

PROMISE *works*



IMPACT REPORT

2023-2024

Delivering inspirational mentoring to Somerset's most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people.

PROMISEworks recruits, trains and supports volunteers who build long-term mentoring relationships with some of Somerset's most vulnerable children and young people. Our service helps not only the children but their families and the wider community.



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

Welcome to our 2023–24 Impact Report

Now in our seventh year as an operational charity, we are immensely proud of the achievements of the young people we support and for the unyielding dedication of our volunteers, case workers, area coordinators, operations staff and supporters.

This year, we introduced a comprehensive evaluation system that highlights the transformative power of long-term, relationship-based mentoring. Our data confirms that with the guidance of trained mentors, young people develop resilience, build meaningful connections, and gain the confidence to shape a brighter future. By assessing mentees' needs at the outset of their mentoring journey, we establish a baseline that helps us track the impact of these relationships. Many of the young people we support have experienced trauma. While we cannot erase their past, our compassionate, non-judgmental mentors help them navigate life's challenges.

Every year we have seen an increase in the number of vulnerable children and young people who we support, and this year is no exception. As our referral list continues to grow so too does the demand on our service. We recognise that next year will be just as challenging as the last.

The PROMISEworks Team



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

AT THE END OF 2024 WE WERE WORKING WITH

153
Mentees

143
Active Mentors

THIS YEAR WE HAVE

Trained
39
new
mentors

Completed
77
matches

Achieved
43
successful
graduations

More than
22,000
volunteering
hours

Increased
our mentor
numbers by
8.5%

311
Referrals Received

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Since April 2017...



443 children
have been matched
with a mentor



1459 referrals
have been
received



BEHIND EVERY STATISTIC IS A YOUNG PERSON

At PROMISEworks, we recognise that every data point represents a young person with unique challenges. Thanks to the dedication of our staff, we have gathered valuable insights from mentees and referral partners to assess progress and impact.

We believe that resilience and positive attachment are crucial for a young person's emotional and psychological well-being. Many of our mentees face difficulties such as stress, anxiety, struggles with transitions, limited problem-solving skills, and a lack of trust and empathy. To better understand and support them, we have developed a questionnaire that assesses their needs at the start of their mentoring journey and at key stages along the way.

This data allows us to focus on the most pressing issues affecting the young people we support, to evaluate the effectiveness of our mentoring, and to continuously refine our service to provide the best possible support.

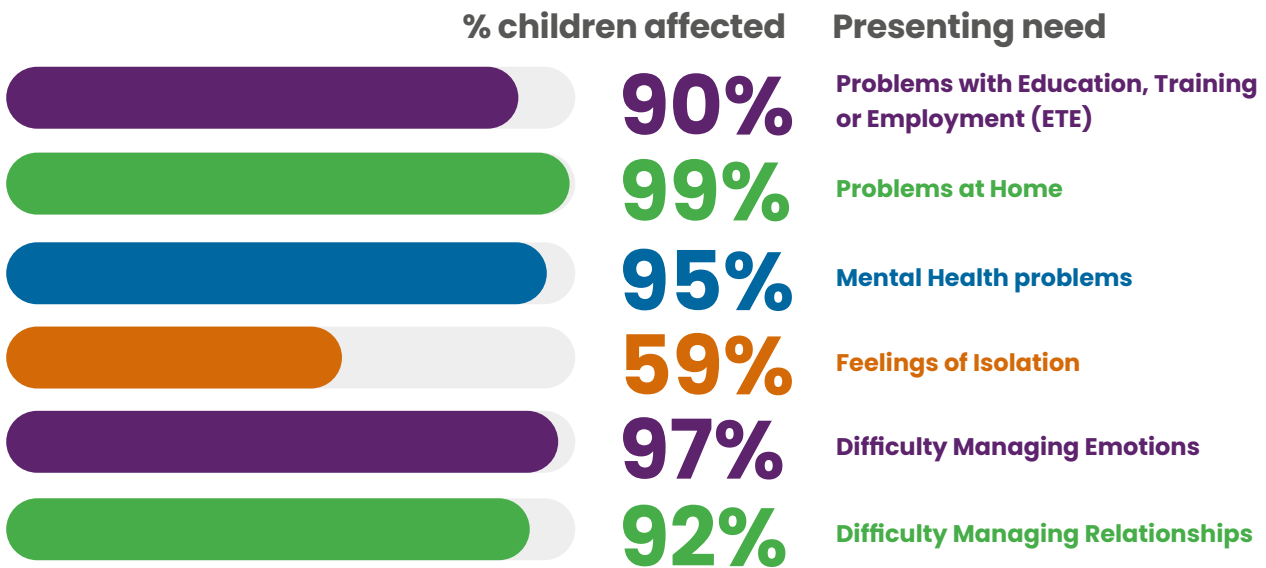


"The relationship is going well, J is a lovely, kind and appreciative person. He is slowly getting chattier"

