

Report – Near Peer Coaches

„It made me believe that other people are there to help and they are here to listen.“

Abstract

This report was conducted to explore the feedback data from pupils who attended the Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring programme, ran by the company Elevate. The programme was delivered to pupils from nine different high schools across the area of south Wales by a professional coach. The pupils were selected by the head teacher to become peer coaches for younger pupils. The participants attended two full days of training (except Cardiff High school, they attended only one day). After the training, the peer coaches engaged in coaching practise with younger pupils who experienced friendship issues, low-level behaviour problems or low-level anxiety.

A qualitative questionnaire was distributed to the coaches at the end of the Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring Programme. A thematic network analyses revealed a variety of benefits the pupils reported in their feedback forms. Apart from gaining more skills like listening, questioning and communication skills, the pupils more empowered to help others, they reported gaining more confidence and felt they can cope better with stress. Some of them reported better self-awareness and increased ability to deal with different situations and people. These and other benefits are further described in the results section below.

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1. Introduction

The importance of wellbeing in educational settings is a widely discussed topic between teachers, psychologists, counsellors, researchers, and other related professionals. Brady (2011) suggests that self-esteem is the central role in psychological well-being. In adolescent population, The World Health Organization's "Preventing Suicide: A Resource for Teachers and Other School Staff" (2000) states that high self-esteem protects adolescents from mental distress and enables them to cope with difficult life situations (as cited in Hosogi et. al., 2012).

Coaching interventions have become increasingly popular in schools for both staff and student development (Dorrington & van Nieuwerburgh, 2015). Green, Grant and Rynsaardt (2007) state that many high school-based interventions are aimed to enhance academic performance, delivering study skills programmes, but it has quite a limited focus on overall health and wellbeing of students. The authors found that life coaching in high school student sample was associated with significant increases in levels of cognitive hardiness and hope and significant decreases in levels of depression.

Near Peer Coaching and coaching interventions in general have shown to be highly effective in many different areas. Increased goal attainment, reduced stress, enhanced wellbeing, and resilience are only some of those (Knight & van Nieuwerburgh, 2012). According to the study of Tong and van Nieuwerburgh (2013), coaching can be helpful not only for the coach but also for the coachee (the person being coached) and therefore, both individuals can benefit. By using different techniques, both parties can improve their ability to deal with difficult situations, they can learn how to reflect (Grant, 2014), set goals, reduce stress, improve their engagement (Xu, Yu, Chen & Ji, 2019), and strengthen their peer-to-peer relationships.

Elevate was appointed to deliver the Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring programme to the listed schools. The pupils had the chance to learn and practise different coaching techniques over the duration of one day, followed by three months of weekly

coaching practise. This qualitative report investigates the benefits of this coaching training and practise on the coaches.

2. Methods

Pupils aged between 16 and 18 attended the Near Peer Coaching training in their own school environment. They were selected by the headteacher based on their overall good performance. On the days of the training, the pupils were off timetable.

During the Near Peer Coaching training, they first learnt about coaching in general to gain a better understanding of what does it mean to be a coach and what kind of responsibilities this role involves. They discussed this topic first amongst themselves and then with the professional coach in order to address different expectations and questions about the programme.

2.1 Training

The training itself included different interactive workshops based on the core elements of coaching: rapport building, listening skills, questioning skills, and building trust. In the first part of the training, the pupils learnt about five different levels of listening (interrupting, hijacking, advising, attentive and active listening), followed by techniques about summarising, clarifying, and reflecting. They practised these skills in groups of four and reflected upon the experience together with the professional coach.

Other important skill the pupils learnt about was self-awareness and self-reflection. The group had 5 minutes to reflect upon what they noticed about themselves during their practise. They learnt techniques how to effectively reflect before, during and after coaching session, based on the article of Clutterbuck and Murphy (2018).

The second part of the training included workshops based on questioning techniques and TGROW model. The pupils learnt about different types of questions (open, closed, leading, probing, judgemental, hypothetical, and reflective) and they practised using these questions between themselves. Then, they learnt about a specific coaching technique

called GROW which gave the students a structure which would help them during their coaching sessions.

Lastly, the pupils received more information about the coaching process from the beginning till the end. They learnt how to explain the coaching relationship to their coachee, how to set the rules and boundaries and address different expectations. They also discussed the common issues they might encounter during their coaching practise. There was enough space for questions to make sure all participants understood the role of a coach and the use of all the different techniques they learnt.

The pupils practised everything throughout the whole training. By the end of the training, they had another round of reciprocal coaching sessions lasting 20 minutes each with 5 minutes of learning feedback.

2.2 Qualitative Measures

To gain a better understanding on how this coaching training and practise helped the trained peer coaches, a qualitative questionnaire was administered at the end of the coaching practise (see appendices 1-10). The analysed questions are summarised below:

- *“What comments do you have about the trainers?”*
- *“What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?”*
- *“How has the training helped you gain a better understanding about the role of a near peer coach/mentor?”*
- *“If the coaching training helped you in your own personal development, how did it help?”*
- *“Any other comments about the training that could make it more useful?”*

