

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD1547

Title: **Stepping Stones**

Executive Summary:

The *Stepping Stones* programme is aimed at vulnerable young people who are considered *at risk* during the transition from primary (Year 6) to secondary school (Year 7). It is a “proof of concept”¹ exercise which will ultimately provide resources, in the form of a tool-kit, to all primary and secondary schools in the capital about how best to effectively support this transition for their most vulnerable students.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves expenditure of up to £500,000, subject to annual break clauses and budget process, for the delivery of the *Stepping Stones* programme, which will include:

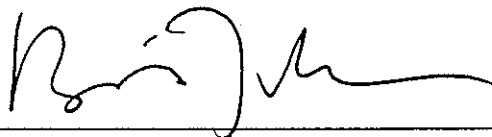
1. The appointment of a youth programme delivery organisation to run and manage the programme.
2. The commissioning of an evaluation of the programme and production of a practical resources tool kit.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision, and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

24.9.2015

¹ Proof of Concept is a realization of a certain method or idea to demonstrate its feasibility

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 For most primary school children the transition to secondary school is an exciting time, they are ready to face the trials and adventures of the next phase of their education. However, the evidence suggests that adjusting to secondary school can be challenging for many vulnerable young people who are not equipped with the necessary skills-set to navigate this change successfully. In fact “primary to secondary transition is now regarded as the crucial time, when learners drop out or are made for life.”²
- 1.2 Young people who were struggling in primary school will continue to struggle throughout secondary school unless support is afforded to them to overcome specific challenges, in this case the challenge of transition. Challenges that are not met at this key developmental stage often have a negative impact on a young person’s outcomes in later stages at school and ultimately in their later life, in key areas like emotional wellbeing and labour market outcomes³. Only 11% of pupils who failed to achieve Level 4 in English overall in 2008 went on to achieve five or more A*-C grades at GCSE, including in English and maths, compared to 72% of pupils who achieve a Level 4 or above.⁴
- 1.3 There is often a natural “transfer dip” in attainment⁵ as children settle into their new educational environment. For the majority, this usually corrects itself but for the most vulnerable this drop in attainment can persist; the evidence from “*the past 20 years shows pupils regressing between the last year of primary and the end of the first year of secondary school.*”⁶ There are currently just over 685,000 pupils in Key Stage 2, in London, with approximately 137,000 in Year 6; at any given time roughly 20% of those pupils can be considered vulnerable or “at risk”⁷.
- 1.4 This transition challenge is exacerbated in London by several London-specific factors including:
- **High rate of inter-borough moves:** for example, in the year ending June 2012 a total of 59% of all internal moves out of local authorities in London were to elsewhere in the London region.⁸ This can be disruptive for young people at the best of times and the unfamiliarity of a new home, friends left behind and a new school will compound the challenges around transition for the most vulnerable.
 - **Literacy levels in London’s primary school children:** Although higher than the national average, in 2013, one in five children in London left primary school without reaching basic levels (level 4) in reading, writing and maths. Age-appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy are a cornerstone of a child’s self-esteem and self-confidence; they are unlikely to succeed in secondary school (or indeed later life) without these skills.
 - **High rates of deprivation,** which exist in almost every borough in London, have an impact on reading and numeracy levels. For example, in 2013, children from low income families were twice as likely to be a struggling reader compared to their peers⁹.

² Primary/secondary transition”, Elaine Williams, 2010, Times Education Supplement

³ Jekielek, S.M., Moore, K.A., Hair, E.C., Scarupa, H.J., (2002) A promising strategy for youth development. Child Trends

⁴ Department for Education data, 2013

⁵ Identified in the 1960s by Murdoch, W.F. (1966) The effect of transfer on the level of children’s adjustment to school, unpublished Med thesis, University of Aberdeen. Cited in Nisbet, J.D. & Entwistle, N.J., The Transition to Secondary Education. London: University of London Press, 1966.