PRESENTING NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRE

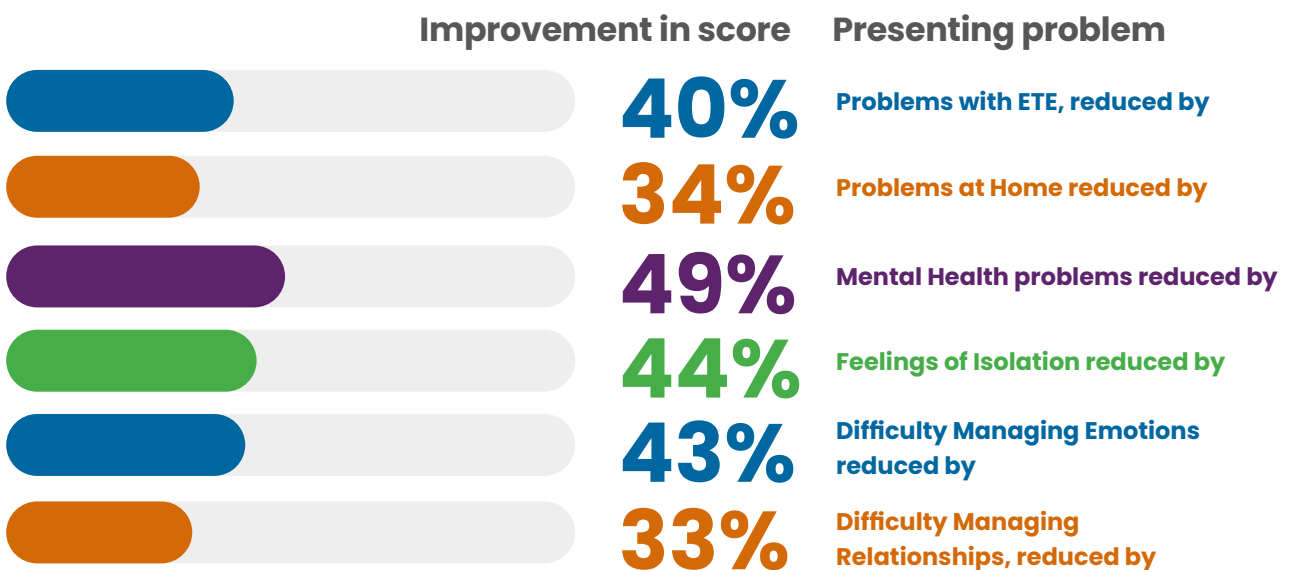
The needs of 77 children were assessed using data gathered from case holders, original referral documents, families, and, when appropriate, the young people themselves. These needs were reassessed annually, or after significant life events affecting the child or their family, and, whenever possible, at the conclusion of the mentoring relationship.

Below, are six of the most pressing issues affecting our young people



Our key outcomes

Below are the % improvements found in our mentees' presenting needs after at least one year of a mentoring relationship.



MENTEE SELF-APPRAISAL

At the start of 2024, before being matched with a mentor, we invited a small group of young people to answer questions about themselves. Each question was carefully designed to assess their resilience and their ability to form positive attachments.

Some of the questions we asked

Do you like to do new things?

How do you deal with new situations?

Do you make your own choices?

Do you have things to look forward?

Do you feel good about yourself?



Our findings showed that within the first year of mentoring, responses to our questions improved by 8-14%

This data highlights how important the length of the mentor-mentee relationship is in achieving positive outcomes. For many mentees who have never experienced a trusting relationship with an adult, building that bond takes time. The longer the relationship, the stronger the connection, and the more mentees can reshape how they see themselves and the world around them.

Our data also shows that mentees recognised the value of their mentors from the outset

90%

of mentees felt their mentor was 'on their side'.
This increased to 100% after 7.5 months.

94%

of mentees felt their mentor was 'good for them'.
This increased to 100% after 7.5 months.