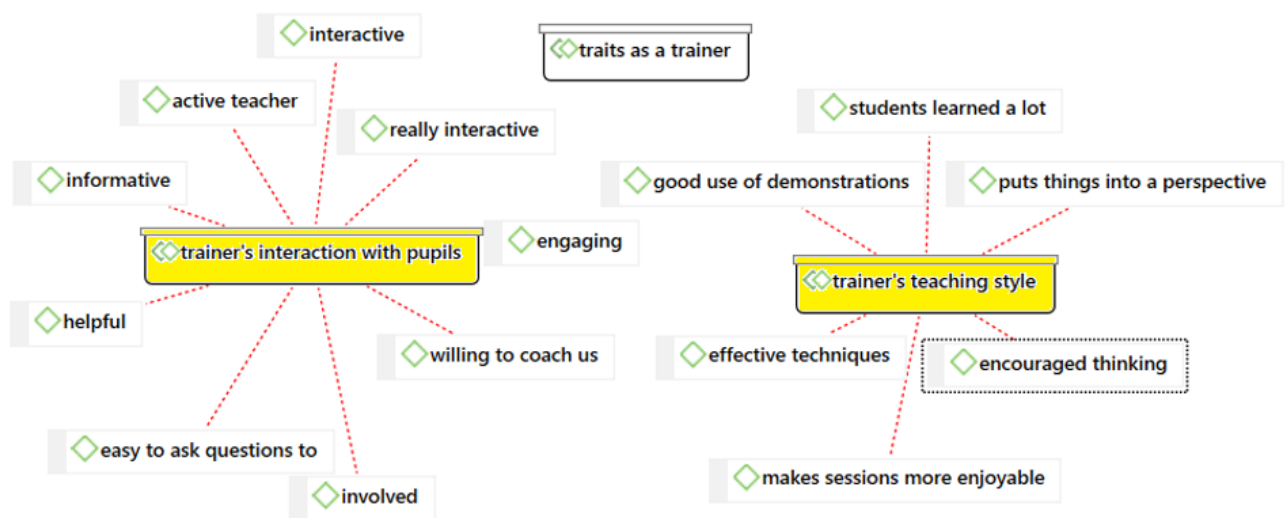
3. Results

Thematic analysis was performed to identify the key benefits of the Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring Programme for the coaches. Data were first organised and typed into one coherent document for each school separately (see appendices 1-9). Following this stage, the qualitative data from each school were merged, re-read several times according to the suggestions of Bogdan and Biklen (2007) and then grouped into basic themes and labelled

with code words in ATLAS for each analysed question. Broader code groups were created and organised into thematic networks. The results are displayed below.

3.1 Trainer

Figure 1 – Thematic network – trainer



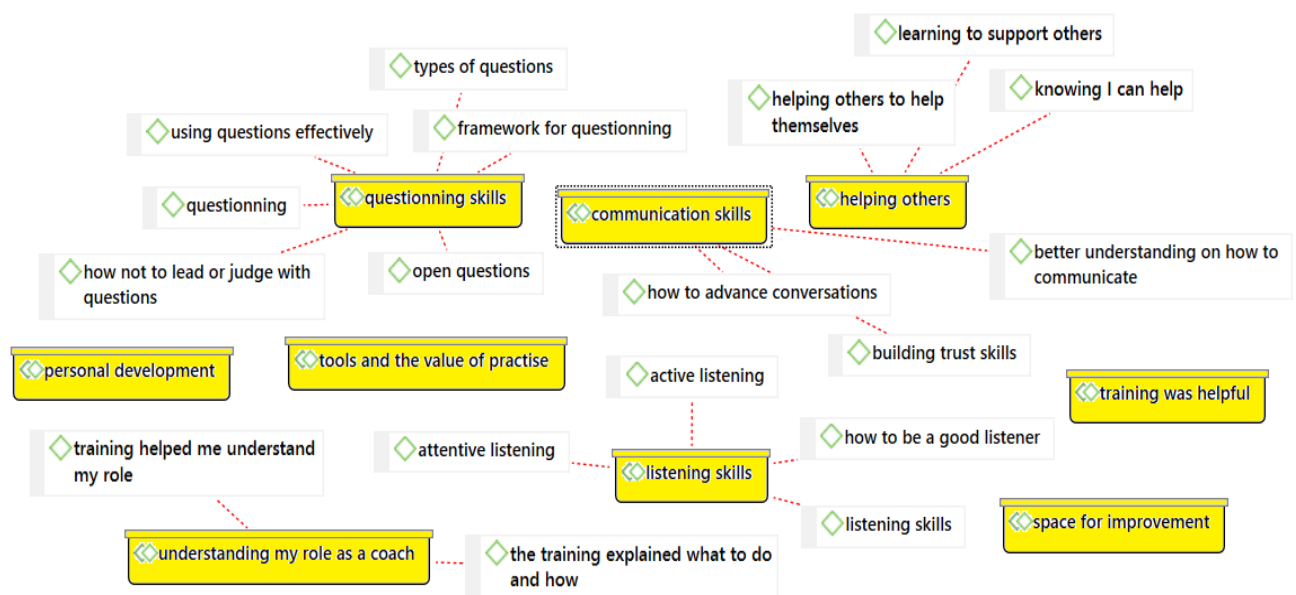
The pupils reported good interaction with the trainer. Many of them thought he made the sessions **engaging** (“Engaging, effective techniques, helpful, patient, good at maintaining engagement.”) and **helpful** (“Really helpful, kind, makes me feel like I am very prepared.”). Some pupils reported that the trainer was **encouraging** (“Kind, calm but also engaging, encouraging and not boring”), they found the sessions **enjoyable** (“Very enthusiastic, made the session enjoyable and interesting”) and **interactive** (“Really interactive, explained everything really well”).

It was reported that the trainer used **effective techniques** (“The trainer used several different training techniques to ensure that everyone understands the content whilst keeping the lesson engaging Learning styles were amazing.”) and **demonstrations** („Used games in order to help us understand easily”). Pupils were „... able to take away a lot from the sessions.” and also commented that the trainer was **fun** („Probably one of the funniest and useful teachers“), a **good teacher** („The way the lessons were taught and the way he went about teaching was amazing“), **enthusiastic** (“Very enthusiastic and involved“), **good at**

explaining (“Really good at explaining each skill, very professional”), **understanding** (“Very understanding and clear”), **non-judgemental** (“Very kind and non-judgemental which made the experience fun and comfortable”), **knowledgeable** (“Very open-minded and kind, understanding and very knowledgeable”) and **gave good advice** (“Gave good advice, active teacher”).

