



**2020**  
**APPOINTMENT**  
**TO THE BOARD**  
**OF TRUSTEES**

# **THINKFORWARD**

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# INTRODUCTION FROM **OUR CHAIR**

**ThinkForward is a very special organisation with an enthusiastic and committed staff team.**



**Our vision is simple - to prevent a new generation of youth unemployment. In 2018 we consolidated our services in London schools, completed our first year in north Nottingham and launched in coastal Kent.**

In 2019 we began delivering DFN-MoveForward, which targets young people with learning disabilities who are amongst the most at risk of future unemployment.

We are looking to recruit new Trustees who can help us continue our ongoing transformation, with the vision and enthusiasm to drive forward a charity with growth ambitions which are relevant to commissioners, schools and young people. There will also undoubtedly be challenges arising from the unprecedented times we are living through with the Covid-19 crisis.

We are looking for specific skill sets to help strengthen the Board including expertise in philanthropy, working with foundations, youth education policy, statutory funding for education and training, legal, expertise in the SEND arena and impact/evaluation experience. We are also keen to fully represent the communities we work within and are particularly keen to invite applications from BAME candidates.

Change is often tough and as a Trustee you will have the belief, passion and resilience to help us succeed in shaping our future. I'm extremely excited about this opportunity to refresh our Board and Governance arrangements and I encourage you to consider becoming a Board member of ThinkForward.

**Charlie Green,**  
Chair

# ABOUT THINKFORWARD

**ThinkForward exists to empower young people to create better and brighter futures.**

**Many young people face barriers such as a lack of opportunity in their communities, low household incomes, challenging relationships and limited aspirations. Without support, these hurdles can lead to a high risk of unemployment, with long-term negative impacts on a young person's career and life chances.**

There are more than 800,000 16-24-year-olds in the UK who aren't at school or college, or don't have a job or training place. Our ambition is to prevent young people becoming one of these statistics.

We run two programmes that allow more than 1,000 young people to gain the autonomy, skills and confidence they need to fulfil their potential and have happy and successful futures. In an ever-changing world we support them to prepare for their move to adulthood, the working world and the start of the rest of their lives.

The ThinkForward programme provides five years of personalised coaching and employability activities to get young people ready for the world of work. Coaches build trusted relationships, empowering young people to take control, find solutions to challenges, develop skills and create a positive vision for their future.

Complementing the one-to-one coaching, targeted Ready for Work activities support young people to gain insights into the workplace, grow aspirations and identify a pathway to their chosen career. We run this programme in 18 schools in North and East London, Nottingham and Kent.

Just 6% of adults with a learning disability are in paid work. We are determined to change things through our new programme, DFN-MoveForward. Coaches work with young people who have mild to moderate learning disabilities, providing long-term support to prepare them for sustainable paid employment. Young people take part in insight visits, work placements and business mentoring to build their experience and develop skills and capabilities. We also work closely with parents to engage them in the opportunities and benefits of the programme.

We have secured five years of funding for this programme through a social impact bond (SIB). The government's Life Chances Fund and The DFN Charitable Foundation are commissioners and Big Issue Invest are providing the social investment. We were early pioneers of SIB funding in the UK and already, signs indicate that we will exceed expectations in terms of job outcomes for participants. The DFN-MoveForward programme operates in schools and colleges in London, Kent and the West Midlands.

# OUR VISION

To prevent the next generation of youth unemployment in areas of the UK that most need our support – London, Nottingham, Kent, and Warwickshire.

# OUR MISSION

To provide long-term personalised coaching to young people at the highest risk of unemployment, to enable them to transition into sustained work.

