Evaluation of
AHKM Learning Mentor
provision in Schools

Abstract

Aimhigher programmes aim to widen participation in higher education through work with selected students in schools where indicators show there is potential to raise aspiration and attainment. Central to this is the funding of dedicated Learning Mentors to work intensively with students identified as likely to benefit from focussed support, particularly in key transition years. Such students have low aspirations, are at risk of underachieving and have parents with no experience of higher education.

This paper presents quantitative and qualitative findings on the impact of Learning Mentors, including the predicted and actual attainment of mentored students against their peers, and the longitudinal tracking of individual students over years as they progress. Complementing these measures is qualitative research that reveals shifts in attitude and aspiration through generic and individual case studies.

This paper contends that AHKM Learning Mentors contribute to a significant impact on mentee outcomes such as GCSE attainment, retention and progression beyond age 16.
1. Introduction

This paper presents an evaluation of the effect of mentoring as a core activity in AHKM delivery. The paper combines evidence collected from a variety of sources, including quantitative evidence collected at learner level and qualitative data collected from learners and AHKM Learning Mentors (AHKM LMs). Head teachers were also consulted to assess their perception of the impact of AHKM Learning Mentor delivery. A second phase of the evaluation was to evaluate HE undergraduate mentoring delivered through the AHKM Associates programme and this is presented in a separate paper.

The evaluation explores some of the following questions:

- Who is being selected for AHKM mentoring activity?
- What form does AHKM mentoring delivery take, i.e mode, scope and content of delivery?
- To what extent does AHKM mentoring contribute to increased aspirations, achievement and progression with mentees?
- What barriers to Learning Mentors face when implementing mentoring delivery?
- How much value do schools (Head teachers) place on AHKM Learning Mentor provision?

2. Background

The evaluation examines two phases of delivery; 2006-08 and 2008-11. In both delivery periods, the partnership funded the provision of Learning Mentors to work in partner schools across the area. Learning Mentors were situated within schools and assigned to work with students who met the Aimhigher criteria. AHKM Learning mentors played a crucial role in the collection of the evidence presented in this paper. The two Local Authorities in the partnership have also contributed to the evaluation by facilitating access to learner data centrally through the school census. This assisted the AHKM Learning Mentors in their role, alleviating some of the administrative burden associated with learner data collection. Although, this paper explores the impact of AHKM mentoring activity and the effect on AHKM learners who have been mentored, it is worth noting that AHKM LMs are also involved in coordinating activities for a general Aimhigher cohort who attend HEI talks, tasters etc.
3. **Key results**

- The majority of mentees are first generation HE and over two thirds live in an area of high deprivation. (see 4a)

- In 2008-09, the gender split of mentees was 52% female, 48% male. This is an improvement on previous years where the imbalance was more pronounced. (see 4b)

- Schools are more likely to ask AHKM LM to direct mentoring provision to learners in years 11 and 13, key transition and exam years. (see 4c)

- AHKM Learning Mentor delivery is varied and encompasses a range of tasks over and above actual mentoring students. Mentoring activity is also varied and AHKM LMs are often required to help mentees with psycho social issues (see 5)

- Although disentangling the impact of mentoring on student aspirations, attainment and progression is very difficult, the results of mentee cohort compare favourably with non mentee cohorts.

- AHKM Mentoring is viewed as influential by mentees and mentees are more likely to say that mentoring activity was influential than the other AHKM activities. (see 6a)

- Head teachers acknowledge that AHKM LM has contributes to an increase in aspirations, progression and attainment (see 6a, 6b, 6c)

- AHKM Mentoring increases mentee knowledge of HE study and mentees are more likely to recognise facts about HE study following mentoring. (see 6b)

- Over 80% of an AHKM mentee cohort achieved higher total GCSE points than their FFT Year 9 estimates. In comparison, 65% of a non AHKM cohort at partner schools (with same FFT estimates) had higher points achievement than their FFT Year 9 estimates. Moreover, the extent to which AHKM mentees increased their points was found to be considerably more than the non AHKM cohort (see 6c)

- A tracking study of 482 mentees in 2007-08 found that 81% stayed on in education (either school or FE), post 16 whereas the average proportion of all Kent AHKM partner school students staying on in education post 16, was 72%. (see 6d)

- Results of a tracking study involving 91 students who were mentored by an AHKM LM in Year 11 found that 46% of them progressed into Higher Education and just under half were in Further Education. (see 6d)

- Head teachers clearly value AHKM LM provision in partner schools. 16 out of 17 head teachers surveyed said that they would explore ways to continue to fund this role should funding cease. (see 8)

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1 Destinations data obtained via Connexions Kent & Medway.
4. How effectively is the partnership targeting students’ for mentoring provision?

