



Charity story:

Bedford-based Fun 4 Young People aims to inspire young people to reach their potential by creating trusting, non-judgemental environments that are inclusive, nurturing, and respectful, enabling them to make positive contributions to society and overcome any barriers that they may face.

The charity offers support services which provide educational, accessible and fun opportunities for young people, and wraparound support for families, including guidance, advice and signposting. It focuses on developing self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience in young people, and supporting families.

The charity provides year-round provision for young people through after school and holiday programmes that are informed by young people and are adapted to support their individual needs. The programmes aim to address issues such as social skills, bullying and isolation and promote positive well-being, communication and relationship building. It also offers 1:1 therapeutic intervention and group support for families to support young people's mental health.

The charity had been in contact with Cranfield Trust previously, with a team member receiving mentoring from a Trust volunteer. Chief Executive Sophie got in touch again to ask for mentoring support herself. The charity had recently been part of a larger organisation, but had become independent in 2021. Sophie was thinking about the charity's future, and how to build corporate and community support for its work, and also working to ensure that she had a strong staff team in place to deliver its services.

The Trust's Mentoring and Learning Manager Emilia matched Sophie with volunteer Muriel. They formed a strong partnership, meeting regularly over several months, with Muriel sending Sophie questions to consider, and suggesting approaches to different challenges.



Sophie reported:

"Working with a Cranfield Trust Mentor has provided valuable external insight for our organisation. Their guidance has helped us clarify priorities, improve leadership approaches, and review operational processes. This has supported more informed decision-making, clearer communication, and stronger governance. The mentoring has also contributed to developing leadership capacity and increasing self-confidence among senior staff. This has supported morale, improved team cohesion, and helped us manage change more effectively."

In the longer term, our organisation is likely to benefit from a more confident leadership team, clearer strategic direction, and more sustainable practices. The support received is helping us build the skills and tools needed to deliver quality services, make good use of resources, and maintain a positive impact on the young people and communities we serve."



Muriel believes the greatest impact was helping Sophie trust her instincts.

"I think the mentoring gave her confidence that her thinking was robust. She tested her ideas carefully, considered different perspectives, and came to see that her approach was sound. When leaders feel supported and confident in their decisions, the whole organisation benefits, and so do the people they exist to serve."

Sophie summed up the overall impact of the mentoring with Muriel,

"I'd describe my experience of mentoring as a structured but flexible way to develop professionally. Having a neutral sounding board outside the organisation helped me see situations differently and explore new approaches without judgement. It also gave me space to focus on my own development, clarify my priorities and gain practical guidance on specific challenges. Overall, it felt like a constructive partnership that encouraged reflection and growth."

