



CITY YEAR UK

The City Year Mentor Handbook

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024



Give a year to tackling educational inequality

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What is City Year?

City Year UK is a youth and education charity which empowers diverse 18 to 25-year-olds to tackle educational inequality through a year of full-time volunteering in schools. Acting as student success coaches, they support pupils furthest from opportunity to achieve their full potential.

The City Year experience empowers these exceptional and diverse young people to realise their aspirations and grow as leaders, both through their impact on children's lives and through training, coaching and career development opportunities. City Year UK's volunteers are integral to the school day. They encourage pupils both in and out of the classroom to engage with and to enjoy learning, while developing their own skills. During the year they also take part in City Year's leadership development programme, where they benefit from additional training, delivered by experts from across the education, business and voluntary sectors.

City Year was first established in Boston, Massachusetts in 1988 and operates in 27 cities across the United States, as well as Johannesburg in South Africa. City Year UK launched in London in 2010 and has since expanded to the West Midlands in 2013 and Greater Manchester in 2015.

Culture

City Year takes pride in having a very distinct culture, sense of purpose and a strong identity. It influences the way we communicate with each other, our behaviour and attitudes towards people and the way we run the organisation.

At the centre of City Year's idealistic culture is an ever-growing collection of stories and quotations from many cultures and sources. They represent the civic values that guide City Year, set the organisation on course, and remind us of the most fundamental motivations for our work.

From the very beginning of your City Year journey you will be introduced to the City Year culture, from Putting Idealism To Work (PITWs) to first and final circles. Some elements may seem out of your comfort zone but embrace it. City Year is a programme where '**what you put in is what you get out**' definitely rings true. Please read through some of our founding stories to gain a true sense of who we are.

Vision

Our vision is of a society where the transformative power of full-time social action in schools is an integral part of growing up in the UK; supporting every child and young person to achieve their full potential.

Mission

Our mission is twofold:

- To give every pupil the chance to succeed, by partnering with schools to coach those furthest from opportunity to achieve the social, emotional and academic results they need to progress at every stage of their education.

and

- To tap into the talent, energy and idealism of diverse young adults to drive social change in education and develop the standout experience, leadership skills and networks to launch any career.

Values

RESPONSIBILITY: we are the change we wish to see in society.

INCLUSION: we unite from all backgrounds to serve a cause greater than ourselves.

PROGRESSION: we are dedicated to the personal and professional development of all.

ACTION: we don't just talk, we do. We are always ready.

EXCELLENCE: we strive for nothing less, no matter where we start.

Acting as role models, mentors and tutors, our City Year Mentors support pupils furthest from opportunity to enjoy and succeed at school. But that's not all. Over the course of their City Year, they also have the opportunity to develop as leaders, with the passion, values, experience and skills to go on to lead transformational change in their communities long after their year of service.

What makes our young people extraordinary is their ambition to improve the lives of children, a willingness to stand up as a role model, the desire to keep learning themselves and the determination and resilience to see the year through.



What is a City Year Mentor?

A City Year Mentor will work in a primary or secondary school and will usually be given a year group to focus on. Within that year group, they will have a group of students they will work alongside. This group is commonly referred to as the 'focus list'. The focus list students are chosen by the school staff and have been identified as students who would greatly benefit from having a near-peer mentor and will need help with one or more of the following areas: attendance, behaviour, curriculum or development (well-being).

Role Description

Our City Year Mentors act as student success coaches, helping pupils achieve their full potential by supporting them to develop key social, emotional and academic skills. They volunteer, usually full-time, from the hours 8am - 4pm, Monday to Thursday and 10am - 4pm on Friday.

City Year Mentors are integral to the school day. As part of a team, they encourage pupils both in and out of the classroom to engage with and enjoy learning, by providing 1:1 and small group support in class and running breakfast and after-school clubs.

As role models, our mentors are uniquely well-placed to create meaningful relationships with children who need help to do well at school. They bring a new perspective to learning and boost pupils' confidence, while improving behaviour, creating no-bullying cultures and helping pupils to feel safe, empowered and happy.

Our City Year Mentors embody a powerful culture which runs through everything they do, and our distinctive uniform helps them be highly visible role models around the school and wider community.

City Year UK is a Leadership Development Programme and we take the personal and professional development of our mentors very seriously. As a way of measuring development, we create specially tailored Professional Development Programmes for each City Year Mentor to help them develop the key skills and competencies that employers are looking for - things like planning and organisation, communication, problem solving, taking the initiative, resilience and self-awareness.



The Need for City Year Mentors

There's a gap between what schools have been historically designed and resourced to do, and what children need. Many pupils need more support than even the best teachers and school staff have the resources to provide. City Year UK helps bridge the gap. Our City Year Mentors provide full-time, individualised attention to children and promote a positive culture throughout the whole school.