3.2 Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring Programme feedback

Figure 2 – Thematic network - Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring Programme feedback



Nine different themes were identified from the data that related to the coaching and mentoring programme. Three of them related to the skills the pupils attained throughout the training: **questioning, listening and communication skills**. Other themes related to the **tools** they learnt, the value of **practise**, overall **helpfulness of the training** and **understanding the role of a coach**. In the remaining three themes, the pupils suggested some tips on **how to improve the training** in the future, they reported **increased ability to help others** and stated that the coaching and mentoring training helped them with aspects form their **personal development**. All main themes are detailed below.

3.2.1 Questioning skills

In terms of questioning skills, the pupils valued learning how to use **open questions** (*“I found the open question most valuable; I will apply it when I am with the young person.”*), how **not to lead or judge** with questions (*„How to listen and not to lead or judge with questions“*), how to **use questions effectively** (*„Learnt how to ask appropriate questions“*), what **types of questions** to use (*„I learned about the types of questions I need to be asking to encourage the coachee.”*) and what **framework** to use (*„I valued the framework for questioning... Learnt how to alter the way questions are asked... How to structure questions ... How to word the questions to help shaping the session.“*). Many pupils reported an **improvement in their questioning skills** (*„Very much taught me how to approach issues and ask questions especially to a young audience ... asking open questions, feel more confident with speaking ... I was able to use questions effectively ... I learned the types of questions to ask and not to ask ... Helped me be more thoughtful asking questions“*).

3.2.2 Listening skills

Pupils reported they appreciated learning and practising **attentive and active listening** (*„I found attentive listening very helpful ... Attentive listening can help us realise the problems within the coachee’s world ... valued how to get to the root of the problem through active listening ... Attentive and active listening, I will apply it to my conversations within close relationships to help them make informed choices.“*). Some of the pupils reported that they learnt **how to be a good listener** (*„It helped me to become a better listener ... I understand more about how to be a good listener.“*) and developed their **listening skills** (*„It helped me develop my listening skills ... Listening, meant so much more than you first think, I will apply it in my sessions ... made me realise there are multiple ways of listening ... The training has taught me relevant listening skills and how to adapt, react and respond to a conversation ... Completely changed my thought, more listening than lead.“*).

3.2.3 Communication skills

According to communication skills, pupils reported they practised **building trust skills** („Helping to build trust and understand the importance of supporting others ... Most valuable aspect was how to create an environment where the coachee will find the ability to be comfortable and open ... made me realised there are multiple ways of listening and how you can comfortably make them open up ... No specific advice/technique was given about building trust, it came in practise.“).

The pupils also reported a **better understanding on how to communicate** („Helped me communicate with peers ... It pushed me out of my comfort zone, and I met new people and improved my communication ... The training has taught me relevant listening skills and how to adapt, react and respond to a conversation ... It gave me a better understanding on how to communicate and learn about what they are experiencing.“) and valued **learning how to advance their own conversations** („It helped me with my conversational flow ... It's helped me be emotionally present and not lead people's thinking ... I think it makes my conversations more honest and meaningful ... Better at conversations in general ... Helped me discuss in a professional manner.“)

3.2.4 Tools and the value of practise

Pupils reported they valued learning about different coaching **tools**. They mentioned **TGROW** and the **Wheel of life** being very useful („TGROW is easy to understand and helps structure the conversation, mind map was useful in identifying the areas to focus on ... I valued the framework for questioning and I will use the TGROW structure to get the conversation back on track and add value where I can... valued the wheel of different assets of life.“).

The pupils also reported they appreciated the coaching **practise** they had throughout the training („The practise in between helped build the skills...The tasks we have done have increasingly developed my peer coaching skills“). They especially mentioned **goal setting skills** („How to help achieving goals in a realistic way... Yes, I can get to a solution/goal... Helped to figure out ways how to achieve goals.“), **setting boundaries** skills („Helped me understand

*boundaries... How to be there for someone without overstepping boundaries.”) and skills **how to structure a coaching session** („Knowing when to push and when to sit back ... Structured conversation as it helps the time flow effectively.”)*

Pupils also mentioned **gaining insight** („Gave me a good insight as I could practise with others.”) and **undersanding the techniques better** through practise (*Through doing exercises and playing games to help but the techniques into practise.”*). Lastly, the pupils reported an increase in developing **problem solving skills** („Yes, I have a better understanding how to approach problems... It helped me a lot by understanding different views and how to work around different clients ... It helped me be the best I can at being able to deal with certain situations.”).

3.2.5 Helping others

Another important theme found in the data was about pupils gaining the strenght to **support others** („I now know how to address and help someone to solve problems for themselves ... I know how to support people in different ways and how to direct them to a goal”) and **help others to help themselves** („They may be facing problems and my job is not to try and fix it for them but it’s to guide them to fix it themselves ... Its helped me realise that I don’t always have to know the answer, instead I am just there to help them find it for themselves ... That we are helping them to help themselves and that we only ask open questions so they will get to the root of the issue.”).

3.2.6 Personal Development

Pupils reported the coaching and mentoring programme helped them with their **personal development**, e.g. „It helped me to become a **better listener**.”. Many pupils said they felt **more confident** after the training („Helped me feel more confident in myself ... Helped me gain confidence in my ability to advice ... Feel more confident with speaking ... More confidence with communicating with other people ... It helped me to put myself into new situations and feel more confident talking to others ... Gained confidence and trust within myself Confidence increase ... Improved my confidence in talking to coachees as well as

*knowing and relating to how they also find it difficult to open up... I feel confident after the course therefore I enjoyed it.”). Pupils further reported they found some useful techniques to **cope with stress** better („I valued the techniques to destress ... How to deal with stress better and overcome it ... How to help stress levels.”).*

Talking about their own problems **helped the pupils to open up** a little bit more („Talking about my problems with other people in controlled environment, open up more in the future... Happy to apply in everyday life, talking to others.”), gain a **more positive outlook** („Helped me realise that I shouldn’t view everything negatively... It made me believe that other people are there to help and they are here to listen.”) and a **better understanding of themselves** („ I feel like I understand myself better and know how to approach many different situations ... Helped me understand my mind as well.”).