⁶ “Primary/secondary transition”, Elaine Williams, 2010, Times Education Supplement

⁷ Department of Education, Performance Data, March 2015

⁸ Internal Migration by Local, Authorities in England and Wales, Year Ending June 2012

⁹ Reading at the transition – Interim Evidence Brief, (2014) Education Endowment Foundation,

- 1.5 Two of the current preventative programmes for vulnerable young people *at risk*, the *Mayor's Mentoring Programme* and the *Leadership Clubs*, come to a close this year. This next phase of preventative support will build on the success and incorporate the learning, in both development and delivery¹⁰, from these two programmes (and others), that specifically target support to vulnerable young people to improve their outcomes both in and out of school.
- 1.6 A successful transition for a young person would include:
- developing new friendships and improving their self-esteem and confidence
 - settling in so well in school life that they cause no concerns to their parents/carers
 - showing an increasing interest in school and school work
 - getting used to their new routines and school organisation with great ease
 - experiencing curriculum continuity¹¹.
- 1.7 There is, however, currently a lack of evidence about how best to support a vulnerable young person during this crucial transition phase. Given the pan-London role of the GLA it is uniquely placed with its well-established links to London's schools and its strategic partnerships with experts in the field of education, early intervention and evaluation, to fund this "proof of concept" programme which aims to close the evidence gap and create practical resources to enable all of London's schools to increase their capacity to support this cohort at this challenging time.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes:

- 2.1 The main outcomes for this programme are:
- a) 200 young people have improved across three pupil related outcomes:
 - i. Improved attendance – a reduction in the number of absent days during the period of the programme.
 - ii. Improved educational goals – the young person reaching agreed education-related progress milestones (this is not limited to improved grades and will focus on intermediary goals).
 - iii. Improved behaviour at school – measured by a bespoke Strengths and Difficulties survey conducted at entry and exit points to measure the 'distance travelled' in terms of improved behaviour and relationships.
 - b) A robust evidence base is created from this project culminating in a tool-kit that will capture the learning and present 'what works' with this cohort of young people.
 - c) Dissemination of findings & tool-kit:
The evidence from this project in the form of a tool-kit will be disseminated across London to every primary and secondary school interested in supporting the successful transition from primary to secondary. A conference, to disseminate the findings of the programme, may also take place.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 Due consideration has been given to the impact of this project on the intended cohort and the proportionate and relevant responsibilities of the GLA to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 3.2 The cohort for this project will be:
Both boys and girls:
- who are transitioning from Year 6 of primary to Year 7 of secondary school
 - who are at risk of underachievement
 - who meets the additional *at risk* criteria.¹²

¹⁰ See Interim Report of the Mayor's Mentoring Programme – Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion

¹¹ What Makes a Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School?, Institute of Education, 2008

¹² see appendix 1 for complete list of criteria and definitions

- with any of the relevant/appropriate protected characteristics (disability, faith, ethnicity, sexual orientation in particular)
- with special education needs and /or disabilities
- who are corporately parented by the State/Looked After Children

3.3 The London average of pupils with SEN is 18.35% (national average is 17.9%), with Inner London showing significantly higher rates than Outer London, 19.7% and 17.5% respectively. The Annual London Education Report 2014 stated that at a national and London level children eligible for pupil premium, who have a Special Educational Need (SEN), or of some ethnic backgrounds continue to underperform. While London schools do better than others nationally, there are still big gaps in attainment. In 2013 in London, only 15% of disadvantaged children achieved level 5 or above at key stage 2, compared with 28% of others. This 13 percentage point gap has remained consistent over the last three years, whilst overall attainment at the top levels has gone up.

3.4 The likelihood of Looked After Children going on to access training, education or employment is lower than average. In 2011, 74% of London’s Looked After Children were in full time education after leaving year 11. This compares with 93% of non-looked after children across England. 56% of Looked After Children in London come from BME or other ethnic groups and 67% have Special Educational Needs.

3.5 The positive impacts of a successful programme on these children, in the short term, will lead to better performance and attendance at school, and improved control of their emotions resulting in improved relationships both in and out of school. The potentially negative impact is that these children will be labelled as “at risk”, which in itself can be stigmatising but the lasting benefit of the help they will receive will outweigh the temporary and short term labelling of the young person.

4. Other considerations

a) *key risks and issues*: The main risks to the successful delivery of this programme are outlined below:

Table 1: Risks and mitigation

risk	mitigations	likelihood	impact
Working with schools can be challenging given the high level of activity already taking place in schools.	Essential to find a delivery partner who has good relationships with schools/ or assist the delivery partner in building solid relationships with schools <i>before</i> referrals to the programme begin.	3	4
Programme will not succeed without input of schools into the design.	Programme needs to be refined with schools input and to make sure the balance between social and emotional skills and academic progress is maintained and that the project meets the local need.	3	3
A lack of in-school coordination would undermine the successful delivery of this programme.	A (secondary) school based co-ordinator will work with delivery partners, primary schools to ensure good overall coordination.	3	4