Great teachers are key - we know they are the most critical factor in driving pupil achievement. But schools have not traditionally been designed to meet the unique needs of all pupils, and may struggle with the pressures of providing all the additional support pupils require.

We bring additional people power to schools where at least 30% of pupils are from low income backgrounds.

- If children don't see the point of school, our volunteers inspire and show them what they can achieve.
- We have a proven impact on attendance, behaviour and curriculum performance.
- We build meaningful, trusting relationships with focus list pupils to tackle frustration, anger and low self-esteem.
- We create an environment where children look forward to school and enjoy learning.
- We help pupils develop the skills they need to face emotional and social challenges.



"A year of service is a learning experience for both City Year Mentors and their Impact Officer because you learn to discover yourself as a leader with strengths and weaknesses and as a consequence, you become more determined to "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

Impact Officer, London

The City Year Impact Officer - Your First Point of Contact

Impact Officers are school-based City Year UK employees who manage up to two teams of City Year Mentors in schools Monday to Thursday, and support Leadership and Development training days on Fridays.

The key tasks of an Impact Officer include:

- Managing teams of City Year Mentors in schools
- Being the custodian of the City Year UK programme delivery including strong City Year UK culture
- Coordinate, manage, and evaluate the activities that City Year UK provide
- Lead on City Year Mentors' professional development and provide pastoral support
- Responsibility for ensuring efficient administration processes and keeping all of our data systems running smoothly

Your Impact Officer is your 'go to' person for any questions you may have about the programme or when you are unsure about how to do something. They are also there to talk to and support you if you are experiencing any difficulties in your volunteering or personal life



Expectations

What we expect from you

- To always treat your teammates, students, school staff and City Year staff with respect, consideration and appreciation.
- To act professionally and remember that you are representing City Year UK at all times.
- To be a positive role model for the students you work with and enforce positive behaviour.
- To commit to volunteering full-time for one academic year and to turn up on time everyday, letting your manager know as soon as possible of any absences or lateness.
- To comply and reinforce school policies and procedures and always report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- To embrace opportunities throughout the year and to integrate yourself into the school and into the City Year culture.

What you can expect from us

- To always treat you with respect, consideration and appreciation.
- Continuous support and guidance as well as access to the volunteer and employee assistance programme i.e VEAP.
- Honest and fair feedback on how you are performing as well as personalised development plans and regular 1:1s.
- Tailored training to help towards your personal and professional development.
- A clear breakdown of your role and responsibilities as well as clear and consistent communication.
- A fun and enjoyable working dynamic with lots of variation and opportunities, including the opportunity to have a corporate mentor.



City Year Mentors are volunteers not employees. You do not get paid for your time but we reimburse you for meals and travel expenses incurred whilst volunteering. HMRC set the rules for how volunteers can be reimbursed for their expenses that all volunteers and City Year UK must abide by.

What are volunteers entitled to receive?

- A daily allowance to cover the cost of meals whilst volunteering in schools (Living Allowance).
- Reimbursement of travel costs relating to City Year service for which receipts MUST be provided.
- All expenses are reimbursed weekly in arrears on Friday for that week (five days) that has just occurred.

How much is the Daily Allowance?

- City Year Mentors are entitled to £25 per day serving in London or £23 per day serving in the West Midlands & Greater Manchester
- No allowance is paid if you are absent for a whole day
- You are only entitled to the allowance for the days you are in school or serving City Year e.g training days, Repping the Red.

Which travel expenses are eligible for reimbursement?

- Daily travel to and from your home address to school.
- Travel to and from your home to any other place for training.
- Travel to any other City Year events such as 'Repping the Red', recruitment events, work shadowing at CY offices etc.
- Travel should be by public transport.
- All Oyster cards (for London City Year Mentors) must be registered on [this website](https://oyster.tfl.gov.uk/oyster/entry.do) (<https://oyster.tfl.gov.uk/oyster/entry.do>).

How do I get reimbursed for my expenses?

- City Year Mentors must take responsibility for logging their own travel expenses (with valid receipts) and attendance using City Year Connect app (Training will be provided during BTA). This will commence from the 2nd week of BTA.
- Attendance must be logged daily and travel once a week (with receipts attached) and Impact Officers will need to approve it before payment can be made.
- The finance team prepares a payment schedule for City Year Mentors every Friday at noon based on the attendance and expense records for that week (5 days ending on Friday). We aim to have all City Year Mentors reimbursed by the end of Friday for that week.

For example, for the week ending Friday 25th August, you will receive your allowance reimbursement on Friday the 25th for the 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th.