David Howe (2011) Attachment Across the Lifecourse

"...change is always possible. The more significant a relationship with a key other...the more likely it is that the individual's attachment organisation will change. If positive change is to happen, it is most likely to take place in the context of a warm, responsive relationship."



HOW DO OUR MENTORS HELP?



Bruce D. Perry, M.D. Ph.D, Principal of The Neurosequential Model Network

“One of the few things I knew for sure about traumatised children was that they need predictability, routine, a sense of control and stable relationships with supportive people.”

Mentors develop meaningful relationships with their mentees, working together to explore strengths and areas for growth through activities such as:



**Cooking/
baking**



**Dog
walking**



**Music
gigs**



**Going to
the beach**



**Train
journeys**



**Horse
riding**



**Arts
& Crafts**



**Cafes/
Cinema/Zoo**



**Group activity
days with
other mentor/
mentees**



**Playing hide
and seek**



**Theatre
& Museums**



**Trips to other
UK cities**

MENTORS GIVE THEIR MENTEES PRACTICAL SUPPORT LIKE:



Catching a bus to school



Introducing them to after school activities



Help mentees find a hobby or part time job



Advice on healthy eating



Help them integrate into the community



Talk about relationships and sexual health



Explore boundaries



Help them understand their emotions



Help with online safety



Introduce them to new experiences



Give advice on friendships



Advocacy with families and agencies

But it isn't just the mentees who benefit from the relationship. What our mentors say:




"A said that O is a little superstar who does a lot for me' and wonders if O gets as much from the relationship as she does."



"L enjoys B's company and hopes that B is enjoying it too. They are making a recipe book together of B's favourite recipes."

ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR


Our training programme has been endorsed by Open College Network (OCN). A true recognition of the thoroughness and professionalism of the training team. On completion of the training sessions, trainees can now be issued an OCN certificate.

This year we ran our first evening course which allows flexibility to train outside working hours. 

We have tailored our Charity CRM to help us communicate key messages to our funders and supporters 

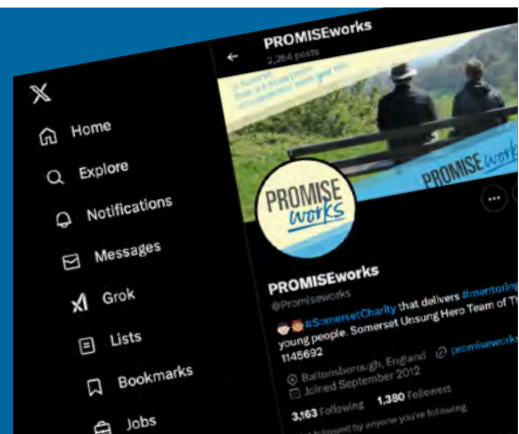
We secured a second Hinkley Point C Community Fund Grant allowing us to continue the growth of mentoring numbers in the Sedgemoor and Somerset Coast areas. 

We have elected a new Trustee. Kama Mckenzie has joined us with extensive experience in both charitable and statutory organisations. 

We have increased our reach into the difficult rural areas of Exmoor, Minehead, Williton and Watchet. 

We continue to signpost the families of our mentees to other agencies as appropriate to access the support they need. 

Social media has become the most crucial channel for volunteer recruitment. Approximately 60% of our mentor applications now come via social media and the website with 40% coming via word of mouth. With the help of PATH Marketing, we have refined our targeting volunteer recruitment reaching out to further education establishments and local businesses. 



OUR EVENTS



Almost 80 mentors and their partners joined us for our Annual Mentor Celebration where we were joined by the High Sheriff of Somerset Mr Rob Beckley QPM, who talked engagingly about the value that volunteers add to Somerset Communities.



Fundraising event hosted by The Newt in Somerset with psychiatrist, psychotherapist and author Dr. Sue Stuart-Smith in conversation with psychotherapist and author Julia Samuel M.B.A.



Our now legendary Christmas Party welcomed nearly 80 mentors and mentees to enjoy party games, silent disco and meet Father Christmas!

SAFEGUARDING

Our top priority is safeguarding both our volunteers and the young people we support. We actively maintain records of any young person identified as a concern by us or other agencies. Additionally, we work closely with families and young people, helping them access the appropriate level of support from statutory services.