# OUR VALUES

**Integrity** I will do what I say

**Determined** I will believe in people's potential

**Innovate** I will search for creative solutions

**Trusted** I will trust my colleagues

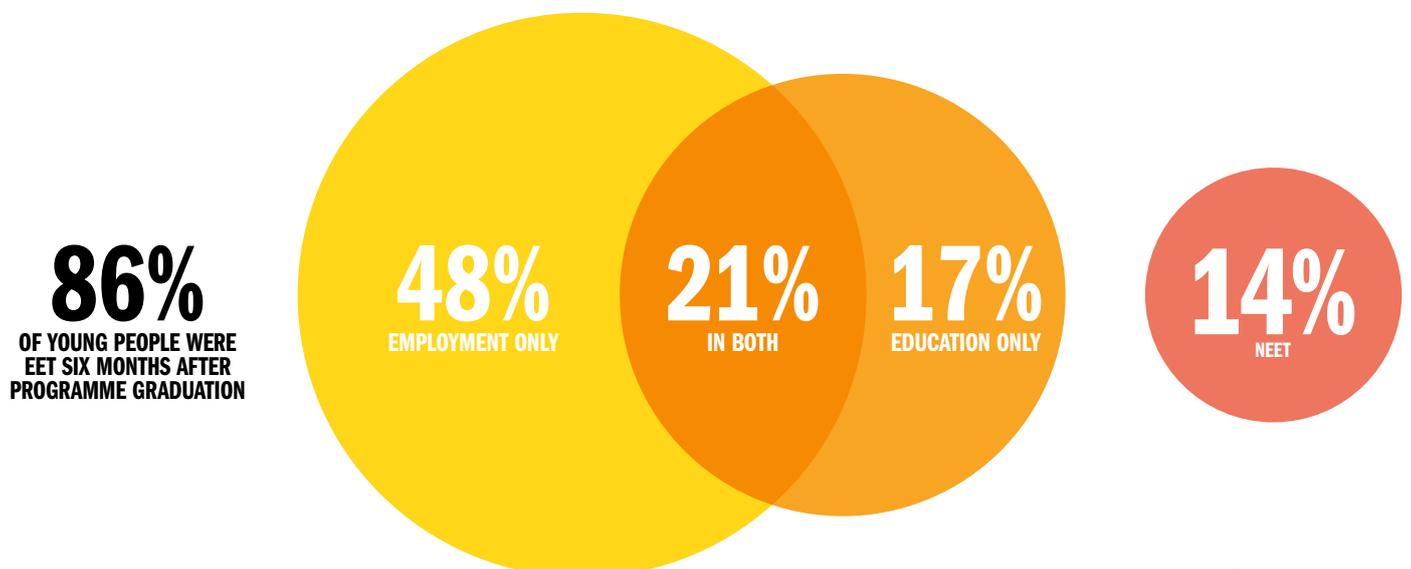
**Collaboration** I will collaborate

# OUR IMPACT

We supported 1,122 young people in 2018/19

ThinkForward		MoveForward
957	YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE PROGRAMME	165
6,534	1-2-1 COACHING SESSIONS DELIVERED	426
3,749	GROUP COACHING SESSIONS DELIVERED	290
896	PARENTAL ENGAGEMENTS	67
427	READY FOR WORK ACTIVITIES	88

We intentionally work with the most at-risk young people, as interventions exist for those who require less intensive support. Through a scoring mechanism and the knowledge of school staff, we identify 13-year olds with known risk factors, including poor behaviour, attainment and attendance and whether young people are in care, on free school meals or have special educational needs.



For our most recently graduating cohort of student graduating from the programme.

\*known outcomes, including self-employed young people

# OUR STRATEGY

## We are preparing to undertake an intensive strategic review of the organisation

**The process will be a thorough review of our operating environment (including the impact of Covid-19), how we need to flex and adjust to the policy landscape we exist in (both now and in the future) and how we remain agile whilst seeking scale and growth opportunities. Our aim is to develop our new five-year strategy which we will launch in September 2020.**

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The review will include fully exploring key strategic questions such as:

- How do we articulate a roadmap to external impact/evaluation?
- Do we need to review our programme design considering the outcomes of our first five-year graduating cohort on ThinkForward?
- How do we identify growth/scale potential across all programmes?
- How can we explore future sources of funding and test out all aspects of sustainability?
- In a dynamic policy environment, how do we ensure we are best placed to take advantage of future opportunities and manage potential risks? Continuing pressure on school funding and ongoing changes in priorities in the education sector mean we must work harder than ever to articulate the full value of our intensive and unique approach to supporting young people in school with the greatest need.

Alongside our exciting future strategy work, we will ensure we meet our current strategy and deliver on our previously stated aims.

## YOUTH

# PARTICIPATION

**At ThinkForward one of our key organisational aims is to develop the role of our young people in the design and direction of our programme.**

**We've reached an exciting stage in the development of our youth participation strategy, as we prepare to launch our youth board. Being a youth board member will enable young people to become influencers in their ThinkForward communities, and work alongside the adult board to implement change.**

The youth board will lead on several priorities, which were identified from a survey of our young people. The questions were designed by young people to learn about the opinions and experiences of their peers on the programme, and we were delighted to get nearly 400 responses.

One focus of the youth board will be to ensure that more young people participate in our ready for work activities. They'll support us to better promote these events through improved promotion, use of digital platforms and self-registration.

Another aim will be to provide even better support to young people to support them to get a job. This will include developing information to map the labour market in each location to highlight the availability of local jobs, and to enable young people to really understand their career options and the role of their coach in guiding them.

In 2020 we will also continue to provide peer leadership roles through our national ambassador programme, deliver local social action projects, conduct regular peer research and celebrate young people's participation through positive story telling.

There will also be an emphasis on increasing the membership of our alumni network. This creates opportunities for young people who have graduated to give back, by sharing their journey and experience with the next ThinkForward generation.

To support us to deliver on these key goals we were delighted to secure funding from the Jack Petchey Foundation to appoint a programme communications intern for one year. This role is also providing a young person with a fantastic opportunity to take their first steps in the youth charity sector.