Remittances are sent out after each payment every week to your City Year email account. This shows the split between living and travel payments and we advise all City Year Mentors to view this should they have any queries with the payment they received.

What is a valid travel receipt?

For all sites receipts should be legible and MUST show:

- Date
- Zones / transport methods / route covered
- Price paid (not top ups)
- A Photo of the actual receipt can be attached or a screenshot can be uploaded containing the above information.

If the receipt has been lost, Finance will accept other forms as proof of payment, such as:

- Credit card or bank statement copy
- Oyster journey history
- Photo of ticket

If you do lose your receipt, please tell your Impact Officer immediately.

Can I get reimbursed for driving to school?

- Yes, depending on where you live it may be cheaper and easier for you to drive to school.
- City Year will reimburse you 45p for each mile you travel.
- To claim mileage, you must let your Impact Officer know the distance you travel each day. The Programme Manager must verify the distance and approve the mileage claim.
- **It is not necessary to submit petrol receipts to claim mileage.**
- Note: City Year do not cover your car maintenance costs. If your car breaks down and you cannot afford to fix it as it is an unforeseeable cost, you can make an application to the Hardship Fund but assuming you use it for personal use as well, City Year is unlikely to cover the cost.

Will I get reimbursed for parking?

No, you will not receive reimbursement for parking. However, most schools will have a free car park.

Can I ride my bike to school?

- Yes, just keep safe and follow the Highway Code (remember you are representing City Year if you are travelling in your uniform!); a helmet is recommended.
- Note: City Year do not cover your bike maintenance costs. If your bike breaks and you cannot afford to fix it as it is an unforeseeable cost, you can make an application to the Hardship Fund to cover the repairs but assuming you use it for personal use as well, City Year is unlikely to cover a substantial sum.

Are City Year Mentors entitled to other money?

Childcare:

- If you need support with childcare, speak to your Impact Officer.

Housing Benefit

- Housing benefit can be claimed in some circumstances but due to benefits rules not by volunteers who are University placement students. Your Impact Officer can provide a letter on request confirming that you are volunteering full-time for housing benefit purposes.

Jobseeker's Allowance

- City Year Mentors are NOT entitled to JSA

Student Finance Letter

- Ideally we like volunteers to have made arrangements for student finance before starting on the programme. If you require a letter to prove your status as a volunteer in order to receive student finance, speak to your Impact Officer as soon as possible. The Impact Officer will get in touch with finance who will be able to provide a volunteer confirmation letter.

If you are experiencing any financial difficulties during the year please speak to your Impact Officer for advice and support.

Uniform

The Red Jacket

We expect all City Year Mentors to wear the City Year uniform as it helps the students distinguish us from staff and unites us all as one. The red jacket is iconic and is the common bond across all three sites in the UK - students at returning schools understand that the red jacket belongs to someone they can trust and helps to create faster bonds as the initial barriers are already down. We expect the uniform to be kept neat and tidy, shoes to be sensible and white shirts to be tucked in. Please remember that when wearing the City Year uniform you are representing City Year.

The uniform consists of:

School days

White shirt / Smart white blouse
White shirts / Smart blouse to be tucked in
Black trousers
Red/Black or White Hijab
Black shoes
Red CY jacket
Red CY Coat

LDD days

Red CY T-shirt
Black trousers
Black shoes
Red CY jacket
Red/Black or White Hijab

What City Year provides:

Red CY T-shirt
Red CY jacket
Red CY Coat

What the City Year Mentors provide:

White shirt / Blouse (4 are recommended)
Black trousers (2 are recommended)
Black shoes (one good pair is recommended)

*If providing your own uniform is an issue, please speak to your Impact Officer asap at training.

**Some schools will allow City Year Mentors to wear trainers when on duty/walking bus/after-school clubs, please check with your Impact Officer.

***Uniform standards will be monitored by your Impact Officer, who will have the final sign off.



Leadership and Development Programme

City Year UK's Leadership and Development Programme is designed to help young people be successful at securing employment or progressing to higher education after their year of service.

City Year Mentors will:

- Participate on a year-long comprehensive training programme.
- Gain professional experience and key life skills to help them succeed in their chosen career after City Year - transferable to the public, private or not-for-profit sector.
- Have the chance to meet, network and learn from leaders within top organisations from across industries.
- Be matched to a mentor, typically a business professional who will help support their development and career plans after City Year.
- Achieve professional level 3 CMI qualifications in Coaching and Mentoring, and Leadership and Management.
- Develop 8 core competencies in line with the Skills Builder employability framework.

Leadership and Development Days, internally referred to as LDD, are training days which take place every Friday. These are either held in person at regional training venues or virtually where you log in from home.