The evidence needs to be very robust in order to create a useful and practical tool-kit.	Evaluation will start before the project goes into delivery. The evaluators will be involved in the design and measurement of the programme from the very beginning.	2	3
A change of leadership at City Hall may wish to divert resources elsewhere.	Ensure this project has cross party support so that funding remains intact.	2	4

b) links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

1. This project will help meet the Mayor of London's youth priorities outlined in *Young Londoners – Successful Futures*. These priorities include: reducing child poverty, tackling disadvantage and improving children's life chances; reducing the number of children & young people who are NEET; and increasing youth crime prevention.
2. This programme will also meet the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy objective (4): *to give all Londoners the opportunity to take part in London's economic success, access sustainable employment and progress in their careers.*
3. It will also support the Education Inquiry's commitment to *"increase educational attainment for young people and increase numbers of young Londoners entering higher education/ job market."*
4. MOPAC Strategic Ambitions for London: *Gangs And Serious Youth Violence*, under the prevention strand, identifies the necessity of developing *support mechanisms in schools and particularly support for young people in the transition from primary to secondary school.*

c) Impact assessments (See Section 3) and consultations:

Consultations

Wide-ranging consultations have taken place during the development phase of this project:

- In March 2015 a **Mentoring Round Table** was hosted by the Mayor's Senior Advisor - Mentoring where issues such as models of delivery; volunteer mentors vs paid mentors; target groups; training and evaluation were discussed by a varied group of mentoring experts and youth organisations.
- **MOPAC** – regular discussions with senior level and officer level staff at MOPAC took place to ensure alignment and harmonisation between the two agencies' preventative programmes and related work.
- The Mayor's Senior Advisor - Mentoring met with **over 20 anti-gang and youth-focused organisations** and individuals in the spring to discuss the current and evolving landscape of preventative programmes in London and the gaps in provision, cohort types and any emerging trends relevant to the development of a programme of this nature.
- **Internal consultations** with relevant GLA units– the Health team, Team London and the Social Policy and Diversity team.
- A **Stepping Stones Round Table** was held in July and a dozen experts from the non-profit sector; (youth programme delivery, mentoring and evaluations); London boroughs (through the Association of Directors of Children's Services); head teachers from secondary schools and experts in the field of intervention in primary schools in London helped to shape the design and implementation plans for this project.
- **Expert Advisors:** A smaller sub-group was also convened from the Roundtable of experts to further advise on the key elements of this programme, the delivery of it and the evaluation.

5. Financial Comments

- 5.1 The total cost of this proposal is up to the value of £500,000 and is to span 3 financial-years from 2015-16 to 2017-18. There is no specific budget provision currently earmarked within the GLA's draft spending plans for 2015-16 onwards for this project. However, it is being proposed to re-direct budget resources allocated as part of the 2015-16 budget process, specifically from the following budgets (a direct result of project under-spends and the phasing out of some programmes): 2015-16 Mentoring budget (£317,000), 2016-17 Mentoring budget (£50,000), 2016-17 Supplementary Schools Programme (£40,000) and the 2016-17 Academies Programme (£93,000).
- 5.2 The proposed phasing and redirection of budget provision for this programme from the 2016-17 financial-year will be addressed as part of the 2016-17 budget process and is summarised below:

Stepping Stones Funding Proposal	15-16	16-17	17-18	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	71	286	143	500
Proposed Funding				
2015-16 Mentoring budget	71	236	10	317
2016-17 Mentoring budget	0	50	0	50
2016-17 Supplementary Schools Programme	0	0	40	40
2016-17 Academies Programme	0	0	93	93
Total	71	286	143	500

- 5.3 It should be noted that the 2016-17 budget will be the last to be set by the current Mayor and consequently all contracts and funding agreements entered into that span into 2016-17 and beyond will contain an annual break clause as well as the flexibility to increase or decrease budget provision as required.
- 5.4 Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.

6. Legal Comments

- 6.1 Section 30 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the 'Act') allows the Mayor, acting on behalf of the Authority, and after appropriate consultation, to do anything which the Mayor considers will further the promotion of economic and social development and wealth creation in Greater London. Education is relevant to economic and social development and wealth creation and the GLA's funding of the Stepping Stones programme and the associated initiatives described in this MD fall within the scope of the Mayor's powers.
- 6.2 Section 31(3)(b) of the Act prohibits the GLA from incurring expenditure in providing any educational services which could be provided by a borough council or other public body. However, the Mayor is not prevented from incurring expenditure in co-operating with, facilitating or co-ordinating the activities of a borough council or other public body. The Stepping Stones programme does not constitute the provision of an education service by the GLA but instead has as its aim the creation and provision of resources to schools in London to assist with how best to effectively support the transition from primary to secondary school for vulnerable students. The role of the GLA in respect of schools is a co-operative and facilitative one and is, therefore, permitted under the Act.