8

mentees were supported to report sexual abuse

27

cases were escalated to Children's Social Care because of PROMISEworks involvement

2

young adults now have the ongoing support of adult services because of PROMISEworks involvement

Operation staff have regular one-to-one caseload supervision with the General Manager, Ali Hart. Staff members also have clinical group supervision, facilitated by a trained supervisor from Somerset Counselling Centre (SCC). The general manager also receives external clinical supervision from the same provider.

LOOKING AHEAD

We are committed to:

**Strengthening
our financial
sustainability**

**Expanding and
strengthening our
partnerships**

**Collecting data to assess
our impact and improve
our service**

**Advocating for stronger
collaborations with other mentoring
charities while leveraging our
evidence base to shape policy**

**Collaborating with independent
charities to exchange insights on
best practices and lessons learned**



FINAL THANK YOU

Alongside our army of regular personal donors and fundraisers, we would like to extend sincere thanks to

Acorn Solicitors

Adfal Trust

Barratt Foundation

Basil Samuel Charitable Trust

Bruton Town Council

Burns the Bread, Glastonbury – for both financial support and the use of their storage facilities

Cave Foundation

Charles Dowding Open Day

CHIMP Management Ltd

Co-op Community Trust

Corton Hill Trust (through Somerset Community Foundation)

Cyril & Eve Jumbo Charitable Trust

Enmore Golf Club

Enterprise RAC UK Ltd

Golden Bottle Trust

Hinkley Point C Community Fund (through the Somerset Community Foundation)

Kilver Court Pop-Up Christmas Fair

Leonardo in Yeovil Trainee Fundraising Committee

Lloyds Bank Foundation

My Brain Books

National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund

National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society

Ninesquare Trust

Perivoli Foundation

Prudence Trust

Sherborne Castle Country Fair

Sherborne Classic Cars CIO

Somerset Community Foundation

Somerset Community Volunteers Trust

Taunton BoB Trust

Tesco Community Grants (via Groundwork UK)