The Aimhigher Learning Mentors work closely with school staff, e.g. form heads to select the mentee cohort using the HEFCE targeting guidelines and information on student performance. Thus, mentees will have been selected for the following reasons:

- Students without a parental background of HE

Students who were believed to be from lower socio economic groups (NS SEC 4-7) AND

- Students with above mentioned backgrounds who had the academic potential to progress to HE but who for a variety of reasons were likely not to (e.g. motivation, attendance, low aspirations, negative attitude, etc)

- Gifted and Talented students from non HE backgrounds and lower socio economic groups

At the same time, the AHKM LM works closely with the school management team to prioritise Learning Mentor resource where it is most needed in the school and decisions are made regarding how much LM time is allocated to students in specific year groups. The partnership encourages schools to work across year groups 9 through to 13, but ultimately, it is the school who decides how to best apportion AHKM LM resource.

Looked After Children and Disabled Students were also targeted but the partnership did not flag these students on the database until the 2008-09 cohort so they are not disaggregated in this paper.

a. Deprivation and educational background

Over three quarters of AHKM mentees in 2008-09 did not have a parental HE background and a further 14% did not know whether their parent has an HE background (Fig 1). Figure two shows that over two thirds of the same group of mentees lived in an area of high deprivation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AHKM cohort</th>
<th>No parental HE background</th>
<th>Not Sure of parent HE background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentee n= 1220</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AHKM 08-09</th>
<th>High IMD &lt;13000 rank</th>
<th>High EST &lt; 13000 rank</th>
<th>High IDACI &lt; 13000 rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentee n= 1220</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2**
Furthermore, 74% of the 2008-09 mentee cohort live in an area classified as low HE participation.

b. Gender profile

An analysis of the mentee cohort engaged during 2006-08 found that considerably more females than males were being mentored: 58% female to 42% male. Schools and AHKM Learning Mentors were asked to consider the reasons why more females than males were being engaged in Aimhigher. It was felt by AHKM practitioners that school staff were more likely to identify females than males due to their attitude (more open and positive to new experiences) and the likelihood that females would positively engage with mentoring provision.

In 2008-09, schools and AHKM LMs were asked to filter new targeted students from school census data combined with attainment and postcode deprivation data before enlisting school staff to help with background information. LMs were also asked to be aware of an equitable gender split and not to discount male students because of their attitude. To help AHKM LMs monitor their selection, any cohort lists which identified an inequitable gender mix were returned to the school for review. In 2008-09, the gender imbalance was reduced where 54% were female compared to 46% of males. This imbalance will continue to be monitored.

c. Year group profile

The chart below shows the year group breakdowns of two AHKM cohorts during 2008-09; the mentee cohort and the general cohort. It is clear that Learning Mentors are more likely to mentor students from Year groups 11 and 13, both key transition years. Clearly, with progression and

![Year Group Breakdown Chart]

Figure 3

attainment outcomes in mind, schools are keen for LMs to mentor students in the years that they will sit exams and make important decisions about progression.

5. What form does mentoring delivery take, i.e. mode, scope and content of delivery?

The Aimhigher Learning Mentor role is school based with the majority of AHKM LM working in a part-time capacity, funded by AHKM but employed by schools. The AHKM Learning Mentor is involved in a whole range

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2 POLAR YPR www.hefce.ac.uk/polar
of tasks encompassing direct contact with individual students as well as a co-ordination role where balance the delivery of AHKM related activities with the day to day student timetable.
Tasks typically involve:

- liaising with school staff to identify pupils who would benefit from mentoring;
- helping pupils who are underperforming in their subjects on a one-to-one basis outside the classroom and looking at why they are underperforming and what can be done to help their situation;
- implementing strategies and supporting pupils in self-esteem and confidence-building activities;
- listening to and helping pupils resolve a range of issues that are creating barriers to learning;
- drawing up agreed action plans with pupils, outlining the aims of the mentoring;
- administering paperwork associated with AHKM delivery (monitoring & evaluation)

Learning mentors are also involved in:

- networking with other learning mentors and teachers and referring pupils to other appropriate professionals, e.g. social workers, educational psychologists and personal advisers. An AHKM survey involving 36 AHKM LMs\(^3\) asked who LMs worked with in schools and a whole range of practitioners were listed from Head teachers to school nurses.

