

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE IN
MORE **COMMUNITIES** TO REACH
THEIR **FULL POTENTIAL**



A YEAR IN REVIEW



**CHARLIE GREEN, CHAIR AND
KEVIN MUNDAY, CEO**

2017 WAS THE YEAR WE LAUNCHED IN OUR THIRD LOCATION AND STRENGTHENED EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

ThinkForward's vision is simple – to prevent a new generation of youth unemployment. We do this through a coaching programme that provides long-term support to young people at high risk of unemployment. At the end of 2016 we set out ambitious plans to do this more widely, by refining our coaching programme, diversifying funding and scaling up delivery. In the context of constrained public finances, continued changes to educational policy and the distractions of Brexit looming over many employers, this was challenging. Nonetheless in 2017 we consolidated in six London neighbourhoods, completed our first year in north Nottingham and launched in coastal Kent. We started DFN-MoveForward, targeting the young people with learning disabilities who are amongst the most at risk of future unemployment. None of this would be possible without the help of our funders and business partners, and we value your ongoing support.

TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

KENT

**NICOLETTE, EDUCATION
AND EMPLOYMENT
COORDINATOR**



My role is about making sure ThinkForward young people in Kent get to experience the careers they're interested in.

I also arrange enrichment activities to broaden horizons and improve confidence. Exposure to the workplace and taking part in new activities open their eyes and help them understand what they need to do to achieve their goals. For me, this was the attraction of moving from teaching to ThinkForward. I'm now able to focus full-time on helping students find a career and start building their lives.

LONDON

**CHARLENE, COACH AND
PROGRAMME ADVISOR**



A highlight for me in 2017 was seeing my students graduate from ThinkForward.

One young person's journey particularly sticks out because I was able to help her when she was struggling to get into university. After a bit of a battle she's now studying social work at Canterbury. I've been a coach for five years and I've learned a lot about what works so I'm now going to be putting my knowledge to use by taking an organisational lead on developing our programme design.

NOTTINGHAM

**DAN, REGIONAL DELIVERY
MANAGER**



In 2017 we came to the end of our first full academic year in our first four schools in north Nottingham.

A key achievement for me was creating the business mentoring programme for our Year 10s, and we built excellent partnerships with some key employers in the city to do this. Staff who took part in mentoring told me how much they got out of the experience, and the young people were inspired by the insights they got from our brilliant volunteers. We also grew, expanding to a fifth school in St Ann's.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S STORIES

KENT

**KERRI NEWLAND – 14
FOLKESTONE ACADEMY**



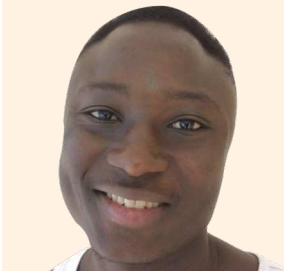
Working with my coach has changed my life in a good way. I used to storm out of the classroom if I got annoyed but that's part of my past now.

My behaviour is better at home and at school, my attendance has gone up and my attitude

has improved. I'm getting on better with my teachers and I'm listening more. The teachers see that I am behaving and they're changing their perception of me. I used to think school was pointless but now I want to do well because I want to be a nurse.

LONDON

**LANSINET – 19
PROGRAMME LEAVER**



What I learned with ThinkForward has stayed with me.

I arrived in London from Guinea when I was 11. I couldn't speak English so it was hard to make friends. I was lonely and my confidence was low. My coach gave me advice about making eye contact, shaking hands, how to

start conversations and being friendly. Gradually as my English improved it all came together and I became more confident. In 2017 I discovered I got a place at university. Now my dream, amazingly, is to be an actor. The confidence I got from being on ThinkForward is where it all started.

NOTTINGHAM

**ELYCIA – 15
BULWELL ACADEMY**



I used to get angry really quickly and I would punch things. My hands would hurt and be really badly bruised.

My coach encouraged me to do boxing after school and she did it with me. She would hold the pads and I would wear the gloves and

do the punching. It really helped me to calm down. We talked a lot and really got to know each other. I've gone to every business insight day and business mentoring session my coach has organised because all these opportunities help me realise what I want to do for a career.

