

R1

What does your peer support programme aim to do and why?

Please identify what else could be done to ensure your programme achieves its aims:

BEST PRACTICE

ANY ADAPTATIONS NEEDED

1 WORK WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE AT

BE CREATIVE IN HOW YOU
ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE

Choose mentors and mentees against clear criteria and consider best ways to reach these young people – offering what children and young people want, and not what professionals may expect.

Be creative and inventive – after all, not everyone's a talker – they may prefer to dance, or play football.

Differentiate the offer according to age and abilities of the children and young people you are working with – not one size fits all.

2 INVOLVE THE RIGHT PEOPLE

THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT MENTOR
AND MENTEE RECRUITMENT

Ensure your programme is accessible – offering what children and young people want, and not what professionals may expect.

Don't work in isolation – look to build a team – be supported by your own peers.

Ensure the senior leadership team are on board and supportive.

3 FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS

BUILD TRUST TO CREATE SPACE FOR CHANGE

Mentors need to be supported to develop the skill set to build trusting relationships. This is key to enabling change.

Be aware that many children and young people will struggle to build trust because of difficulties in their past – and this could impact on the mentor – mentee relationship.

The mentoring relationship will have a beginning, a middle and an end – and each of these stages needs careful consideration.

4 ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE'S OWNERSHIP

COLLABORATE, CO-DESIGN, AND CO-PRODUCE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

For the programme to effectively engage the young people you are seeking to support there needs to be true co-production. A tick box consultation exercise does not work.

Young people need to feel they have a sense of agency and ownership of the programme.

Credibility and authenticity are essential to enable young people to walk alongside their peers.

5 BE SAFE AND BOUNDARIED

ENSURE MENTORS ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND SUPERVISED

Ensure through their training and subsequent regular supervision that your mentors feel safe and supported.

Ensure you and your peers have access to regular support through supervision

Note that supervision is vital to ensuring effective safeguarding.