Pupils also reported some development in **self-awareness** („It helped me with self-awareness by teaching us how to reflect ... I valued self-awareness and reflections.”). One pupil reported that „I feel **more empathy**.” by the end of the training and many other pupils said they will use what they learnt in the training in their **day to day life** („Attentive and active listening, I will apply it to my conversations within close relationships to help them make informed choices ... I found the difference between open and closed questions very valuable and will apply it to everyday conversations ... I hope to apply it into everyday life and to help others.”).

3.2.7 Understanding my role as a coach

Another theme that came out from the data was the understanding of the role as a coach. Pupils reported a good **understanding of the role** („I understand what my role will be and how to help ... It gave me insight into the role of a near peer coach ... I understand my role ... Confidence in my role ... Helped me to understand what comes under the role and what I should pass on to someone else, helped me to understand what my role is in regard to my client.”).

3.2.8 Training was helpful

The pupils evaluated the usefulness of the coaching and mentoring training. Many of them stated that the **training was helpful** (*“Helped me view my own issues from an outsider view ... Helped me with trusting people ... It has made me more comfortable in talking to people, listening and helping them ... It helped me clarify my problems ... It helped me think about my own goals ... Helped me reflect on my problems, helped me realise that I can have smaller action steps towards achieving a greater goal.”*). The pupils also valued the **course content** and the training in general (*“The content was very interesting and fun, it included practising in groups for example which made me learn physically ... I liked the experience, very informative.”*).

3.2.9 Space for improvement

Lastly, the pupils listed some points for improvement. They felt that it would be good to *„Have **another session** later in the year to follow up and consolidate.“*. They would appreciate *„Maybe **more time** (not sure if this is due to school hours) to avoid worrying about time.“*. And recommended to *„Make it **longer** to cover more aspects.“*.

Pupils also felt that it *„Would be helpful to spend slightly **more time on setting goals/ending sessions**.“*. They would appreciate *„**More physical resources** ... and ... **More practical tasks**, however there was a good balance between visual and practical tasks.“*. The pupils also thought that *„Some activities relied on a large group of participants, therefore activities as a whole group might be better for **smaller groups**.“* And finally, in terms of organisation, the pupils suggested to *„Maybe **do it (training) on a day where there aren't many lessons** going on.“*.

4. Discussion

This report explored the feedback data the pupils produced at the end of their Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring Programme. Two thematic networks were created, one revealing the main themes for trainer evaluation and a second one revealing the benefits pupils described after attending the programme. In terms of the trainer, the pupils reported that he was engaging, helpful, encouraging, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, understanding, fun and non-judgemental. He gave good advice, used effective techniques and demonstrations and was very interactive with the class. One student said that the trainer was *“Very helpful, kind, makes me feel like I am very prepared.”* and another one said *“Really good at explaining each skill, very professional “.*

In terms of the benefits reported by the pupils, the thematic analysis revealed nine themes. Three of these themes reflected the skills the pupils learnt throughout the course. Specifically, those were listening skills, questioning skills and communication skills. According to Eriksen, Collins, Finocchio and Oakley (2020), peer coaching develops pupils’ ability to listen and help each other. Our data support this claim. Pupils reported e.g.: *“The training has taught me relevant listening skills and how to adapt, react and respond to a conversation “and „It helped me to become a better listener. “* Another pupil mentioned *„I now know how to address and help someone to solve problems for themselves.“.*

In terms of questioning skills, the pupils valued learning *„How to listen and not to lead or judge with questions“* and *„Asking open questions, feel more confident with speaking“.* One pupil said: *„I found the difference between open and closed questions very valuable and will apply it to everyday conversations“.* According to Jacobs and Renandya (2021), supporting students in asking more and better questions promotes deeper engagement and learning. Therefore, engaging in coaching practise could potentially also help the pupils academically. Moore, Westwater-Wood and Kerry (2016) actually state in their research that peer coaching has the potential to increase academic achievement.

Another important theme that emerged was about personal development. The pupils reported they felt more confident in the end of the training, they understood more about

themselves and were able to cope better with stress: „Gained confidence and trust within myself“; „It helped me with self-awareness by teaching us how to reflect“ and „How to deal with stress better and overcome it.“. This is very important as self-awareness, confidence and the ability to deal with stress are the core parts of pupils’ wellbeing (Brady, 2011).

There were also many other benefits reported by the students. The pupils appreciated the coaching practise as it helped them develop goal setting and problem solving skills: „Helped to figure out ways how to achieve goals.“ and „Yes, I have a better understanding how to approach problems.“ And they learnt how to use different coaching tools - TGROW and the Wheel of life.

Last three themes described further helpfulness of the course, understanding the role of a coach and suggestions for improvement. The pupils mentioned that the training: „Helped me with trusting people“; „Helped me view my own issues from an outsider view“ and „It has made me more comfortable in talking to people, listening and helping them.“. They understood their role: „I understand what my role will be and how to help.“ and pointed out it would be good to:

- „Have another session later in the year to follow up and consolidate.“
- „Maybe more time (not sure if this is due to school hours) to avoid worrying about time.“
- „...more time on setting goals/ending sessions.“
- „More physical resources ... “
- „More practical tasks, however there was a good balance between visual and practical tasks.“
- „Some activities relied on a large group of participants, therefore activities as a whole group might be better for smaller groups.“
- „Maybe do it (training) on a day where there aren’t many lessons going on.“

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the feedback from pupils revealed there are many benefits based on attending the Near Peer Coaching and Mentoring Programme. Even though pupils spent only one- or two-days learning about the coaching techniques, it seems enough for obtaining important skills and other benefits. The training inspired pupils to help each other and become more confident. They felt empowered to problem solve, to ask questions and communicate with others. One student mentioned that: *„It made me believe that other people are there to help and they are here to listen. “*

There is a need for more research in the effectiveness of peer coaching programmes, however it seems that peer coaching could be an effective, affordable and accessible way of promoting pupils' wellbeing, connectedness and engagement.