Activities may also involve:

- organising and running extracurricular activities, such as sports, music and discos, during lunch times or as out-of-school activities;
- setting up breakfast clubs and drop-in sessions
- helping with transition activities for pupils moving to other schools and colleges
- helping with references for UCAS, jobs
- helping with post 16 application

Focus groups and interviews\(^4\) involving AHKM mentees have highlighted the scope of the relationship that may exist between AHKM LMs and their mentees, where support “went beyond straight forward, practical or instrumental assistance in terms of how to fill out applications, or offer advice on study skills, or careers options. Instead, the support also provided high levels of psychosocial support.” The focus group findings provided significant evidence to suggest that the AHLMs were performing a role where students were reliant on them for personal support and encouragement and for enhancing their self-esteem. The strength of this relationship in terms of not only being able to provide practical support but also psychosocial, was raised by all ten students interviewed in the focus groups.

**a. Mode of delivery**

- Most of AHKM Learning mentoring activity takes place outside of the classroom, although occasionally an AHKM LM will work with a student during a timetabled session in the classroom, at the request of a subject teacher.

- 60%\(^5\) of AHKM LM sessions are on a one to one basis with individual mentees, where topics covered are dependent on the specific needs of the individual and frequently cover aspects such as personal

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\(^3\) AHKM Learning Mentor Survey 2008-09

\(^4\) Research into Post 16 Transition amongst Aimhigher Kent & Medway Students

\(^5\) Based on a sample of 530 mentoring sessions
confidence and motivation. 40% of the sessions are on a small group basis where AHKM LMs will work with the group on common issues relating to aspirations, progression etc.

b. Mentoring Activity content

AHKM Mentoring covers a whole spectrum of activity tailored to the needs of each mentee. An analysis of the types of input delivered in mentoring sessions in 2007-08 revealed the range of topics covered by Learning Mentors. The chart below illustrates that range, showing that a considerable proportion of time is spent working on the motivation and confidence of learners. A third of the sessions covered academic attainment.

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4**

Most mentees had experience of an additional Aimhigher activity to mentoring. The chart below shows that in academic year 2008-09, three quarter of mentees have experienced more than one activity. In the main, where mentees have participated in only one activity, it has been mentoring activity with the Aimhigher Learning Mentor. Furthermore, student records of participation in previous years showed that 42% the mentees in 2008-09 had participated in AHKM activities in previous years.

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5**

Over 60% had experience of a general HE Talk (generally delivered by an HE Ambassador) and 42% had attended a Taster at a University campus. The level and range of participation depended on a range of factors including the year group of the mentee and the needs of the individual. Other Aimhigher activities delivered to mentees ranged from Study Skills sessions to Master Classes and UCAS Talks.
6. To what extent does AHKM Mentoring contribute to increased motivation, attainment and progression with mentees?

   a. Increased knowledge, aspirations, motivation and confidence

97% of AHKM LMs believe that participation in AHKM has had a High or Some impact on their Mentees’ attitudes to progression and this view is supported by evidence provided by mentees directly. A survey involving 118 mentees measured their attitudes to progression and specifically to Higher education before receiving mentoring from an AHKM LM and then again at the end of the year after receiving mentoring sessions (these students may also have participated in other AHKM activity in addition to mentoring).

   • Before participating in AHKM mentoring activity, 43% said they were definitely planning to enter HE on completion of their Level 3 study and this had increased to 49% at the end of the year.

   • 74% said that taking part in AHKM had made them feel more positive about studying in Higher Education

Disentangling the impact of mentoring on student aspirations as opposed to other AHKM activity is very difficult and relies on the student making a judgement mostly retrospectively about their AHKM journey and the effect of this journey on their state of mind at a point in time. Individual mentees have provided insights into the value of mentoring for them personally:

“The mentoring has helped me especially, I have such a better understanding and it has given me extra motivation to succeed”  Aimhigher mentee, year 11

“Aimhigher has helped me a lot, my Aimhigher mentor has helped and advised me so much and has helped me to have more confidence in myself and my abilities”  Aimigher mentee, year 10