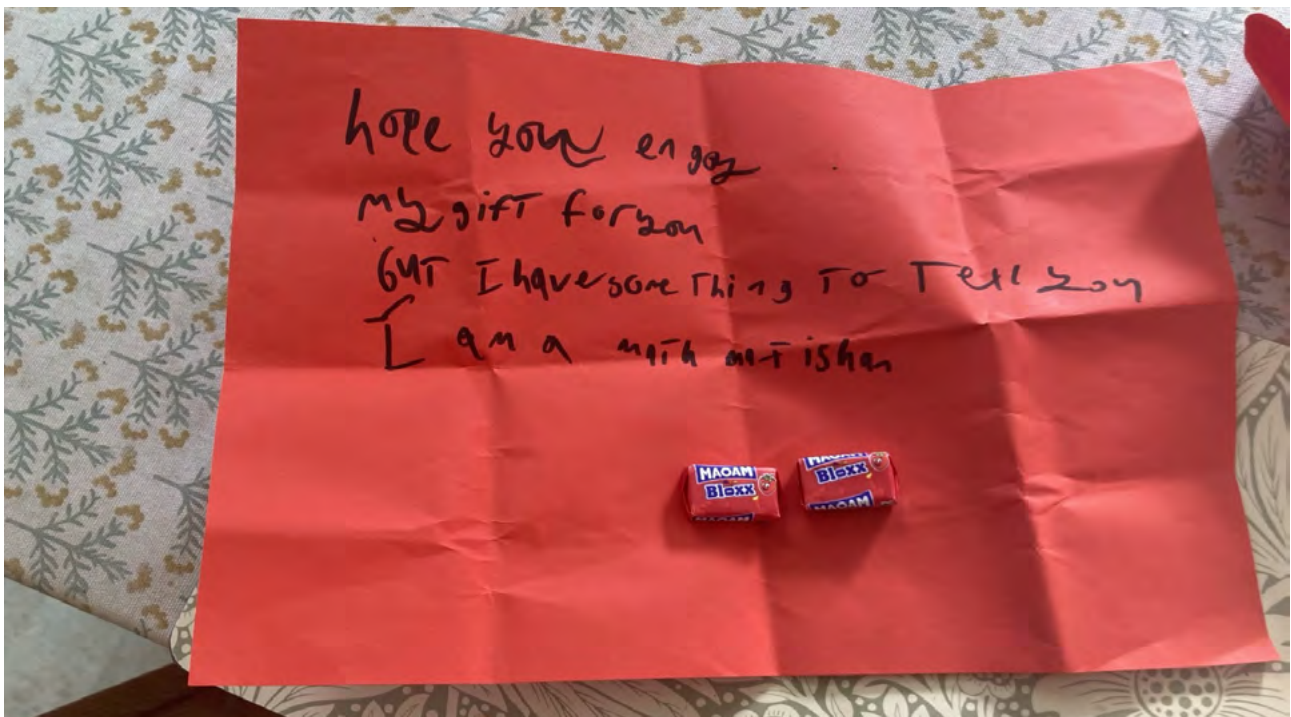
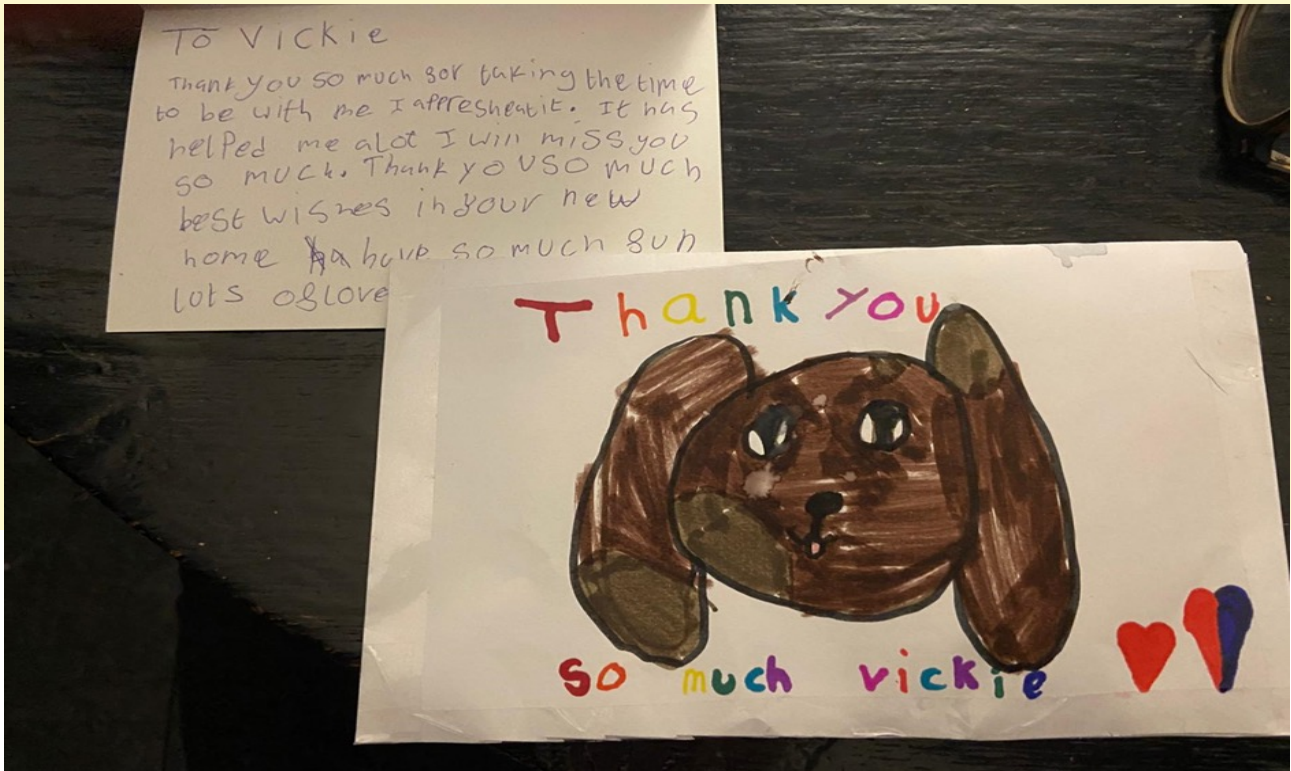
Walpole Dunn Accountants