7. References

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8. Appendices

8.1. Appendix 1: Qualitative data – Cardiff High School 2021

What comments do you have about the trainers?

- The trainer was very enthusiastic and passionate
- Very enthusiastic and specific and helpful
- Helpful, puts things into a perspective
- Really good at explaining how to do everything
- Engaging and non-judgemental, helpful
- Enthusiastic and engaging, non-judgemental, kind
- Very helpful, easy to ask questions to, made it fun
- Made training very fun
- Gave good advice, active teacher
- Really interactive, explained everything really well
- Very good speaker, managed to convey information in a clear and interesting way
- Really enthusiastic and engaging
- Very enthusiastic and respectful
- Extremely enthusiastic and gave a good understanding
- Very good, kept us engaged and was very informative

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- How to question and build trust with my mentee
- How to help achieving goals in a realistic way
- Attentive listening – how to listen and not lead or judge with questions
- I now know how to address and help someone to solve problems for themselves
- How to listen well and be able to ask suitable questions
- That we are helping them to help themselves and that we only ask open questions so they will get to the root of the issue, active listening was very helpful
- How to ask questions to help the coachee recognise their own solutions and goals
- Asking open questions, feel more confident with speaking
- I was able to use questions effectively
- The active listening part where we practised with our peers was very helpful
- Attentive listening. Giving time to talk without interrupting
- How to guide rather than lead to finding solutions
- Knowing how to ask questions without using persuasive language
- How to get to the root of the problem through active listening

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding about the role of a near peer coach/mentor?

- It helped me be the best I can be at being able to deal with certain situations
- Made me realised there are multiple ways of listening and how you can comfortably make them open up
- How to listen actively and attentively

- How to talk to the coachee and listen to their problems and ask appropriate questions
- Listening skills, they are helping themselves rather than me fully helping them
- I feel like I understand myself better and know how to approach many different situations
- Gave me a good insight as I could practise with others
- It shows how the peer mentor need to let the peer mentee help themselves
- I understand more about how to be a good listener
- A near peer mentor need to remember that the mentee is the focus
- I now know the difference between mentoring and coaching, how to listen and make the coachee feel comfortable
- I feel more confident with speaking to my mentee but will continue to learn in the role
- We help them help themselves
- It has explained what we are actually aiming to do and how to approach it

If the coaching training helped you in your own personal development, how did it help?

- It helped me to put myself into new situations and feel more confident talking to others
- It helped me very much and helped me realise situations better
- Better at conversations in general
- Helped me gain a better understanding of how to approach a situation
- Helped me with trusting people
- Made me more confident
- It helped me with self-awareness by teaching us how to reflect
- It pushed me out of my comfort zone, and I met new people and improved my communication
- Helped me communicate with peers

8.2.Appendix 2: Qualitative data – Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf 2021

What comments do you have about the trainers?

- Very enthusiastic and engaging
- Informative, helpful, knowledgeable
- Very kind, energetic
- Very energetic and engaging
- Very enthusiastic, made the session enjoyable and interesting
- Very nice and easy to listen to
- Brilliant
- Interesting, very fun

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- Active listening, and allowing the coachee to speak and not give advice as such
- Knowing I can help a coachee
- Specific guidance at asking questions/structure conversations

- How to apply in everyday life, talking to others
- The wheel of different assets of life
- Deep listening/attentive skills will help me to listen to them
- How to listen properly with other people I know
- I will be able to actively listen to my coachee
- How to deep listen in what they have to say, how to give open questions to them

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding about the role of a near peer coach/mentor?

- By understanding how to appropriately approach near peer coaching
- By informing me of what their roles
- How to prepare conversations, what questions to ask
- Helped me understand that there's a difference between coach, mentor, and teacher
- Understand more on how to handle being a coach
- It gave me a better understanding on how to communicate and learn about what they are experiencing

If the coaching training helped you in your own personal development, how did it help?

- Built confidence
- Made me realise that I can – self efficacy
- Helped me gain confidence in my ability to advise
- Feel more empathy
- It made me believe that other people are there to help and they are here to listen

7.3 Appendix 3: Qualitative data – Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf 2020

Any comments about the trainers?

- Really engaging, knowledgeable and understanding
- Engaging
- Engaged effectively whilst introducing different strategies
- Really kind, very good teacher, good at explaining
- Really good at explaining each skill, very professional
- Very helpful and engaging
- Very kind
- Very understanding and clear
- Taught memorably, remember what I learnt
- Lovely man, very understanding and willing to teach, stayed patient
- Helpful and kind
- Helpful and used good demonstration for the skill learning
- Very helpful and insightful

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- Many different areas and in depth
- Learning how to understand and engage with clients
- How to let someone tell you the most about what's going on in their lives by asking the right questions – practising with others
- The listening methods were very interesting
- I found the open question most valuable; I will apply it when I am with the young person
- I found the difference between open and closed questions very valuable and will apply it to everyday conversations
- Strategies to help to grow
- Practising in groups so can use those styles with the coachee
- How to word the questions, will help with shaping the session
- Learning how to listen and coach without taking an instrumental role
- I hope to apply it into everyday life and to help others
- Knowing when to push and when to sit back
- Having open conversations, open questions
- That sometimes it's important to just listen when the coachee don't necessarily want to work through a problem and they want rather just have someone to listen to them
- How to build a relationship with the person we'll be mentoring

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding of using mentoring or coaching with the young people?

