

News Release

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Young people celebrated at Mentoring for Achievement Programme celebration event

Colin Neighbourhood Partnership (CNP) recently held a celebration event to mark the end of its two-year Mentoring for Achievement Programme.

The event, held in Youth Initiatives in Poleglass, was attended by pupils, teachers and CNP mentors. Two of the Colin area's youngest sporting heroes, boxers James Tennyson and Brendan Irvine, also made a guest appearance and gave inspirational speeches to the young attendees. Each pupil received a certificate of participation, a CNP goody bag, and lunch.

The Mentoring for Achievement Programme (MAP) was launched in the Colin area in April 2016 as part of CNP's 'Transitions' support programme. The MAP programme involves mentors working individually with children on a weekly basis for 2 years using a motivational interviewing technique. This method enables children to set goals and helps them identify ways of tackling barriers in order to achieve them. School attendance improved for 50% of the children, and punctuality improved for nearly 60%. However, the most important aspect of MAP has been developing patterns of behaviour and problem-solving that should long outlast the 2 years of their involvement.

Speaking at the event, CNP's Early Intervention Programme Manager, David Simpson, said: *"We are delighted to congratulate all the children and young people who have successfully taken part in the Mentoring for Achievement Programme and present them with certificates today. To date, 81 pupils from the Colin area, plus their teachers, have been involved with the MAP programme, with 16 schools across Colin, West and South Belfast and Lisburn*

taking part. Working with so many schools outside the Colin area (which was necessary because so many children transferred from local primary to post-primary schools during the 2 years of their involvement) has been a first for Colin Neighbourhood Partnership."

"Since April 2016, 2,860 mentoring sessions have been successfully completed, hundreds of meetings with class and subject teachers have taken place, and nearly 600 phone calls to parents had been made by mentors to keep parents informed. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff, teachers and mentors for their dedication to this programme."

If you are interested in finding more about the Mentoring for Achievement Programme, or would like to know about similar programmes in the Colin area, please contact Bernie Donaghy at Colin Neighbourhood Partnership on 028 90623813 or email bdonaghy@newcolin.com.

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Notes to editor:

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