In the results below, over a hundred mentees were asked to assess the influence they believed that individual activities had had on their attitudes to progressing onto Higher Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 6</th>
<th>AHKM activity</th>
<th>Very Influential</th>
<th>Quite Influential</th>
<th>Not at all Influential</th>
<th>Total surveyed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visit to HE campus</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assembly led by Aimhigher or Learning Mentor</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentoring by AHKM Learning Mentor</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summer School</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject taster/masterclass</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As figure 6 illustrates AHKM mentoring is viewed as influential by mentees and a higher proportion thought that mentoring activity was influential than the other activities listed.
Feedback from school staff and Head teachers’ supports the evidence that mentoring helps to raise aspirations; 79% of Head Teachers that responded to a survey\(^6\), believe that Aimhigher mentoring has had some definite impact on increasing their students’ aspirations, confidence and motivation.

![Figure 7](image)

**Figure 7**

“Aimhigher mentoring has made students and parents aware that they can access higher education and that it is not just open to a select few. Whereas once our students would have looked at apprenticeships as the pinnacle of educational achievement they are increasingly beginning to think about higher education.” Year 11 Form Head.

Comments from Head teachers encapsulate the impact AHKM LMs can have on raising aspirations:

“One to one mentoring has ‘saved’ certain students who might well have continued to dwell in the land of underachievement and demotivation.” and

“Due to the enthusiasm and determination of our mentor, more students are being motivated to consider the FE/HE route”.

**b. Increasing HE knowledge of mentees**

Hand in hand with increasing aspirations, AHKM LMs work with students to increase their knowledge of Higher Education, breaking down barriers and demystifying HE, including correcting student’s misconceptions of HE study.

At the end of the year a survey with both mentee and general AHKM students asked how much they knew about university study. The results shown in Figure 8 found that mentees were more likely to say that they knew a lot or quite a bit than the general cohort.

![Figure 8](image)

**Figure 8**

\(^6\) AHKM Headteacher survey 2008-09, 19 respondents
By comparing the responses of over a hundred Year 9-11 mentees at the beginning and end of the year, their knowledge of Higher Education was assessed. Their response to these statements provided an indication of their factual knowledge about HE study. The results were positive, showing that following participation in AHKM mentoring, students were more likely to know correct information about HE study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (n= 118 mentees)</th>
<th>% Before AHKM mentoring</th>
<th>% After AHKM mentoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You can only get into Higher Education with A Level type qualifications</td>
<td>36% Didn’t Know</td>
<td>15% Didn’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A degree is the only level of qualification you study in Higher Education</td>
<td>50% said False</td>
<td>74% said False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can study part-time in Higher Education for qualifications</td>
<td>59% said True</td>
<td>78% said True</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9

c. Impact on Mentee achievement

As seen in Figure 4, a fair proportion of AHKM LM time is spent on activities related to increasing individual achievement including sessions focussing on attainment, study skills and exam techniques. All of the 36 AHKM Learning Mentors who participated in an evaluation of mentoring activity believed that mentoring had a positive impact on mentee achievement and 18 out of 19 Head teachers surveyed also said that mentoring had an impact on how well students did at Key Stage 4. Although it is difficult to disaggregate the extent to which AHKM mentoring impacts individual achievement, it is fair to say that AHKM mentoring contributes to an increase in mentee achievement, particularly in light of the evidence presented below.

Data and information collected for over 600 AHKM mentees who engaged in the AHKM project during the period 2006-08 was analysed and a tracking study undertaken through to age 18 and 19 years, with mentees who had reached that age as at December 2008.
i. GCSE points achievement

Year 9 FFT Estimates\(^7\) for a mentee cohort (n=603) who had participated in mentoring before and through Year 11 were recorded and at the end of Year 11 GCSE Actual Point Scores collected for comparison. Over 80% of the cohort achieved higher total GCSE points than their FFT Year 9 estimates. As a comparison the achievement of a similar group\(^1\) (see end note, page 17) of students were examined and results showed that a smaller proportion of this group achieved higher GCSE points than their FFT estimates (65%). This suggests that AHKM mentoring activity contributed to an increase in achievement.

Furthermore, the extent to which mentees increased their points was found to be considerably more than the whole school cohort. Figure 11 shows that, on average the tracked cohort increased their points’ achievement by 108 points whereas the comparison group achieved less of an increase on estimated points.