- Completely changed my thought, more listening than lead
- ... Practised skills that I will use with my young person
- Through doing exercises and playing games to help but the techniques into practise
- I understand my role
- It will help me understand people and listen to them
- Their problems won't be as severe as I maybe assumed, I know how not to push them
- Just how to help them understand more about themselves
- How to guide them and help in a positive way and know our boundaries
- Know our boundaries and supplied useful tips
- Understood how to listen to and guide them
- Know how to let them be the initiator and you are the listener
- Helped me be confident in how I will approach my coachee and listen to his needs and worries
- Learning different strategies to help people/understand them, questions to let them lead the conversation
- They may be facing problems and my job is not to try and fix it for them but it's to guide them to fix it themselves

- Helped me understand the importance of just listening and letting the people we'll be coaching open up

Any other comments about the training that could make it even more useful?

- I feel confident after the course therefore I enjoyed it
- Maybe there could have been a bit more conversing about me still but overall, I had no problems
- Good and helpful experience, it was very good
- Maybe spend a bit less time on the things that are sort of common sense like fears and hopes
- Very positive experience
- Course content was very interesting

7.4 Appendix 4: Qualitative data – Y Pant Comprehensive School 2021

What comments do you have about the trainers?

- The way the lessons were taught and the way he went about teaching was amazing
- Really good, makes sessions more enjoyable
- Upbeat, keeps everyone engaged
- Upbeat, could be a bit more detailed, interesting exercises, keeps students engaged
- Really good
- Very energetic, very good
- Very enthusiastic and involved
- Got us all involved and was very enthusiastic
- Very entertaining and keeps you attentive whilst teaching valuable skills
- Very entertaining – unique – engaging
- Really great
- Very encouraging
- Very encouraging
- Very helpful, funny, and encouraging

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- How to structure questions
- How to form questions related to issues
- How to word questions correctly
- How to advance conversations and what questions to ask
- I found attentive listening very helpful
- Practise sessions with trainer and volunteers
- I valued the framework for questioning and I will use the TGROW structure to get the conversation back on track and add value where I can
- How to listen really in depth
- How to question in the sessions
- Attentive listening, active listening in my sessions

- Learned how to ask appropriate questions and how to structure a coaching session
- How to ask useful questions
- How to deal with emotional situations

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding about the role of a near peer coach/mentor?

- Helped me understand how to coach and the difference between coaching and other roles
- I know more about my role and how to help them
- I didn't understand before but now I do
- Understanding the role and what it entailed
- It has given me an understanding of how people can change and how to inspire change
- Cleared any issues and doubts, gained confidence
- I understand how much input to give and how much listening is involved
- I understand more what my role will be and how to help
- I know what I can and cannot do when coaching a coachee
- I learned the types of questions to ask and not to ask
- Helped me to understand what comes under the role and what I should pass on to someone else, helped me to understand what my role is in regard to my client
- It helped me understand how to stay solution oriented
- Used games in order to help us understand easily
- By helping me understand questions

If the coaching training helped you in your own personal development, how did it help?

- Helped me figure out ways to achieve goals
- Techniques to destress
- Confidence in my role, opening up, advanced conversation
- Gained confidence and trust within myself, training was ideal, it included a range of different learning types
- It has given me the structures to think in the same way as the coachees so I can evaluate how to improve and organise certain aspects of my life
- Techniques
- How to deal with stress better and overcome it
- How to help stress levels
- Helped me to reflect on my problems, helped me to realise that I can have smaller action steps towards achieving a greater goal
- Confidence increase
- Yes, I can get to a solution/goal

Any other comments about the training that could make it more useful?

- Have another session later in the year to follow up and consolidate
- Training was ideal. It included a range of different learning types
- Make it longer to cover more aspects

7.5 Appendix 5: Qualitative data – Stanwell School 2021

What comments do you have about the trainers?

- Really helpful, kind, makes me feel like I am very prepared
- Informative, and very good, understanding, supportive, qualified
- Very helpful and insightful on the topic
- Helpful and willing to coach us
- Very open-minded and kind, understanding and very knowledgeable
- Very kind and non-judgemental which made the experience fun and comfortable
- The trainer used several different training techniques to ensure that everyone understand the content whilst keeping the lesson engaging
- Really helpful, willing to coach us through becoming a coach
- Very helpful and taught us the relevant skills needed in an informative and enjoyable way, good use of demonstrations

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- Learning all the questions and listening
- Helping others set goals, I want to be a teacher and can learning to support others is a big help
- How to listen attentively to people, apply to own situations
- Active listening
- Practising coaching with peers, I'll apply this in my teaching with younger students
- I thought that talking to someone is very difficult, it requires you to open up but there is a way how to listen and talk to them
- I learned about the types of questions I need to be asking to encourage the coachee
- Types of questioning and attentive listening, useful to listen what is actually going on
- I found the skill and ability to listen to be valuable

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding about the role of a near peer coach/mentor?

- Helped me understand what they are and what they do
- Helping to build trust and understand the importance of supporting others
- Helped me understand boundaries
- How to approach the coachee
- Very much, taught me how to approach issues and ask questions especially to a young audience
- It helped me understand that I am not the hero, but I am the coach, helping the coachee identify their goals and how to solve them themselves
- It has helped me understand the type of relationship I will have with the coachee and understand that the coachee need to be making about the decisions
- Hugely, I didn't understand the role to begin with
- The training has taught me relevant listening skills and how to adapt, react and respond to a conversation

If the coaching training helped you in your own personal development, how did it help?

