



North West Business Guarantee for Looked-After Children and Young People

We are looking for innovative and socially conscious organisations who will commit to supporting our care leavers with the kind of opportunities the rest of us take for granted, and in so doing **create inclusive, opportunity-rich environments for their own teams.**

We are seeking employer partners in Manchester who will work with us to provide some/all of the following:

Industry specific workshops

– showcase the world of work in your sector to grab the attention of a young person.

Mentoring

– members of your team volunteer as Big Brothers or Big Sisters.

Space

– open up your work space for specific workshops, coaching or skills training so that that care leavers can be inspired by real work environments

Care leaver aware **access-to-work programme**

– delivered into your business to enhance your apprenticeships, work placements, internships or targeted recruitment.

Leaving education workshop

– delivered by your business to school-age young people so that their future choices are clearer.

Leadership skills

– develop the skills and bring awareness into your teams to support young people.

Get practical

– help make the spaces where staff and young people meet welcoming and fit for purpose.

WeMindTheGap and Manchester City Council will act as brokers, facilitators, trainers: whatever is needed to allow your business to be able to provide these opportunities to our care leavers.

Once we have proven this concept – that businesses want to, and commit to, providing these opportunities to our care leavers in Manchester – we hope to roll the Business Guarantee out to other councils in Greater Manchester and the North West.

Why would you take part?

Based on data from 2016, 40% of former care leavers aged 19 - 21 are not in employment, education or training (NEET), compared with 14% of all 19 to 21-year-olds (DfE, 2016). The majority of looked-after young people leave the care system to live independently when they are 18 years old. Compare this to most young people, 20 percent of whom remain with their parents into their late 20's and receive emotional, practical and financial support over long periods after they move out.

Yet, the act of growing up quickly forces young people to develop just the sort of skills that employers say they are looking for. In Oct 2018, when asked about work-related skills, a group of looked-after young people in Manchester said:

I am
self motivated

I am used to
problem solving

I have good
observational skills

I trust my gut,
I am
intuitive

I am a
self-starter
and I am
self-sufficient

I can
challenge,
and I am
tenacious,
especially if I
notice things that
are not right

Without doubt the social impact of supporting those most challenged within our society changes lives and enriches local communities, which is great for the local economy. It's well documented that commercially it makes sense to be an inclusive employer to ensure you bring a rich tapestry of skills and experience to your business. Why not include looked-after children in your inclusivity commitments?

Can your business contribute to our guarantee that all the young people in Manchester will have access to the work opportunities they deserve?

Please contact Sue Schilling on Sue@wemindthegap.org.uk to learn more or to offer specific support that will help our community grow.

