome preconceptions

We will work with an identified group of young people (by referral from partners across education, policing and including youth offending teams).

A brief family and personal questionnaire will inform the process of access to service, followed by individual informal interviews and an assessment of suitability. We will work with young people who want help to find a positive future - and to escape their current trajectory.

The initial assessment will produce a development web to chart progress and achievement towards the young person's aspirations and to evidence individual outcomes and distance travelled.

### **The Cluster Approach.**

We will work with young people geographically across the county on both a befriending and support cluster model. It is anticipated that this will be integrated within the CSP (Community Safety Partnership) structure. Each young person will be linked with 2-4 volunteers who will also come together in a support cluster once per month with 3-4 other young beneficiaries (each accompanied by one of their support volunteers).

Cluster activities will range from opportunities to share development and any concerns, to sports and recreational activities, and often involve eating together.

The link volunteers will be available for such cluster meetings and will commit around 10 hours per month to their young person's support and will provide relational support and meaningful friendship outside those meetings.

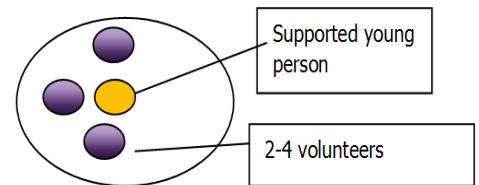
This provides positive role models, alternative social activity and an inherent accountability to link volunteers and the aims of the project they are signing up for.

Where the young person is at school/PRU etc we will organise a fortnightly cluster activity after school for 2-3 hours, including eating a light meal together. This will allow relationships to develop as a platform for beyond school engagement. We will also ensure at least two out-of-school activities per month to support skills acquisition, personal development and positive choices.

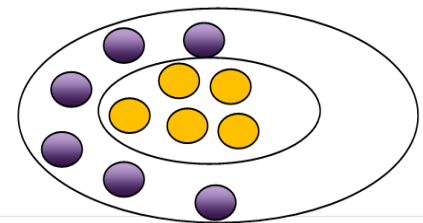
Where they have left school, the level of beyond school provision will increase to 3-4 sessions per month, to further develop relationships and provide effective supported transition as school and other support falls away. This will also provide opportunities for personal and relational development for the young person as well as providing some welcome respite for families.

The project will run throughout the year and will be staffed and run by charity personnel with the important addition of peer volunteers recruited by the charity, including police cadets identified by Herts police.

Individual Support team



Cluster approach



Six to eight weekly individual support meetings with the young person will include feedback on how things are developing as well as planning and identifying opportunities - and will address any issues in current activities, working to enhance personal development and positive outcomes. Delivery will emphasise person centred approaches and planning and we will work to build on the preparation already provided during their time at school and from their individual learning plan, and to especially understand what the young people now want to achieve around learning, employment, community involvement, friendship and home & family life - all of which will build confidence, help young people acquire skills and engender self-esteem and a sense of achievement.

Those choices and aspirations will be supported by the service and will involve signposting and good co-ordination with other agencies. We will expect to work with each young person for between one and two years but to taper the level and modify the type of support as the young person develops. The learning inherent in this approach will mean that what the young person wants to achieve will change over time, as it should and does for most of us.

We will develop and build on previous person centred planning and measure distance travelled towards the goals and milestones identified in their plan. Planning, support and resource requirements will be reviewed regularly throughout the year, especially in the six weekly review meetings. Inputs will be personally adapted using a drop down menu of options tailored to the individual. The menu will include options like communication, social and interpersonal skills, as well as anger and behavioural management skills. Employment and training related inputs will be agreed around their person-centred plan, including signposting to or input from other agencies as part of the programme. A key aim for the service is to support that young person to be included in their own community and to grasp those opportunities and develop an increasing support network beyond the school but into which they are ramped by the overall approach. That includes reducing negative relationships and behaviours and replacing them positively. The involvement of the charity and its staff and volunteers is central to that process.



## Outcomes

The main outcome from the project is that the young person is helped to develop the confidence, skills and competencies needed, with support for them to make the most of this next, crucial stage of their lives. We hope to build a ramp of transition towards a happier, more productive, independent and inclusive life, fulfilling their potential and growing as young adults with much to offer and much to aspire to.

**Educational attainment and learning** will be supported through the evening sessions but learning for life, including self-confidence, communication skills and interpersonal skills will also be supported through the social and outreach activities of the cluster approach. It is our clear conviction that Aspire is a strong and person centred support for young people which will reinforce and support learning outcomes through college and/or apprenticeship. Transitions Plus will work in partnership with colleges, employers and apprenticeship agencies to further support those outcomes, where appropriate.

**Employment opportunities** will be opened up by personal development and by connections with local employers cultivated by both the charity and other partners, including colleges. Giving young people real choice and support in this area both empowers them and reinforces their sense of value and personhood.

**Prevention** and by definition also protection of the young beneficiaries – who we recognise are often exploited and coerced by less positive relationships and peer pressure into anti-social behaviour and petty crime. By providing alternative role models and better options for relationship and involvement the project will prevent young people from embarking on a poor roadmap and trajectory for their lives.