- Helped me feel more confident in myself
- Teaching experience
- Helped me be more thoughtful asking questions (e. g. not use why, coachee could get defensive)
- A better way of listening and questioning others
- Definitely, reminded me the importance of remaining rational, deep breathing exercises I can utilise in my own life
- It helped me think about my own goals
- Whilst training, it did make me reflect about my own situations
- It helped me to become a better listener
- It helped me with my conversational flow

Any other comments about the training that could make it more useful?

- More practical tasks, however there was a good balance between visual and practical tasks
- Course is good, trainer well qualified
- Generally no complaints, I am enjoying this course
- The content was very interesting and fun, it included practising in groups for example which helped me learn physically
- The lesson helped me understand how difficult it may be to clients to talk about themselves
- Would be helpful to spend slightly more time on setting goals/ending sessions

7.6 Appendix 6: Qualitative data – Whitchurch High School 2021

What comments do you have about the trainers?

- Very engaging with everyone
- Really helpful and relaxed
- Energetic, however, personally, too much at the beginning

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- Attentive listening can help us realise the problems within the coachee's world
- The attentive listening is something I will apply in my day-to-day life
- Attentive and active listening, I will apply it to my conversations within close relationships to help them make informed choices

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding about the role of a near peer coach/mentor?

- It is good to allow the coachee discover things about themselves
- How to be there for someone without overstepping boundaries or asking the wrong questions

- It's helped me be emotionally present and not lead people's thinking, I think it makes my conversations more honest and meaningful

If the coaching training helped you in your own personal development, how did it help?

- Helped me realise that I shouldn't view everything negatively
- Improved my confidence in talking to coachees as well as knowing and relating to how they also find it difficult to open up

Any other comments about the training that could make it more useful?

- Some activities relied on a large group of participants, activities as a whole group might be a better for smaller groups
- Maybe go into more detail to avoid situations or questions the coachee have and move on from it
- Maybe do it on a day where there aren't many lessons going on
- The course is mostly positive
- No specific advice/technique was given about building trust, it came in practise ...

7.7 Appendix 7: Qualitative data – Whitchurch High School 2020

Any comments about the trainers?

- Helpful
- Friendly, explained in a way that's easy to understand
- Friendly and engaging, encouraged thinking
- Really nice, very helpful and patient
- Good PowerPoint

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- Learning how to respond
- How to listen, useful for everyday interaction
- Using active and attentive listening
- How to use open ended questions
- Open questions -> when friends are questioning something that I don't know how to help with
- TGROW is easy to understand and helps structure the conversation, mind map was useful in identifying the areas to focus on
- I found how to communicate in certain situations for a more positive outcome
- Listening skills

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding of using mentoring or coaching with the young people?

- How to communicate
- How make coachee think for themselves by gently probing

- Learnt how to alter the way questions are asked
- The training has helped me get the best response out of the young person, in order to help them successfully
- Its helped me realise that I don't always have to know the answer, instead I am just there to help them find it for themselves
- Helped me understand how the conversation should work and what to do in different situations
- Yes, it's taught me the dos and don'ts of what makes it successful
- Helped me ask the right questions

Any other comments about the training that could make it even more useful?

- Liked the experience
- Only marked slides/book lower because I don't like reading
- More time slightly rushed in some aspect
- Helpful
- Maybe more time (not sure if this is due to school hours) to avoid worrying about time
- I liked the experience, very informative
- Relevant information about how process will work
- More physical resources

7.8 Appendix 8: Qualitative data – Whitmore High School 2021

What comments do you have about the trainers?

- Very good, created a fun way of learning
- Very helpful and supportive
- Very helpful and supportive
- Good environment, good teacher
- A very good teacher
- Fun, engaging
- Helpful and fun
- Great
- Energetic
- Probably one of the funniest and useful teachers

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- Learning to listen to others more deeply, so I will have a deeper understanding of my client
- The self-awareness and reflections
- The practise in between helped build the skills
- By taking this information in and helping others as a near peer coach
- That you are there to listen not ask a lot of questions
- The listening skills we have been taught

- Listening, meant so much more than you first think, I will apply it in my sessions
- How to talk to the coachee
- Discovering new skills and how to approach a client
- Listening to people, active and attentive listening
- How to listen properly
- Listening to people, active listening

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding about the role of a near peer coach/mentor?

- I understand how to deal with people better
- It helped me understand the coach to a deeper depth
- Know how to support people in different ways and how to direct them to a goal
- It helped me a lot by understanding different views and how to work around different clients
- I didn't really understand what a near peer coach/mentor
- The tasks we have done have increasingly developed my peer coaching skills
- It gave me insight into the role of a near peer coach
- Explaining what to say to the coachee helps me to understand better
- There are many things/ways you can help someone
- Yes
- It's helped so much
- It's given a lot of content

If the coaching training helped you in your own personal development, how did it help?

- Helped me understand my mind as well
- With confidence and by gaining different skills to develop in
- It helped me develop my listening skills
- It has made me more comfortable in talking to people, listening, and helping them
- Helped me view my own issues from an outsider view
- It helped me from an outsider view
- In the way I can approach someone
- Yes, by listening and reflection
- Helped with my confidence
- Yes, it helped me clarify my problems

7.9 Appendix 9: Qualitative data – Ysgol Bro Edern 2020

Any comments about the trainers?

- Kind, calm but also engaging, encouraging and not boring
- Very engaging, polite, effective ways of learning, patient, gave me a better understanding
- Very kind, interactive, not boring
- Really good, was able to take a lot away from the sessions

- Enthusiastic, helpful
- Really engaging and helpful
- Engaging, effective techniques, helpful, patient, good at maintaining engagement
- Really good, learned a lot
- Really nice and energetic, helped me to become a better coach, feel better in myself, learning styles were amazing, haven't heard of some of them
- Funny, explained everything thoroughly
- Very enthusiastic

What did you find most valuable about the learning and how will you apply it?

