Aspiration Days: A model

A key premise of this transition programme was that we wanted to encourage students to make a strong link between their learning in school and their ambitions. We also wanted to provide a range of experiences which would enable students who did not yet have an ambition to develop their own vision of what they wanted to do in the future. This model has links to other strands of the Stepping Stones programme but it could be delivered as a stand-alone programme. If schools are delivering the taught programme, it is best launched within the Taught Unit: What is success?.

| Type of event | Objectives | Examples: | Role of the Peer Mentors |
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| Launch Event with a motivational speaker | * Address the ‘dip’ that sometimes occurs in Y7 when the initial burst of enthusiasm wears off * Establish a memorable link between achievement in school and success in later life * Secure data from the students with regard to their ambitions and career plans which can be used to plan a programme (questionnaire given to students) | We used:   * The Investigator   Alternatives:   * In-house speakers? * Successful ex-students? | During:  Some peer mentors can hear the speaker  Follow-up Conversation   * Peer mentors able to assess the impact of the speaker (do students remember what was said and do they feel it was helpful?) * Mentees may be more honest and open with mentors than with adults |
| Event exposing students to a wide variety of careers | * Broaden the range of careers which students are considering * Allow students to try out a range of careers to see if their perceptions match the reality | We used:   * KidZania * Metropolitan Police Event at Alexandra Palace   Alternatives:   * Any careers fair? * An in-house careers fair using parents / staff contacts? | Preparation:  Peer mentors look at leaflets or maps and support Y7 to identify what they want to do / experience  During:  Some peer mentors can accompany trip if appropriate  Follow-up:  Peer mentors discuss with mentees what they did and whether the reality matched their expectations. |
| University Visit | * Raise aspirations of students * Expose students to experience of higher education and options available * Inspire and motivate students to achieve | We used:   * LSE   Alternatives:   * Any university? | Preparation:  Discuss their feelings about Higher Education and their expectations  During:  Some peer mentors can accompany trip  Follow-up:  Peer mentors discuss with mentees what they did and whether the reality matched their expectations. |
| Range of Personalised and Targeted Careers Trips | * Give students an insight into their chosen careers * Raise aspirations * Motivate students to achieve | We used:   * Premier League Enterprise Programme   Alternatives:   * Any local business? * School partners? * GLA networks? | Preparation:  Discuss feelings and expectations  During:  Some peer mentors can accompany trip  Follow-up:  Peer mentors discuss with mentees what they did and whether the reality matched their expectations |