



Promise Foundation

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Chair's Report (Mike Hulme - Chair of the Trustees Group)

I am pleased to report that 2018/19 has been yet another successful academic year for the charity with our effective initiatives consolidating our now embedded practice. Our public benefit surrounds a service to targeted young people based predominantly around the 13 to 18 age range in secondary schools, and those from backgrounds of high deprivation or significant need. Based on a peer mentoring model, the foundation utilises adults from the direct community surrounding the host school to support each mentee helping to improve aspiration, academic approach and confidence, therefore improving social mobility. The foundation does not replace any such service to young people that would normally be funded via regular school funding, but supplements and enhances the target group's experiences and overall ability to realise further potential and life chances.

During the year we have remodelled and refined our key vision statement to one which we now feel is succinct and realistically covers our core purpose - *"We are committed to social mobility and our belief that this should be a collective responsibility"*. Trustees have agreed to adopt this revision in the light of the work we are engaged in and in recognition of their future direction and planning.

During the reporting year we were saddened to see our host school co-ordinator Hannah Benn-Gordon leave following her appointment to another post. The Trustees advertised and were delighted to recruit Khadija Zaim to the post in January 2019. The Trustees agreed to adjust the days required for the Host School Co-ordinator position to three days per week with the post holder continuing to work for the host school in her mentoring capacity for the other two days. This arrangement has consolidated mentoring relationships with the host school with a 'buy back' of Khadija's two day commitment with them enabling the necessary funding security for the foundation as a bonus to this arrangement. We understand that this arrangement is set to continue from September 2019 and for the new academic year 2019/20.

Khadija has made a successful start in her post, enabling consistency of approach and an enhanced quality of mentor/mentee management and co-ordination. I would like to acknowledge Khadija's positive manner, relationship building and networking skills which she has developed over the first six months of her work. During her induction, Khadija has now completed her level 3 safeguarding training and is operating as the foundation's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in accordance with our policy and the legal obligation.

As part of our wish to expand the notable impact of our work, the Trustees agreed a five year plan with an ambitious target to encompass some ten centres by 2022. Although there has been some 'slippage' in the timeline, we were able to secure our second school centre to the Promise Foundation during the year.

Newman Catholic College have become the first link-school engaged in Promise Foundation work and the appointed co-ordinator has made a positive start in convening mentor/mentee relationships. The students from the College have benefited from the foundation's support and guidance in building upon our core purpose and vision.

The Trustees look to expand once more within the forthcoming year and hope to secure further link-school working in two centres within the target locality. This will require additional review of our core operation and more funding to establish our practice in the new schools.

Mentoring – the foundation has successfully embedded mentoring relationships during this academic year through liaison with the host school. Each individual has been targeted using a referral protocol and via discussion with the pastoral support teams in the host school. The young people have been linked with suitable mentors from our pool with regular weekly meetings arranged for discussion and agreed improvement tracking. A 2018/19 evaluative break-down of the support is as follows:

Academic:

- 70% of the target students have made measured progress in three or more of their subjects
- Teachers report that 39% of the targeted students have made an improvement in their grades in Maths and English, with 54% making measured improvement in Science subjects.
- 66% of students agreed with the statement *'Promise Foundation mentoring has helped me to do better in school'*

The Skills Club; gaining in confidence and improving self-esteem

- 76% of the targeted students stated that attending weekly mentoring sessions has made them more confident.
- 54% of the targeted students agreed that attending mentoring sessions has had a positive impact upon self-esteem, with one third of respondents stating that mentoring had an extremely positive impact.
- 71% of targeted students were more positive over how they view their future.
- Notable quotes:
 - "The most beneficial activity to work through with my mentor has been self-confidence. This has impacted upon my personal growth including public speaking."*
 - "My mentor has helped me to figure out how to improve my confidence when talking to strangers and new people – I had low self-esteem."*

Targets

- 83% of mentees stated that their mentors had provided regular feedback and constructive criticism in order to help them achieve their targets
- Notable quotes:
 - "My mentor has helped me to express myself. I have learnt to articulate my thoughts better and am able to identify my struggles and make them better"*

The mentoring pool has been again strengthened this year resulting in a thorough pairing process. The necessary management and organisation of this work has been ably co-ordinated by Khadija (Host School Co-ordinator) with a resulting tracking and evaluation of impact process. Such an analysis has enabled the

necessary data to support new fund raising bids and to maintain the evaluative processes for existing and continuing funding streams.

The Foundation has also recruited and trained the new mentors to undertake duties at Newman Catholic College supporting the link-school co-ordinator in his work and ensuring that the expectations and quality standard is maintained for our expansion programme.

Further mentor recruitment will be focussed upon tapping into organisations such as 'Volunteering Brent'; by the distribution of flyers and our business cards within the communities we serve; the further networking of local employers; utilising a number of local newsletters and local email forums; and word of mouth (which still serves as a very strong recruitment tool). This further enrolment drive will support our expansion as the ability to find and match mentoring relationships will be the biggest concern for potential expansion centres.

Fundraising – This remains, and is, a crucial element of core business for the foundation with much work undertaken once more in looking to secure funds for our essential operation and expansion ambition.

