DREAMSCHEME NORTHERN IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT



Registered charity number: NIC100033

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

"YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT ENABLES DREAMSCHEME NORTHERN IRELAND TO MAKE A MEANINGFUL AND LASTING DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE"



As I reflect on the past year, I am proud of the lifechanging impact that Dreamscheme Northern Ireland has had, and continues to have, on our young people.

The past year has been one of significant progress despite a very difficult operating environment. Although many challenges remain, particularly in securing sustainable funding and ensuring that we have the staffing capacity and resources to meet growing demand, I believe that Dreamscheme has a strong foundation on which to build, and we can approach the coming year with confidence.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank our Chief Executive, Jonny Luke, for his leadership during his first year in the role. Jonny has led the organisation with commitment and determination, and the Board has been encouraged by the progress made under his leadership.

I would also like to thank our staff and volunteers for their dedication throughout the year. Their commitment, professionalism and willingness to go the extra mile are exemplary.

Finally, I would like to thank all our funders, supporters and partners. Your continued support enables Dreamscheme Northern Ireland to make a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of young people.

I hope that you enjoy reading about our work and achievements over the past year.

CHAIRMAN

DAVID NICHOLL

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



"DREAMSCHEME REMAINS A SPECIAL PLACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEARN, GROW, AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS — AND I WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERY YOUNG PERSON WHO WALKS THROUGH OUR DOORS FEELS SEEN, SUPPORTED, AND ABLE TO FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL"

The past year has been an exciting one for Dreamscheme, full of excellent youth work and its share of challenges. It was my first year leading the organisation, and I am proud of what our team has delivered — particularly in the final quarter, when we were understaffed but still pulled together to get the job done.

Our young people have faced real pressures this year: drugs, vaping and social media, alongside anxiety, negative attitudes towards others and low aspirations around education. Our youth work programme was tailored to tackle these issues directly, while protecting the space for young people to have fun and connect with one another. I am especially proud of the new workshop resources and training manuals we developed, which have brought greater consistency to what we deliver across our programmes.

Behind the scenes it has also been a year of real progress, as we structured our operational team and strengthened our finance and fundraising functions.

The Board of Trustees has been a tremendous support during my first year, offering invaluable guidance and governance, and I thank them sincerely. My thanks also go to our volunteers, who have been outstanding in the support and guidance they give our young people. I was delighted to see a new partnership take shape with Muskoka Woods, giving young people the chance to take part in a life-changing trip focused on leadership development — exactly what we strive for at Dreamscheme.

You will also read about our 'Her Voice Matters' campaign, tackling violence against women and girls. This pilot was a real success, and I hope we can continue it next year alongside the local schools we work with.

Finally, my thanks to all our supporters and funders. Because of you, young people have a far greater chance of reaching their potential.

I hope you enjoy the report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

JONNY LUKE

WHO WE ARE



HISTORY

What began in 2004 as grassroots youth work has grown, over two decades, into the community and schools programmes Dreamscheme delivers today

MISSION

We aim to inspire and equip at-risk young people through long-term, practical support and transformational experiences

Targeted

Relational

Developmental

Informal

Practical

Holistic

Long-term

ETHOS & VALUES

We are motivated by Christian compassion, believe in the God-given worth and potential of every young person regardless of their background, and have a deep commitment to making a difference

THE NEED

EVERY YEAR, THOUSANDS OF NI'S YOUNG PEOPLE ARE LEFT WITH NO PATH FORWARD

FREE SCHOOL MEAL PUPILS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO LEAVE SCHOOL WITH NO GCSES

57% DO NOT ATTEND A FULL WEEK OF SCHOOL

MENTAL HEALTH

Young people in Northern Ireland are under real pressure. Around one in four experience anxiety or depression — and among Dreamscheme young people, 56% tell us they experience anxiety. Safeguarding concerns in local schools have risen by 47% this year.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY

Many of the young people we support are navigating difficult home and social circumstances. A third live in lone-parent households. A quarter feel lonely and long for a stronger sense of belonging, three in ten say they lack good friendships, and almost as many feel unable to talk to their parents about hard things.

PRESSURES & CHOICES

Young people face intense external pressures in our communities, including social media influences pushing drug use and risky behaviours.

78% feel pressured around alcohol and drugs, while 47% experience regular cyberbullying.

DEPRIVATION & EDUCATION

Young people from deprived backgrounds face significant educational barriers, with lower aspirations and higher disengagement from school. Those receiving free school meals score 29% lower at GCSE on average, while a staggering 57% do not attend a full week of school.

ASPIRATION & SELF-RELIANCE

Too many young people lack the confidence to chase their dreams or shape their own path. 30% tell us they have no clear plan for the future. Without the tools to make decisions, solve problems and take ownership, it is easy to stay stuck.

VALUES & PURPOSE

Young people are looking for direction and a clear sense of what they stand for. They want to understand their own values, what matters to them, and how those values shape the choices they make about friendships, education and their future.

OUR APPROACH

We aim to tackle the needs head-on by building mental health, community, resilience, and self-reliant futures for those who need it most.