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\(^7\) FFT Type B
In focus groups and interviews, individual mentees were particularly vocal in how mentoring had helped them with their exam performance:

“I used to go [to my Learning Mentor] once every two weeks but then after the last few months I asked to go each week especially around the exams, ...she gave us a revision time table, did she give you the colour paper? We write down thoughts and information then in the exam, I would be able to think ‘oh that information was on there’. Mentee, Year 11

A partner school Head teacher comments on AHKM LM provision and how it can help attainment:

“He [AHKM LM] has worked in collaboration with our data manager to use essential information such as "Raise on line", "Fischer Family Trust" and value added figures in order to plot student progress based on his [AHKM mentoring] intervention programme. His programme has enabled other members of staff to look deeper into the potential of students and how standards can be raised.”

d. Progression at age 16, 18 or 19 years

Head teachers have been forthcoming about the impact of AHKM intervention and in particular mentoring and the positive influence this has on mentee progression.

“Aimhigher has raised awareness of HE/FE at this school and the opportunities available for students from backgrounds who would not traditionally consider such a route. Due to the enthusiasm and determination of our mentor, more students are being motivated to consider the FE/HE route.”

Quantitative evidence gathered from tracking studies shows that mentoring has a positive impact on progression of the mentee cohort. In Kent AHKM partner schools, where progression at Year 11 is lower than average\(^8\), the proportion of students staying on in education post 16, was 72%. A tracking study of 482 mentees in 2007-08 found that 81% stayed on in education (either school or FE), post 16.

Case studies have also provided evidence to support the effect of AHKM mentoring on staying on rates. In one case study\(^9\) 98% of mentees in the school continued their education post 16. This is considerably higher than the school 2007 school leaver continuation rate of 68%.

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\(^8\) All Kent school average

\(^9\) How does AHKM mentoring contribute to GSCE attainment and destinations post 16?, Nov 2008
Results of a tracking study involving 91 students who were mentored by an AHKM LM in Year 11 found that 46% of them progressed into Higher Education and just under half were in Further Education.

![Progression of Year 11 AHKM mentees at 18 or 19 years (n=91)](image)

The same tracking study followed 397 AHKM students who had not been mentored but had attended one or two AHKM activities such as HE Talks and Tasters found that 36% had entered HE, a lower progression rate than the mentee group but higher than the indicative 18 year old progression rate found in a recent study of UCAS participation rates for Kent & Medway (2007) where the average participation of 18 year olds was 31%.

7. **What barriers to Learning Mentors face when implementing AHKM delivery?**

36 Learning Mentors were surveyed and asked what hindered their delivery of AHKM activity, including mentoring. As figure 13 shows student timetable constraints was by far the most popular response. Given that both AHKM LMs and mentees have commented on the strength of one to one and small group mentoring, the need to take students out of the classroom into a private area is essential. Student timetable constraints not only prevent a barrier to this type of activity but also the delivery of a progression framework for individual students.

Workload was also an issue and AHKMs working part-time commented on the time needed for co-ordinating and administering the programme particularly given the scope the role and all that it involves. This issue was supported by comments from Head teachers where it was recognised that more “time to administer” was required.

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10 Destinations data obtained via Connexions Kent & Medway.

11 UCAS participation rates for Kent & Medway (18 year olds) 2007

12 Progression data for mentees using Connexions data is not directly comparable to UCAS data and caution should be applied when comparing the two figures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier to success</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your workload</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student timetable constraints</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of resources eg room or materials</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Learning Mentor training opportunities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 13**

AHKM Learning Mentors also feel that ongoing training is essential including training on how to work with parents, on behavioural techniques and counselling.

8. **How much value do schools (Head teachers) place on AHKM Learning Mentor provision?**

Head teacher surveys have provided evidence that schools and head teachers value the provision of AHKM LMs within the schools. Head teachers are able to provide specific insights and evidence that AHKM mentoring has a positive impact on student outcomes. 16 out of 17 head teachers said that if AHKM funding would cease they would try to find a way to maintain a Learning Mentor (with same role) in their school.