- 6.3 Any works or services required must be procured by Transport for London Procurement who will determine the detail of the procurement strategy to be adopted in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code.

Officers must ensure that appropriate contract documentation is put in place and executed by the successful bidder(s) and the GLA before the commencement of the works or services.

- 6.4 Where any payments are to be made to third parties as grant funding, the GLA must ensure that the funding is distributed fairly, transparently, and in accordance with the GLA's equalities obligations. The GLA must also demonstrate value for money in the allocation of the funding and relevant funding agreements should be put in place between the GLA and the recipient before any payment is made.
- 6.5 The Mayor may, under section 38 of the Act, delegate the exercise of the GLA's functions to the Director of Communities and Intelligence as proposed.

7. Investment & Performance Board

This programme was approved in principle by the Investment & Performance Board on August 18th, 2015.

8. Planned delivery approach and next steps

8.1 Procurement:

There are two strands of procurement in order to secure the resources required for this programme and both strands will be procured through an open and competitive process in line with GLA procurement requirements and managed by the Education and Youth team.

I. Evaluation and Tool-kit:

It is proposed that the programme evaluation will be contracted to begin at the same time as the project in order to capture the data which will inform the toolkit. It is essential that the evaluation is as robust as possible so that the tool-kit contains the best possible advice, guidance and practical help for schools.

II. In-school programme delivery:

A grant will be awarded in the autumn for this strand of the programme and an experienced youth programme delivery organisation will be secured to run and manage the in-school programme and the summer activities.

8.2 Programme Design

It is imperative that the schools involved are able to input into the design, i.e. that the programme reflects the local situation in their school whilst at the same time remaining comparable enough to support the creation of a tool-kit for dissemination purposes. (See Appendix 1 for a list of programme components, these will be further refined and tailored by the schools, evaluators and delivery partners).

8.3 Delivery:

The Stepping Stones programme will be delivered in school, by a recognised expert organisation, co-designed with input from the identified participating schools, the programme evaluators and the GLA development team.

There will be one intake of participants for 15 months; the last term of primary school and the whole first year of secondary school (April 2016 – July 2017).

The pupils will participate in a variety of activities (depending on their needs) to support their progress. These activities– designed to improve their social and emotional skills and their academic performance- will include¹³:

- work and activities on social and emotional skills building
- one-to-one academic tutoring (numeracy, literacy and any other subject requiring support)
- Group work on confidence building, improving communication skills, conflict resolution, etc.
- Taught lessons/role playing on how to make the right choices/how to say “no”
- Peer-to-peer mentoring by Year 9 and/or Year 10
- Close observation and monitoring through adult mentoring and/or coaching will complement the peer-to-peer mentoring.

Three to four secondary schools will be involved – with related feeder schools (between one and five) supplying the young participants.¹⁴

In-school Programme Coordinator:

Each secondary school involved in this programme will commit the time of a senior member of staff (c.50%FTE¹⁵) to co-ordinate this project in their school. This co-ordination role is essential to the successful delivery and will work alongside the delivery partners and evaluators. Approximately 50-75 children in each participating primary-secondary school pairing will be enrolled onto the programme. The attrition rate is expected to be low but the period between primary and secondary school is a natural time for a family to move out of the borough/change schools etc.

Activity	Timeline
Any subsequent approvals i.e. MD	September 2015
Announcement	Sept 2015
Procurement of contract	Sept-Dec 2015
Grant agreement award	Sept-Dec 2015
Delivery Start Date	Jan 2016
Final evaluation start and finish (external)	Sept 2015 – July 2017
Delivery End Date	Sept 2017
Project Closure	Oct-Dec 2017

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1:

- A. Eligibility Criteria
- B. Categories of Social Emotional Skills and
- C. Programme Components

¹³ See Appendix 1:C

¹⁴ School selection will be based on level of deprivation in the borough, number of pupils on FSM and number of Looked After Children

¹⁵ The GLA will fund 25% and the participating school 25%

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form –NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Siobhán McKenna, Senior Policy Officer – Social Policy And Diversity Team has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following have been consulted on the final decision.