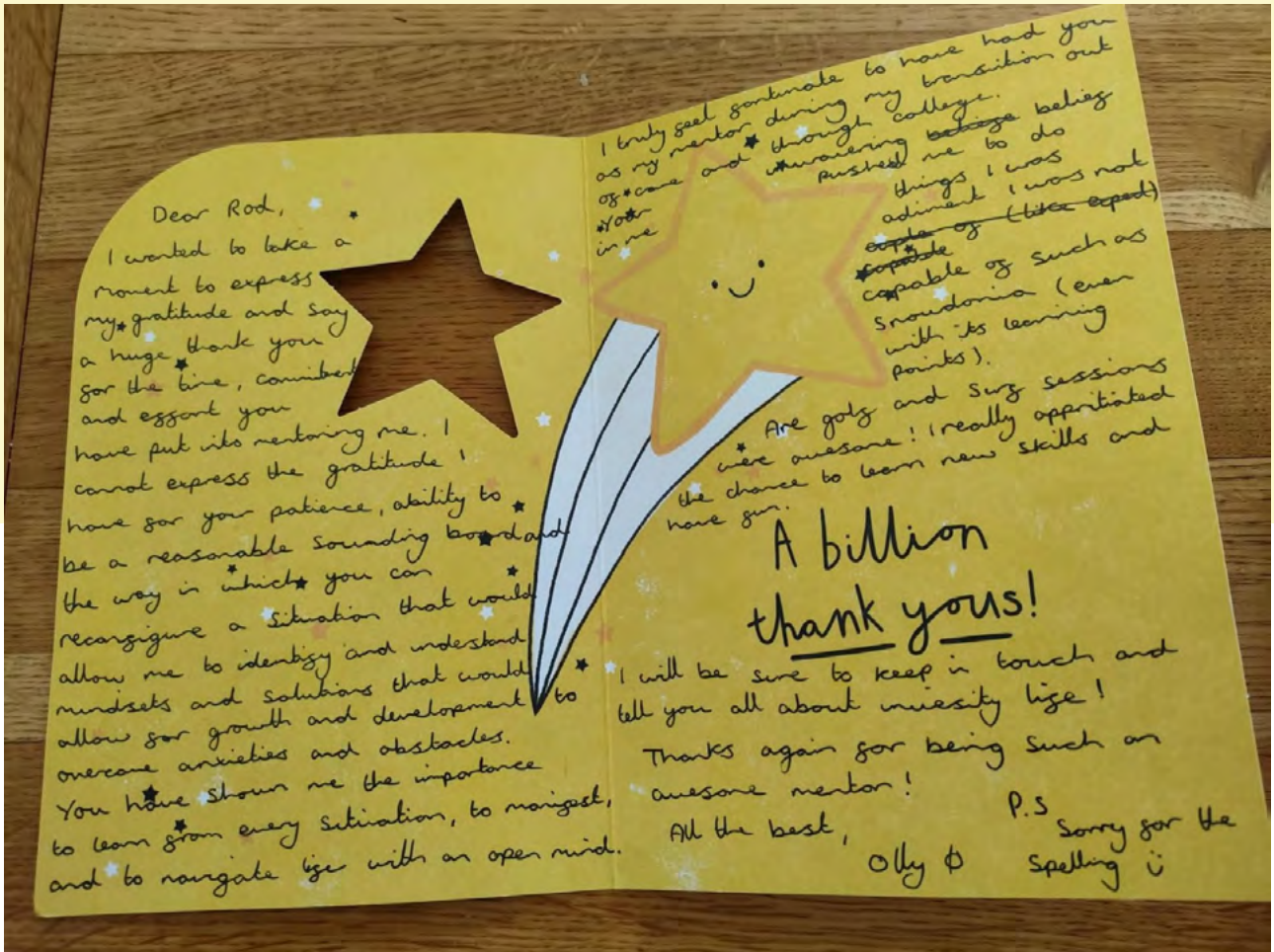
The Worshipful Company of Grocers



“E is a treasure and has turned a corner. There has been a 100% turnaround for E since the start of the mentoring relationship”

THANK YOU CARDS FROM OUR MENTEES





From a fellow professional:



“Thank you for always being at the end of a phone or email, J is very fortunate to have you all”

From Family members:



“Mum feels that S has benefitted from having R as her mentor as it gives her another trusted adult to spend time with. Mum appreciates R’s support”

Text from Nan:



“She is getting on so well with C, thank you so much for introducing her”

THANK YOU

Our deepest thanks go to our dedicated volunteer mentors, whose commitment is the foundation of our service. Their unwavering support transforms the lives and future opportunities of the children and young people we serve in Somerset.

To read our latest Financial Statements and Annual Report [click here](#)

To read our Mentee Theory of Change document [click here](#).

For more information on volunteering visit www.promiseworks.org.uk/volunteer

“Life is best organised as a series of daring adventures from a secure base.”

– John Bowlby,
Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Psychoanalyst and author of Father of Attachment Theory

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