In a few schools, the value placed on mentoring is so high that they have used the school budget to increase provision in the school, to enable the AHKM LM to work with more students:

“We only receive funding for 3 days but pay the remaining 2 days out of school budget” Head teacher

When head teachers were asked to how they incorporated AHKM mentoring and activities into the School Improvement Plan, one head teacher commented:

“It is part of our delivery plan to raise achievement by mentoring students. Our AH mentor is employed for extra hours by us and so blends this work with general mentoring and our Relax and Revise programme after school”

The head teacher in one partner school recognises the value of the AHKM LM as a change agent for the school:

“The AH initiative has enabled us to employ someone full-time. The success of all initiatives is dependent on the framework, but most importantly, the personnel. The AHKM LM has been a highly successful “change agent” and the activities and opportunities provided by her have engaged our students in wanting to experience University visits and links, which in itself has convinced so many young people to aspire to and progress onto University. This has also changed attitudes of our students to the value of academic endeavour. The AH initiative has been one of the most important and influential over the 15 year history of the [partner school].”

Another head teacher acknowledges the impact that AHKM Learning Mentor provision can have to staff attitudes as well as students’.
Aimhigher is an important strand in our drive for improved academic standards. The Aimhigher mentor has worked closely with school staff to target students in Years 9 to 13. We have positive tangible results in the increase of students applying for University and being successful. It has raised students' and staff standards and aspirations.

9. Improving AHKM Learning Mentor provision

Full results from the annual AHKM Learning Mentor and partner school head teacher surveys are published separately and can be found on the AHKM website. The AHKM partnership will review the findings of these reports to see how the partnership can improve provision within schools. Improving communication within partner schools so that all school staff can understand the value of mentoring may help to alleviate some of the barriers that AHKM Learning Mentors face when implementing delivery. Further training and dissemination of good practice may also assist the AHKM LMs in their role.
10. Aimhigher Learning Mentors – examples of activities related to attainment

My one to one students usually come to me with a variety of issues which include low self esteem, poor confidence or behaviour issues. I work with them on what they want to do and how they plan to get there. One to one support usually increases their self esteem and confidence. We work on their aspirations and how we will get there by change of work attitude etc. Behaviour issues are dealt with by talking to them about consequences to both them and the people around them. By changing their work patterns and attitudes, which can mean help scheduling their work, revision support etc we can often increase their confidence and enthusiasm.

I have delivered study skill and revision workshops using simple (non subject specific) techniques and covering areas that they need to know before embarking on revision and exams. I have found that simple issues like reminding them who to go to in case of query and giving them revision techniques is well received.

An example is one student I am working with who is really struggling with her English work. She wrote one sentence in her mock exam which was "I can't do this, sorry". She can most certainly do it and is bright and able. She has gaps in her timetable so I am able to give her individual one to one support where we are working on coursework and exam skills including how not to get stressed, how to revise etc. Through working with her over time she is starting to believe that she can achieve and we have built up a trusting relationship. My input makes a difference, most markedly in the students attitude and esteem.

I offer revision sessions for year 10 and 11 throughout the academic year to help them prepare for the first major exams they encounter in their education, their GCSEs. I also co-ordinate the running of Relax and Revise which gives students the space and support to finish coursework, revise for exams or to discuss their future in a calm environment after school. There is no pressure to attend it is completely voluntary - many students attend every day after school because they find it a lot easier than working at home where there were too many distractions like TV, Facebook and MSN. In 2009 Rest and Revise was believed to be a contributing factor to raising attainment for the yr 11 students that attended regularly.

Last year, I was asked by the English department to work with some AH students on their course work to help them raise the standard of their work to the all important C grade. It was a case of expanding vocabulary and adjusting sentence structure to create the right mood. The students needed additional help understanding the language, themes, structure and context of the poetry. They also needed help focusing on what the question was asking, how to structure the essay (point, example, explanation, deduction) and with finding relevant examples in the text to support the points they made.

The students worked with me on a 1:1 basis and sometimes just used the session to get the work done in a quiet, safe environment. All the students I worked with gained a C grade.
11. Appendix

Evidence showing impact on student achievement

Data was collated for 2 groups:

Group 1 – AHKM Mentees who participated in Aimhigher activities including mentoring before and during Year 11

Group 2 – A sample of students who did not participate in Aimhigher and who had same FFT estimated GCSE Total Points score of group 1

The following data was compared for the 2 groups of students

FFT Type B estimates at Year 9 an estimate of the GCSE Total Points Score of students

Actual GCSE Total Points Score

The difference was obtained to establish student achievement (increase or decrease of FFT estimated total points score)

A two-tailed T test was conducted on the data from the 2 groups showing that there was a significant difference in the achievement of the groups at 95% confidence level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T value</th>
<th>3.59</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t- Critical two tail (95% conf)</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>