

LEAD

RECLAIM PROGRAMME

Delivery organisation: RECLAIM is a bold, innovative, and award-winning charity with 10 years' experience in delivering outstanding programmes for young people from working class communities. Our vision is of a society in which working class young people are positively seen, authentically heard and can lead meaningful social change.

Our young people reject stigmatising labels of 'disadvantaged' and 'disengaged'. We have a wholly strengths-based approach and we work tirelessly to show the talent and promise that exists in often marginalised communities. Our young people's motto is: 'Power Not Pity'.

The organisation nurtures and galvanises the talent of young people who are at risk of failing to reach their potential. Leadership potential exists in young people regardless of postcode or income; yet life chances today are more determined than ever by childhood circumstances. We operate as a bridge to ensure those furthest from power have the opportunity to gain access to the skills, experience and networks effortlessly enjoyed by their richer peers.

Programme Outline: The LEAD Pioneers programme is a unique initiative which offers combination of personal development, goal-focused challenge, and direct connections with industry for 12-13 year olds from working class communities. It is a community-based programme, led by the needs and strengths of the young participants and structured around Leadership, Enterprise, Activism and Development (LEAD). The programme engages these young pioneers, building critical thinking and leadership skills to enable them to lead personal and social change.

Programme duration: LEAD Pioneers runs for 12 months: a 3 month consultation period; 7 months programme delivery; and 2 months final evaluation and stakeholder feedback. Each young person receives approx. 100 hours of support.

Area selection rationale: We select communities which demonstrate at least three of the following characteristics:

1. High incidence of child poverty
2. Poor educational attainment
3. Limited employment opportunities within the area
4. Low investment in infrastructure
5. Pressure on public resources/services
6. High proportion of social housing compared with owner-occupied
7. High crime rates
8. A significant, urgent challenge being faced by the community

Cohort: a single-gender group of 30 year 8 pupils, living in the target community, who self-nominate onto the programme following positive engagement in schools and community organisations.

Impact: The difference this makes to the lives of individual young people is powerful. They tell us that because of the Programme they achieved at a level they didn't think themselves capable of; they felt like they were being heard for the first time; they feel free to learn and get involved because "it's not like school" We see young people demonstrate significant change in their attitudes, personal and social skills, improved engagement in school, as well as far greater employability skills.

Young people at the end of the LEAD programme feel more connected to their community, and report an increased sense of pride and a willingness to challenge negative stereotypes, as well as stronger networks to the business community and important new intergenerational relationships.