# THINKFORWARD TEAM

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Charlie Green**  
Chair



**David Vaughan**  
Chair of Finance Risk  
& Audit committee



**Jill Baker**  
Trustee



**Vanessa Morphet**  
Trustee

## EXECUTIVE TEAM



**Ashley McCaul**  
CEO



**Vicki Wright**  
Chief Operating Officer



**Matt Archer**  
Director of Delivery



**Hannah Sharp**  
Director of Fundraising  
and Communications  
(Maternity leave)



**Steina Adolfsdottir**  
Head of Fundraising  
(Interim)

## TRUSTEE

# ROLE DESCRIPTION

**ThinkForward is seeking new trustees to support the current board and executive team as we move into a new phase.**

**This is an exciting opportunity to help drive the success of a growing and successful organisation that makes a positive impact on the lives of young people and their communities.**

We are looking for those who value the potential of young people, is passionate about their growth and development and understands the challenges that some face. An interest in ThinkForward's work and approach are essential as well as an ambitious outlook for ThinkForward's future.

You will be well respected and have active networks in business, philanthropy, education, policy, SEND and impact/evaluation sectors and will be able to bring expert knowledge in support of ThinkForward's work.

The individual will have a proven track record of working and a senior and strategic level, understand the governance role within which they will be operating. They will also be willing to act as a representative, spokesperson and cause leader creating and identifying donors and business opportunities for ThinkForward.

ThinkForward's board is made up of members, who are recruited, selected and approved by the Board of Trustees. Each trustee serves a three-year term, after which they may stand for a second three-year term.

ThinkForward's Board meets six times per year (usually in London however there is flexibility for those who are interested in the role but not London based). The overall time commitment for a trustee is expected to be up to two days per quarter. The position of trustee is voluntary, but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

# RESPONSIBILITIES

- Contribute actively to ensure ThinkForward's Board fulfils its responsibilities in governing the organisation
- Ensure that ThinkForward acts in accordance with legislation, its constitution and those procedures governed by the Charities Commission and company law
- Support the development of ThinkForward's next five-year strategy (2020-25)
- Ensure that ThinkForward's strategic direction, policies and objectives are clear and kept under regular review
- Ensure that the values and purpose of ThinkForward are upheld in all the decisions and decision-making processes of the Board
- Hold the executive team to account using a support and challenge ethos
- Regularly review financial viability and ensure the financial stability of ThinkForward
- Act as an ambassador and champion ThinkForward's objectives at a senior level, supporting ThinkForward's income activities, and fostering networks that can help generate income for the organisation
- Support the recruitment of senior staff
- Represent ThinkForward at key external events and develop and maintain responsive and interactive relationships with key stakeholders
- Safeguard the reputation and values of ThinkForward
- Declare any conflicts of interest while carrying out Trustee responsibilities
- Make sure ThinkForward's risk assessment is reviewed annually and that ThinkForward is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities
- Be collectively responsible for the actions of the organisation and other Trustees

## TRUSTEE

# EXPECTATIONS AND ENTITLEMENTS

- Attend at least one Trustee training programme as part of their induction so that you understand the work we deliver
- Attend Trustee meetings, which are held six times per year in London, these are generally three hours - trustees are expected to attend at least three per year. In addition, we have a subcommittee structure which also meets throughout the year
- Join one sub-committee
- Get involved with the organisation where appropriate and attend various internal meetings as and when required
- Claim reasonable travel and accommodation expenses to attend meetings which will be payable in accordance with the ThinkForward Trustee expenses policy
- Demonstrate commitment to ThinkForward by supporting fundraising efforts
- Serve for a term of three years and be able to stand for re-election for a further term if required
- Work with the Chair to regularly review your performance

# TRUSTEE PERSON SPECIFICATION

- All Trustees must be 18 years and over
- Commitment to the vision, mission and core principles of ThinkForward and an interest in the wider issues facing disadvantaged young people
- Strong communication skills with the capacity to express yourself with clarity
- Interest in and sensitivity to the political, policy, cultural and social environment in which ThinkForward operates
- Experience of committee work, ability to work effectively as a team member, and an understanding of the differences between governance and management
- Active business and/or philanthropy networks and can be an active ambassador to generate business and donor opportunities as well as professional and advisory support
- Strategic and ambitious for ThinkForward with an ability to shape a collective vision for ThinkForward that informs its ongoing work
- Strong influencing, networking and advocacy skills
- Has time to commit to ThinkForward as a Trustee
- We are particularly interested in applications from BAME and disabled candidates
- Ability to enable ThinkForward to capitalise on your specialist expertise

# HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please email your CV and covering letter summarising your motivations for applying for the trustee role, an outline of the specialist skills you can bring to the governance of ThinkForward and addressing the key points in the person specification to [vicki.wright@thinkforward.org.uk](mailto:vicki.wright@thinkforward.org.uk).

Applicants are asked to provide suitable daytime and evening telephone and email contact details.

Our CEO, Ashley McCaul, would be delighted to speak to any interested candidates:

**Telephone**

07912 391 658

**Email**

[ashley.mccaul@thinkforward.org.uk](mailto:ashley.mccaul@thinkforward.org.uk)

**LinkedIn**

[www.linkedin.com/in/amccaulsfg](http://www.linkedin.com/in/amccaulsfg)