- Most valuable aspect was how to create an environment where the coachee will find the ability to be comfortable and open
- Examples of questions to ask so that they are suitable for the client
- Structured conversations, practise, will remember
- Talking about my problems with other people in controlled environment, open up more in the future
- The structured conversation as it helps the time flow effectively
- Structured conversations as it helped conversations to flow with confidence
- Making a comfortable and safe space for people by asking appropriate questions
- Be kind and let them have time to open up their mind
- Practising with others puts you in the situation
- Ways of ensuring clients get the most out of the session

How has the training helped you gain a better understanding of using mentoring or coaching with the young people?

- How to deal with certain situations and challenge the coachee to think and solve problems themselves
- More confidence with communicating with other people
- Learnt how to talk to a coachee appropriately
- Yes, I have a better understanding about how to approach problems
- I understand that my own thoughts must be left outside the room and the purpose of the coaching is for the coachee to understand themselves
- New techniques, deeper understanding of coaching through practise and comparison to mentoring
- Helped me discuss in a professional manner
- Different techniques on how to get them to be honest and trust us
- It taught me about effective approaching towards young people
- I understand how to use techniques to mentor

7.10 Appendix 10: Qualitative data – NPC experience USW students
2020

Any comments about the training and support you received?

- The training was very helpful and insightful, I had learnt a lot from it and it helped me improve my skills
- Starting from the first day to now, our supervisor Kantz has always helped us and made himself available for any queries and assistance we may require, the training was an incredible learning experience
- More guided/monitored practise would help with using the GROW model and the listening skills
- Made me well prepared for the coaching
- The training and support I received was excellent, Kantz was always very helpful with advice, and support
- I really liked the training; it was very useful, and I learnt a lot of new skills in training

What did you find most valuable about the coaching and mentoring experience? What did you learn about yourself?

- I was able to gain new skills as well as improving on current skills, I learnt how much I enjoyed coaching/mentoring and that these were places where I had to improve myself on and knowing what skills I already had
- I learned how to form a professional relationship with pupils, in addition to the elements and principles of coaching
- Learning new conversational skills, the coaching experience has helped improve my confidence and independence as I feel though I can converse better with people
- Sometimes it is difficult not to come out as telling the coachee what to do, especially when they give the impression that they have tried all the best that they could possibly think of doing to help their situation
- I found the training very valuable, during the first practise coaching sessions I was a little nervous but as I kept practising and getting used to the structure, I came to really enjoy it, also being able to coach in real life was a great experience as it has allowed me to see that people have the power to resolve the issues they want to resolve and become who they want to be with awareness and encouragement
- I think the most valuable thing was listening to young people and trying to help them help themselves, I learnt that I need to do more experiences like this to build my skill set

How can you use the skills learned, in other areas of your work, education, career, volunteering?

- I can use the skills in other volunteering and my career

- As a psychology student who plans to pursue a career in psychotherapy this experience will help me to understand the client's problems and overcome it; these skills will also help me in any future placements I take
- I can use these listening skills in everyday life with an awareness to when I hijack or interrupt; also, I never wanted to work with children but since this placement it is now an option I will consider for a future career
- The coaching experience is really a step ahead for me in terms of career, now I have added the skill of youth coaching or mentorship to my CV which is well desirable for any philanthropic engagement on young people or job that I would want to improve myself in
- I have recently been offered a job as a mental health support worker. I feel the skills I have learnt with Elevate will be very valuable because it will help me allow the people, I will be supporting make their own decisions for themselves. I have also applied the skills I have learnt whilst carrying out interviews for psychological experiments and found the skills very transferable. These skills will also be helpful when talking with colleagues, friends, and family.
- I can use these skills in my future career, I want to become an Educational Psychologist and this experience would be very beneficial to mention in the personal statement

How has the experience helped you gain a better understanding about the young people you worked with?

- It helped me understand that young people aren't seen to be much different to ourselves and that putting our hearts to listen to them can make a difference for the young person, sometimes all they needed was someone to talk to them in a non/judgemental way
- The experience helped me to understand that not always does a child have IQ problems or being a troublesome in class/home making at risk at educational underachievement/disengagement. There is always a story behind every students going through this problem. We just have to help to help themselves motivate that they have the skills, support and courage to fulfil it.
- I found that a lot of the time the children I worked with just wanted to talk and be properly listened to, it also seemed as if they did not see education as being important for them
- The experience has made me realised that with the right engagement of young people such as coaching/mentoring like this, they become motivated about their strength and enhance a lot of positive changes for themselves for the better
- This experience has allowed me to see that young people who are at risk of underachievement/disengagement have the potential to do well and get what they want in life if they remove barriers. For example, beliefs that don't serve them, low confidence, and anger issues. I feel that every young person should have the experience of having one-to-one coaching because it is so valuable to have someone

help you to organise your life in a way that serves you. Young people are not given much autonomy and decisions and I feel this can hold them back when they transition into a young adult where suddenly they are given lots of choices and freedom.

Because of this it's important for them to have a realistic plan that helps them get what they want. Otherwise, they will just float through life helping someone

- I think it did. I was very afraid to work with young people but after this experience I am confident that I will be able to work with young people in the future

What did you not like about the voluntary activity? And how would you solve this?

- I liked everything
- I feel as though I needed more practise in knowing how to set goals with clients when in sessions
- In all I think the activity was worthwhile and I would encourage anyone who would like to engage in such volunteer work to do so
- I think in training it would be best to give some advice on how to tackle first session if the coachee doesn't speak at all or say very little

Any other comments about the experience that could help to improve it?

- More of such volunteer work should be encouraged and more schools should be involved to help wider number of young people
- The training was very good however all of us were adults and we talked to each other in practise sessions – the students talked much less in my first session and I found it very hard to make them talk