KENT

WE LAUNCHED IN SIX COMMUNITIES

In the summer of 2017, supported by Kent Community Foundation, we were able to enrol young people across six new schools. Expanding to Kent is an important step to test and adapt ThinkForward's design in new contexts.

Our third location is, in reality, six very different and widespread communities in Deal, New Romney, Maidstone, Strood, Margate and Folkestone. Rural and coastal isolation, lack of public transport, public transport costs and intergenerational unemployment all contribute to the obstacles facing young people. For example, Thanet is one of the lowest ranking local authorities for social mobility, according to the 2017 report by the Social Mobility Commission.

It was a busy year signing up the six new partner schools and building a new team. With the move to a more rural setting, we reviewed and adapted our programme to better reflect the needs of our students and the local labour market.

There was a big focus on getting parents and carers on board, with coffee mornings and meetings to explain the benefits of ThinkForward. This has resulted in a very supportive group of carers, mums and dads. The coaches have risen to the challenge of covering the large distances in Kent and passed their mini-bus driver training. This allows them to use school transport to take groups of students to different opportunities.

“ THINKFORWARD WORKS WITH SOME OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE PUPILS. THE COACH HAS ENCOURAGED STUDENTS TO RAISE THEIR ASPIRATIONS AND BELIEVE THEY CAN HAVE A BRIGHT FUTURE. ”

Geoff Matthews, Strood Academy

In the winter term, all young people were able to take part in a range of business insight and enrichment activities, including behind-the-scenes trips to a theatre and a power station, a team-building day with the Army and a visit to the Skills London jobs fair.



102 YOUNG PEOPLE TOOK PART IN AT LEAST ONE EMPLOYABILITY ACTIVITY IN JUST THREE MONTHS

Students enjoying a visit to Turner Contemporary, Margate

LONDON



London graduation ceremony at Nomura headquarters

IN LONDON ALL OF OUR SCHOOLS REPORTED SOME IMPROVEMENTS IN BEHAVIOUR FOR YEAR 11s

WE CELEBRATED WITH OUR GRADUATES

In our longest running region, we said goodbye to the Class of 2017, the second group of young people to complete our five-year programme. Eight out of 10 graduates were in employment, training or work when they graduated. Like Lansinet (see Young People's Stories), their journeys on ThinkForward demonstrate the value of ThinkForward's unique coaching approach, combined with targeted exposures to the world of work. This combination empowers young people to take control of their lives and to build essential life and employability skills. We wish all our graduates the best for their future.

In 2017 we diversified our funding mix to become more sustainable. As a result we asked schools to

make a contribution towards the cost of delivering the programme. We continue to develop collaborative partnerships with six London schools across Tower Hamlets and Islington. In schools no longer able to partner with ThinkForward, we committed to supporting young people in the final two years of the programme through to 2019.

ThinkForward continues to develop strong relationships with local businesses. In 2017 we partnered with the Careers and Enterprise Company, who provided funding to develop our business mentoring programme in all our London schools, linking with companies including ICG, Credit Suisse, Bank of America Merrill Lynch and Nomura to deliver a targeted curriculum

“ DURING OUR SIX YEAR PARTNERSHIP, ICG HAS SEEN THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THINKFORWARD ON YOUNG PEOPLE, AND WE KNOW OUR MONEY AND OUR MENTORS' TIME IS BEING WELL SPENT ”

Jo Zendel, ICG

to prepare young people for employment. Through partnerships, young people have also developed important life skills by taking part in an array of enrichment activities including workshops with Google, Sky and the National Theatre.

NOTTINGHAM

WE DEVELOPED LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

There was a lot to celebrate in Nottingham in 2017. We completed our first year of delivery in the city, working with more than 170 young people by the end of the year. All four schools renewed their support, a great testament to the strength of partnerships developed and the impact coaches have had working with young people in Years 9–11. Engagement rates were high, with over three quarters of young people seeing their coach every week.

In September we also launched in a fifth school – Nottingham Academy Alternative Provision. This allows us to reach students who have been excluded from mainstream education and who are often most at risk of youth unemployment. Looking ahead we are launching in a sixth school in 2018. This will bring our

Nottingham reach in line with our other two locations and allow for the recruitment of an Education, Enrichment and Employment Coordinator, who will provide dedicated support building partnerships with further education providers, businesses and cultural organisations.