We do this through both our community based programmes and schools work.

CONNECT

Young people build relationships and meet new people while learning in a safe environment

THRIVE

Young people get involved in practical work projects that enhance employability skills and give back to the community

SELECT

Young people get creative and are encouraged to try new things to enhance their skill set

LEARN TO LEAD

Young people develop leadership skills and give back to their communities

SCHOOLS

Young people are encouraged to engage with education while receiving pastoral support and learn through dynamic spaces

MENTORING

Young people get 1:1 support to cope and grow. Our aim is to lead a young person to be able to make better informed choices and build resilience

EXPLORE

Young people engage in challenging conversations to help them reconsider attitudes and open their minds. They have the opportunity to explore the Christian faith

EXPERIENCES

Young people step out of their comfort zone and build lasting memories on fun trips

OUR IMPACT



OF PUPILS INVOLVED IN OUR I:I MENTORING PROGRAMME RATED IT AS 'VERY GOOD OR EXCELLENT'



FELT THEIR OPINIONS WERE LISTENED TO AND ACTED UPON



OF YOUNG PEOPLE STATED THEY RECEIVED GOOD STAFF SUPPORT



REPORTED INCREASED CONFIDENCE



OF YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE LEARNED A NEW SKILL FROM OUR WORKSHOPS



OF YOUNG PEOPLE WOULD RECOMMEND DREAMSCHEME TO A FRIEND

THE IMPACT

WE RUN 48 WEEKS OF THE YEAR AND WITHIN THAT TIME FRAME WE MANAGED 392 YOUTH WORK SESSIONS

YOUTH WORK SESSIONS

392

II YOUNG PEOPLE CAME THROUGH OUR LEARN TO LEAD - YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

YOUNG LEADERS

II

VOLUNTEER HOURS FROM EITHER WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE OR BEHIND THE SCENES

VOLUNTEER HOURS

2164

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DEVELOPED A CHRISTIAN FAITH

FAITH

8

400

ENGAGEMENT

THROUGH BOTH OUR COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS PROGRAMMES WE HAD 400 YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGE WITH US

388

MENTORING SESSIONS

1:1 MENTORING SESSIONS DELIVERED IN SCHOOLS

450

COMMUNITY SERVICE

ACTS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE DELIVERED

28

FUNDERS

WE HAVE SOME VERY GENEROUS FUNDERS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS

32

TRIPS

TRIPS AND FUN EXPERIENCES ARE KEY FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS



CONNECT PROGRAMME

One of the things that really makes Dreamscheme unique is our commitment to supporting our young people all year round with an action-packed 48-week programme. Our evening Connect Hubs provide young people with a safe space to communicate, learn and be themselves.

We covered a wide range of topics over the last year, including:

Goal Setting
Politics and Debates
Personal Development and Identity
Romantic Relationships
Culture
Mental Health
Alcohol, Drugs and Vaping
Social Media

CONNECT HUBS

Our Connect Hubs are at the heart of our programmes, providing a welcoming place where young people can meet friends, build new relationships, and take part in our core workshops. These safe spaces support young people to grow while helping to divert them from anti-social or risk-taking behaviours.



FILTER DROP-INS

Our Filter programmes have also seen continued success, with young people stopping by the Four Winds and the Village Coffee Shop after school for a hot chocolate and a chat about mental health.



YOUTH SELECT

Our Youth Select programmes are designed for smaller interest groups, giving young people the opportunity to try activities they are keen to explore. This year, we were able to offer Couch to 5k, photography, social action projects, Christmas card work, and more.



"IT'S A GREAT PLACE, MY TWO BOYS LOVE IT! DEFINITELY CHECK THEM OUT! LOVELY STAFF, SO APPROACHABLE AND WOULD DO ANYTHING TO SUPPORT THE YOUNG PEOPLE!"
- PARENT

BELVOIR

There has been encouraging growth in the Belvoir Hub over the past year, with a consistent group of around 25 young people attending each week. Zara joined the Belvoir youth work team in August and has spent time getting to know our young people and supporting them in whatever way she can.

Some highlights from the past year include our packed summer programme, which featured trips to Let's Go Hydro, Belfast Zoo, and our annual residential. We also hosted our very own Belvoir Olympics, which was a great success. Our Belvoir young people have also taken part in a range of workshops, including healthy habits, community initiatives, and a culture night where we made our own burritos.

BRANIEL

Braniel continues to grow, with a strong and consistent group of young people attending each week, alongside new faces joining regularly. We are grateful that our young people continue to invite friends and welcome others into the Dreamscheme community.

We have focused on developing skills such as goal setting and encouraging young people to try new experiences. A highlight was our four-week Robot Building programme, where young people built and programmed their own robot to move. We also hosted our annual Community Christmas Dinner, a key event in our calendar. We were delighted to welcome The Lyric Theatre, who delivered two engaging drama workshops with the group. We also enjoyed trips to Prison Island, Laser Quest, an ice hockey match, and Braniel's favourite trip: go-karting.