Our approach is to create a programme which meets your needs and so remain responsive to your feedback; identifying where training gaps may exist and serving fill them. The training days are led by City Year staff and can include a range of focus areas from school-specific sessions to CV workshops and mock interviews. You can expect to receive a number of training sessions delivered by external guests; specialists in their area and personnel from our corporate partners.

Throughout the year there will be plenty of personal development opportunities available to City Year Mentors. These may vary from MP visits, attending recruitment fairs, speaking at events, delivering presentations, being assigned with a professional mentor and so much more. These are the opportunities which help you to grow as individuals and enhance your CV - so we encourage you to 'say yes' to as many opportunities as possible.



City Year UK's Leadership and Development Programme for 2023/24 is built around six thematic areas and delivered in three stages of:

Explore - Term 1; Focus - Term 2; and Achieve - Term 3.

1. REFLECT- Guided Reflection curriculum that develops civic identity and self-awareness.
2. LEARN - School Specific Skills that enables you to coach students to success.
3. IMPRESS - Personal and Professional Development workshops that aim to develop Skills Builder employability competencies that will allow City Year Mentors to thrive.
4. EARN - Career Progression opportunities that supports the City Year Mentors to transition into employment and continue their Leadership after City Year (LACY).
5. ACT - Social Action Projects where City Year Mentors can put their skills into practice in the community on issues that they care about.
6. CONNECT - Culture and Community events promoting local and global connection through City Year's unique culture and sites in the USA and South Africa.

Key Dates for your Calendar:

- 21/08/23 - 08/09/23: Basic Training Academy
 - (a combination of foundation training, inset days, and school service).
- 15/09/23 - 22/12/23: Explore - up to 13 days in the Autumn Term.
- 09/01/24 - 12/01/24: Advanced Training Academy.
- 19/01/24 - 22/03/24: Focus - Up to 8 days in the Spring Term.
- 19/04/24 - 12/07/24: Achieve - Up to 12 days in the Summer Term.
- Mid-July: Graduation Celebrations.
- August onward: ongoing Alumni engagement.

You can find out more about City Year UK's Leadership and Development Programme in our National Careers, Learning & Development brochure.



Policies and Procedures

During the City Year Mentors induction you will receive the following policies:

- City Year UK - City Year Mentor Agreement
- City Year UK - Safeguarding Handbook
- City Year UK - Confidentiality Agreement
- City Year UK - Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure for City Year Mentors.

All policies should be read carefully and thoroughly, you will be able to access these on the shared drive and should you wish to have a hard copy, please speak to your Impact Officer.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and pupil well-being are the most important priorities of any school and ensuring that children are safe is everyone's shared responsibility. Although this can be a sensitive and sometimes daunting area, there are several things you can do to ensure you and your team are prepared to deal with any situation.

You will receive comprehensive Safeguarding training during BTA as well as further training provided by the school. It is crucial you are aware who the designated Safeguarding Lead (commonly referred to as the DSL) at your school is, you will be told this information before you start school or during the inset days. If you are unsure of anything or ever in doubt if something is worth sharing, tell your DSL. Remember, once you have told the right person, you have done your part in safeguarding a child, it is then time to step back and let the DSL do their job.

Your safeguarding is also of importance to us. Your Impact Officer is there to support you during your school service, external support is available and we shall explore this more during basic training academy.



Resources

Practical

As the year progresses you will begin running after school clubs, starting interventions, even delivering sessions during LDD days. There is a [City Year Mentor resources](#) folder on the shared drive which you will have access to, this contains previous activities/presentations City Year Mentors before you have created and used.

Please feel free to use any of these to aid your year of service, and if you do, [you must make a copy and save it in your own drive](#). Any questions, please speak to your Impact Officer.

Support

The year can be challenging and we do not want you to go through it alone. Your Impact Officer is there to support you and guide you throughout the year, as is your team. We also offer all volunteers and staff a free and confidential counselling service.

Our Workplace Wellbeing Programme

We offer a range of well-being initiatives available to all Mentors, which include all of the features in the Plumm app. Plumm is a revolutionary well-being application designed to uplift your mind, body, and spirit.

With Plumm, you'll have access to confidential counselling and coaching services via real-person chat or video calls. As well as a wide range of online resources, including well-being courses, guided meditations and monthly webinars. You can use Plumm by downloading the app and logging into the service with your City Year email address. You will receive a welcome email in your first month with the organisation.

*All communications between staff and the provider are confidential. The only exceptions are if there are concerns of either illegal activity or physical harm to self or another when Plumm would report this to the City Year contact.

**For more information about PLUMM, talk to your Impact Officer,
or login at <https://plummhealth.com/account/login>**



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cityyear.org.uk