The need to continue to fundraise has resulted in several bids being pursued with mixed success as the demand upon potential finding organisations to provide for small charities continues to increase. A conscious effort to explore as many different and diverse funding providers remains with several results pending. The focus has been upon support for the costs of our expansion work and that of maintaining our essential central staffing funding, the latter being the most challenging as potential providers are particularly eager to support only new development projects.

To date, and within this reporting year, we have applications and interests from the following:

National Lottery Awards for all (pending)
Tristan Capital Group (pending)
Young Brent Foundation (successful)
The Burberry Foundation (rejected)
National Lottery Youth Fund (rejected)
Paul Hamlyn Foundation (rejected)
Endemol Shine group (successful)
Wembley Park Community Fund (pending)
GLA Mayor's Fund (pending)

Khadija and myself have also attended workshops with Young Brent Foundation and the National Lottery. This has provided invaluable networking opportunities and advice on how to proceed.

Our existing funding streams include Children in Need (moving into the final part of our three year award); individual contributions and donations; and the QPCS contribution to the host co-ordinator work. We have again maintained solvency during another challenging cash-flow and budgeting year, and are mindful of the need to require further successful funding streams during the next academic year.

Funds – reserves/debts/income/expenditure – despite the continual need to pursue support, I am pleased to report a stable funding period during the year with regular and one-off contributions covering the our operational costs. We did secure funding for our first link-school venture and are awaiting funding decisions to support our two further centre openings during the forthcoming year.

Trustees are informed at each meeting of the status of the foundation's financial circumstances via a detailed cash flow/account balance reconciliation provided to us by our wonderful volunteer Funmi Aro who has been hugely supportive for several years. I would like to thank Funmi for her work. We are currently looking to secure new provision in this field and have been seeking a volunteer for some months without success. The Trustees will need to prioritise such an appointment during the new reporting year to sustain our detailed analysis of the accounts.

Our accounts have been dutifully annually audited to September 2018 by Rouse Partners LLP being submitted to Companies House for the record in accordance with legislative requirements. Trustees have paid due regard and diligence to the audited accounts during their meetings as required.

Operational organisation -

- **Strategic planning** – The Trustees were able to construct a strategic plan for the 2018/19 academic year thus enabling a coherent over view of our objectives and desired outcomes. The strategic plan has enabled roles and responsibilities to be better understood whilst providing important evaluative scoping for the work of the Host School Co-ordinator. I am pleased to report that the vast majority of objectives have been achieved and, through the RAG rating process, our annual impact outturn has been, once more, realised. This has given a benchmarking process for the forthcoming academic year with an opportunity to expand and introduce new objectives for the charity. The draft strategic plan for 2019/20 will be adopted by the Trustees during the September 2019 meeting.
As previously outlined the strategic five year plan has suffered some slight slippage due to a number of operational reasons and unavoidable issues. However, as an aspirational document, it still serves as an indication of the Trustees direction and ambition up until 2022.
- **The role of the Trustees** – Work has continued to consolidate the position of our Trustees group. We have analysed roles, evaluated impact and sought to hone our agendas to have greater impact and focus. This has been most effective during this reporting period and the engagement of our experienced group has been very effective. All are aware of their influence and expectation with Trustees also contributing directly by leading on matters such as the skills club; the debating group; securing work placements within their organisations; attending the celebration evening; organising a social event to support and celebrate the work of the foundation; and to utilise their experience to support all aspects of the Promise Foundation. I remain hugely grateful to the Trustees for their commitment, loyalty and professionalism during the year.
- **Safeguarding** – the Foundation's safeguarding policy and associated responsibilities remain paramount to our principles and we continue to apply the strictest reference to matters of recruitment; child protection; and disclosure and barring service checking. Level three safeguarding training for myself and Khadija has been undertaken and we are fully compliant with the legislative requirements. All volunteer mentors have been DBS checked by their host schools, including our new link establishment Newman Catholic College.

Looking forward – It is with confidence that the Promise Foundation moves into another academic year as we have successfully negotiated 2018/19. Once more, the need to organise and ratify our operational model has taken priority. The endorsement of policy and the application of a strategic approach has strengthened progress and the continued appointment of a Host School Co-ordinator has strongly

supported the Trustee's operational objectives. We have realised successfully our challenge of expansion and will embellish this work with two more centres in 2019/20.

The new academic year will also look to secure the services of a funding application post to be employed on a short-term consultancy basis. The Trustees will work to define the purpose of the position in the early part of the Autumn term.

There will always be huge challenges for small charitable organisations in maintaining sufficient funding to sustain services. I am confident that Promise Foundation remains strong within its remit and that the principles at our core remain those to be upheld for the young people who we serve.

I conclude with a poem constructed by one of the Promise Foundation mentees and performed with exceptional confidence at our celebration evening in June of this year. This serves as a fitting illustration and encapsulates our core message:

At first I thought I was beneath all
I felt so bad, I felt like I was stuck in a never ending fall
Episodes and series of the same thing over and over
Never changing
It felt like I was fazing
But when I met my mentor
I felt safe, it was like a haven
I opened up and never caved in
Now I'm climbing over my fears
I'm at the front, and I'm changing gears
Zooming past and Running fast
I'm heading straight, I'm on the right path
Now I'm aiming high
Feeling like I can fly
I'm filled with this happy feeling
And I want to say thank you Promise Foundation for existing

-Salma

Mike Hulme



Chair of the Trustees (Promise Foundation)