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Amanda Coyle, Assistant Director, Heath and Communities has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Jeff Jacobs, Director, Communities and Intelligence has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor’s plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Ray Lewis, Mayor’s Senior Advisor- Mentoring has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:


The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature



Date

21.9.15

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature



Date

23.09.2015

Appendix 1:

A: Eligibility Criteria

Participants will be expected to meet a minimum of **two** of these criteria

Gender:	Male or female
Age range:	10 to 13 (year 6 and year 7)
Ethnicity:	all backgrounds
Disability:	All (inc SEND)
Geography:	participants must attend one of the participating primary schools
At risk variables	<u>Low attainment</u> - based on their teacher's assessment of their potential
	<u>Poor attendance</u> - missed a number of days in the last term/academic year
	<u>Poor behaviour</u> - based on their school's assessment
	<u>Cautions</u> - Received one or more cautions in the last 12 months
	<u>Free School Meals</u> – entitled to FSM
	<u>Older sibling</u> with history of poor behaviour, contact with the police/justice system, gang/criminal involvement.

B. Categories of Social and Emotional Skills:

The *Stepping Stones* project will support a cohort of vulnerable young people to develop and build on a set of defined social and emotion skills. A review¹⁶ of current literature and the British Cohort Study (1970) for the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) in March 2015 establishes five broad groupings of social and emotional skills in children that are associated with, and impact on, social, emotional and labour market outcomes in adult life. These include:

- **Self-perceptions and self-awareness.** These relate to a child's knowledge and perception of themselves and their value, their confidence in their current abilities and a belief in their efficacy in future tasks.
- **Motivation.** This can be characterised as the reasons for which individuals strive towards goals. It includes the belief that effort leads to achievement, distinguishes whether goals are set by other people or by oneself, and the value that is attached to the goal in question, aspiration and ambition.
- **Self-control and self-regulation.** These refer to how children manage and express emotions, and the extent to which they overcome short-term impulsivity in order to prioritise higher pursuits within many domains of adult life, including mental health, life satisfaction and wellbeing, qualifications, income and labour market outcomes, measures of physical health, obesity, smoking, crime and mortality
- **Social skills.** These describe a child's ability and tendency to interact with others, forge and maintain relationships, and avoid socially unacceptable responses. They cover communication, empathy, kindness, sharing and cooperativeness. They are absent when a child is solitary, shy or withdrawn.
- **Resilience and Coping** these two skills are demonstrated when an individual is able to adapt positively and purposefully in the face of stress and other difficult circumstances. Resilience is a development process more than a characteristic – it is the ability to summon strength when needed and reduce the burned of adversity on the individual.

¹⁶ **Social and emotional skills in childhood and their long-term effects on adult life**, A review for the Early Intervention Foundation by Alissa Goodman, Heather Joshi, Bilal Nasim and Claire Tyler, March 2015

C. Programme Design

STEPPING STONES PROGRAMME COMPONENTS	
<i>Stage</i>	<i>Activities</i>
Engagement of a young person:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Referrals of young people deemed <i>at risk</i> will come through the school, parents/carers or key worker(s) and possibly self-referral. – Eligibility criteria checked and met.
Needs Assessment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – An assessment of needs. – Identification of barriers to progress.
Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A bespoke action plan will be drafted with the young person and will include the best way to motivate the young person to improve their engagement with education, their behaviour and their decision-making processes.
Skills Development Activities (<i>can include but are not limited to</i>):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potentially includes focused work and activities on social and emotional skills in order to improve a young person's outcomes. – Close observation and monitoring through adult mentoring and/or coaching. – Peer-to-peer mentoring by Year 9/10 to complement the adult/coaching mentoring (successful mentors will receive Team London certificates). – Skills activities include one-to-one (or small group) academic tutoring (numeracy and literacy), confidence building, improving communication skills. – Taught lessons/role playing on how to make the right choices/how to say "no".
Career Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Every young Londoner should have access to impartial, independent and personalised careers education, information, advice and face-to-face guidance in their local community¹⁷. – As students transition from Key Stage 2 through to Key Stage 3 they may have a limited and un-informed view of their career options and may make poor decisions based on assumptions or ignorance or a poverty of ambition/lack of aspirations¹⁸. – Essentially a child is never too young to be thinking about what they "want to be when they grow up"; inspiring talks, meetings, and sessions will be available to these young people to see where the progress they are making can take them.
Summer Activities	<p>Summer engagement activities that are educational, fun (e.g. London Curriculum's River Explorer Trail) and experiential (work experience, a-day-in-the-life) will ensure engagement is maintained over the summer break.</p>
Continuous support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A crucial and unique element of this programme is that it will support the young people in the last term of primary school, through the summer holidays and all through the first year of secondary school.

¹⁷ London Ambitions – Career Offer: GLA & London Councils, 2015

¹⁸ *From School to Work in London*, Partnership for Young London, 2015