The Careers and Enterprise Company helped fund ThinkForward's first year of delivering employability activities in Nottingham. To do this, we established new partnerships with thirteen local employers including KPMG, Nottingham City Homes and Nottingham Trent University. They have offered insight days, mentoring, and skills workshops to enable young people to be more 'work ready'.

**“ THINKFORWARD
HAS PROVED IT
TRULY UNDERSTANDS
THE VALUE OF
PREVENTING RATHER
THAN TREATING
NEET, THAT'S ONE
OF THE REASONS
I LOVE WORKING
WITH THEM ”**

Graham Allen, former Nottingham North MP

After one year, our impact data shows that young people are making improvements in terms of their engagement at school. We can see, for example, that when it comes to behaviour across our first four schools, 83% of Year 9s, 90% of Year 10s and 89% of Year 11s have all improved their behaviour at school.

Bulwell Academy
students and coach
Michelle, with
business mentors
from Nottingham
Trent University

**IN NOTTINGHAM
ALL YEAR GROUPS
ACHIEVED SOME
IMPROVEMENTS
IN ATTENDANCE**



2017 IN NUMBERS

**WE SUPPORTED
857 YOUNG PEOPLE**

**TO ACHIEVE
THIS WE SPENT
£2.2MILLION***

8/10 of our London graduates were in a **positive destination when they left the programme

Together we can transform the prospects of young people most at risk of unemployment. We are funded primarily through voluntary donations. Donating:

£2500

supports a young person on the programme for one year

£500

covers the cost of skills and confidence-building activities for five young people for one year

£250 provides a month of one-to-one coaching for a young person

*unaudited accounts

**a positive destination means being in employment, training or further study

OUR SCHOOLS

NOTTINGHAM

- Bluecoat Beechdale Academy
- Bulwell Academy
- Ellis Guilford School
- Nottingham Academy Alternative Provision
- Nottingham University Samworth Academy

LONDON

- City and Islington College*
- City of London Academy, Highbury Grove
- City of London Academy, Islington**
- George Green's School
- Green Spring Academy, Shoreditch
- London East Alternative Provision
- Samuel Rhodes School*
- Swanlea School

KENT

- Bradfields Academy*
- Folkestone Academy
- Goodwin Academy
- Hartsdown Academy
- MidKent College*
- New Line Learning Academy
- Strood Academy
- The Marsh Academy

*MoveForward Pilot

**ThinkForward and MoveForward school

DFN-MOVEFORWARD PILOT

Our pilot programme, DFN-MoveForward, which is supported by the David Forbes Nixon Charitable Foundation began in 2017 in Islington in London, and Kent.

The programme provides young people who have mild to moderate learning disabilities with long-term specialised support, to enable them to move into sustained paid work. It starts in Year 9 and continues beyond entry into paid employment, ensuring students are supported on every step of their journey into work.

Our Islington coach started in October and is now well established in two schools – City of London Academy, Islington and Samuel Rhodes School – and City and Islington College. Forty five young people are on the programme.

In Kent the coach has been in post since December, working in Bradfields Academy in Chatham, where 25 students are enrolled, and MidKent College in its Maidstone and Medway campuses, where we have 20 students.

MoveForward has a dedicated education and employment coordinator who will arrange business insight days, volunteering, mentoring and work placement opportunities. These are all designed to prepare the young people with the confidence, skills and experience required for the workplace.

As an innovative and new programme, the design of MoveForward will be subject to ongoing review and development to ensure we are providing students with the best possible support.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

THINKFORWARD RELIES ON PARTNERSHIPS TO BE ABLE TO TRANSFORM YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIFE CHANCES. OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS IS INTEGRAL TO MAKING OUR WORK POSSIBLE.

ThinkForward

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ThinkForward is a charity
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*Volunteer their time to
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work and/or provide
entry level jobs.*

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British Army

Capital One

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Experian

EY

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JP Morgan

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KKR

Leas Cliff Hall Folkestone

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Nonsuch

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University

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