**Reduced levels of crime.** Young people on the project will be less likely to offend and reoffend, saving police and authority resources and money in intervention and community policing.

Inclusion and engagement of all too often vulnerable and exploitable young people will be a vital outcome from this relationally based project. Engagement with other young people seeking to move forward – and positive young volunteers - will support and reinforce their opportunities in other areas, provide mutual accountability and positive role models and will combat depression and support positive attitudes.

**Safer Communities.** The project will reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour and negative actions by young people and will build more awareness, breaking down misunderstanding and promoting responsible and positive behaviours.

**Respite** will benefit parents and carers as their growing young person moves forward beyond school, as will the knowledge that they are positively engaged in such a life changing project. Respite is reciprocal and these maturing young people need to find relationships and opportunities outside the home to help them flourish.

**Volunteers** also will learn to work as a team and will learn how to support and encourage vulnerable young people with respect and understanding of their special needs. They too will enhance their own educational and employment opportunities, strengthen their CV and be helped to fulfil their potential.

## **Staffing and structure**

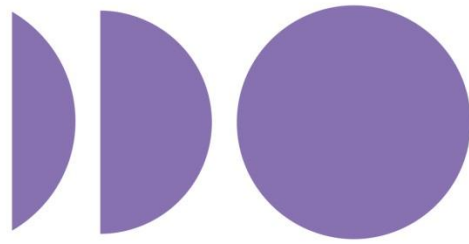
The project will be monitored by an advisory group which will include the Chair or CEO of Transitions UK, together with the Project Co-ordinator and representatives of parents, young people and volunteers. Transitions UK will be legally responsible for safe and effective delivery.

Transitions UK will appoint a suitably qualified and experienced Project Manager who will in turn recruit and support peer volunteers and co-ordinate the off-site cluster and other activities, will work in partnership with other agencies as appropriate and report directly to the Chief Executive of Transitions UK. Where required, suitably qualified sessional staff will also be employed to strengthen the delivery team, depending on the needs of the young people.

## **Monitoring and Report**

The project Manager will jointly produce a written report to the advisory group via the CEO of Transitions UK every three months, including qualitative as well as quantitative measurements of service process and individual attainment and development. This will be shared with the Police Commissioner and other relevant persons. The Advisory Group will meet quarterly and will receive service reports and will monitor development and address any issues. It will take a financial report at the same time. Such reports will be available to the Charity Trustees and to all partner agencies. Monthly management team meetings will consider service progress, individual development and any necessary adjustments required to optimise outcomes and benefit to individuals, including as recommended or required by the steering group. Learning will be captured to affect internal development and replication elsewhere.





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**Referral Process**

**1. Identify Young Person**

Young People are to be referred via PRU, secondary school or local authorities. Young people will be those looking to leave school within the next 2 years.

**2. Consoltation with referrer (May inc parents)**

Phone call or face to face meeting with referrer to confirm information and background.

**3. Assessment and File**

An assessment is to be carried out with parents and young people and referrer to cover the current support, opportunities, weaknesses and strengths.

**4. Volunteer Matching**

Volunteers to be matched with young people. The initial induction will take place in an area the young person is comfortable in.

**5. Attend Activities**

The young person will start attending with the volunteers & mentors. Initial support in clusters will include life skills & hobbies. To enable them to reach their target.

**6. Meeting with YP to discuss Person centred**

A meeting with young person takes place to discuss their PCP (Person Centred Plan), goals and aspirations for the next two years and how we can help them achieve them.

**7. Standard Review on personal development**

A review of the young person's personal development to take place termly with young person and appropriate support.

# Aspire Project Referral Form



## SECTION 1: YOUNG PERSON

Surname:

First Name:

Preferred Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Name of School:

Not on a school roll

Gender:

Date of Birth:

Year Group:

Ethnicity:

Nationality:

Religion:

Families first assessed: Yes  No

Interpreter/Signer Required for Young Person: Yes  No

## SECTION 2: REASON FOR REFERRAL

**(Note: Additional information sheet added to form if needed)**

Nature of Concern:

Actions Taken:

Aims of Referral:

### **SECTION 3: BEHAVIOURAL & RELATIONAL CONCERNS**

**What are the young person's behavioural or relational issues that would benefit from this project?**

### **SECTION 4: PARENT/GUARDIAN DETAILS**

Surname:

First Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Tel:

E-mail:

Surname:

First Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Tel:

E-mail:

### **SECTION 5: PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other:

Designation/Title:

Date form completed:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name:

Contact Number:

E-mail:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For further information on completing this form please contact us using the details below.**

**Radhika Dattani  
Project Manager**

**Aspire**

**Transitions UK, 21 St Thomas Rd, Luton LU2 7UX**

**Tel: 07841 470382**

**E-mail: [radhika.dattani@transitionsuk.org](mailto:radhika.dattani@transitionsuk.org)**

## ADDITIONAL NOTES