HUB HIGHLIGHTS

OPERATING IN DIFFERENT AREAS, WE BRING ALL ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAMME TO EACH HUB

NORTH BELFAST

The North Belfast small girls' group has been a space where strong, trusting relationships have grown over the past three years, helping the girls feel comfortable, supported, and heard. Key highlights have included meaningful discussions around relationships, school, peer pressure, and social media. The girls have engaged openly in conversation, showing increased confidence and emotional awareness. Their willingness to share, listen, and reflect on their own experiences has been a clear sign of their development and of the supportive environment we have created together. This group also won 'Best Group' at our first annual Dreamscheme Awards!

NEWTOWNBREDA (BREDA / FOUR WINDS)

Over the past year at Four Winds, we have observed significant positive change within the group, particularly in the young people's confidence and in the relationships between staff, volunteers, and participants. A highlight has been the consistent weekly engagement of a group of young males who bring energy and fun, while also showing a strong willingness to take part in planned activities.

One young person, in particular, stood out for his positive attitude and initiative. Each week, he makes a point of checking in and offering his support. Since joining last year, his development has been remarkable, and we look forward to continuing to support his progress, along with that of the wider group.





"DREAMSCHEME IS SOMEWHERE I CAN JUST BE MYSELF. NO ONE JUDGES YOU HERE. IT'S THE HIGHLIGHT OF MY WEEK" - DAISY

ANTRIM

In Antrim, we have witnessed significant growth over the past six months, both in numbers and in participation, with 18 new young people coming through the doors and a consistent group attending each week. One of our priorities has been to ensure that Dreamscheme is a welcoming place for friends and newcomers, and the young people have helped create a culture that reflects this.

The group has developed strong friendships, and some of the young people's highlights have included our go-karting and Prison Island trips. We have also made a shift towards more interactive, activity-based workshops, and the positive impact has been clear, with young people eager and motivated to engage in learning new skills and experiences.

SUMMER @ DREAMSCHEME



Filled with opportunities for young people to learn, grow and connect through a range of exciting activities and shared experiences

Last summer was a busy and rewarding time for our young people, with plenty of opportunities to learn, grow and have fun together. Across the summer months, we delivered a wide range of activities, trips and shared experiences that helped young people build friendships, develop confidence and make lasting memories.

One of the main highlights was our area residential at Sheep Island View on the North Coast. This gave young people from different areas the chance to come together in a supportive and exciting environment. The residential included team games, group challenges and outdoor activities, all of which helped to strengthen relationships and encourage teamwork. A particular highlight was the coasteering trip from Ballintoy Harbour, which encouraged many young people to step outside their comfort zones and try something new.

Throughout the rest of the summer, we organised a variety of trips and outdoor experiences to keep young people active and engaged. These included a day trip to Newcastle, a walk from Helen's Bay to Bangor, and several trips to Let's Go Hydro Waterpark, which remains a favourite across the areas. These activities gave young people the chance to spend time together, enjoy the outdoors and build friendships in new settings.

Overall, the summer programme gave young people the opportunity to enjoy a memorable season filled with fun, challenge and connection. It was a valuable time for building confidence, trying new experiences and creating memories that will stay with them for years to come.









THRIVE WORK PROJECTS

"I ENJOYED WORKING ON THE PODCAST WITH MY FRIENDS, AS IT MADE THE EXPERIENCE FUN AND RELAXED. IT WAS A GREAT WAY TO TALK ABOUT THINGS THAT MATTER TO US, WHILE BUILDING CONFIDENCE, LEARNING NEW SKILLS, AND HAVING OUR VOICES HEARD"

We launched our first full year of the Thrive Work Projects programme, which is designed to create meaningful opportunities for young people to develop skills through creative and practical experiences. This year, the programme continued to grow, with a particular focus on digital skills. Young people took part in photography, podcasting, coding and videography, gaining hands-on experience in relevant and emerging fields. The programme broadened their awareness of career opportunities, encouraged conversations about future pathways and helped build confidence, transferable skills and positive aspirations for the future.

We were also pleased to have volunteers from the software engineering field, support and mentor young people, helping to highlight new opportunities, interests and skills.

Podcasting has been a particular highlight, giving young people the chance to create and share their own episodes online. It has been a powerful platform for self-expression, confidence-building and connection.

"THE CODING WORKSHOP GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO LEARN A NEW SKILL, BUILD MY CONFIDENCE, AND DO SOMETHING I HAD NEVER DONE BEFORE. BUILDING AND CODING A ROBOT WAS AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE, AND I'M GRATEFUL I GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART"



"I ENJOYED DOING THE PODCAST AS IT GAVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE OUR THOUGHTS ON THINGS. I DEFINITELY THINK DIGITAL PROJECTS LIKE PODCASTS ARE BENEFICIAL TO YOUNG PEOPLE AS I FEEL IT GIVES THEM A VOICE TO SHARE THEIR VIEWS ON TOPICS AND USE THEIR VOICES. I HAVE NEVER BEEN GIVEN THIS OPPORTUNITY BEFORE"

SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

This past year, we worked in five schools in our areas. We delivered 388 mentoring sessions, various small group programmes, and reached over 400 pupils through wider year group projects.

> *The mentoring programme has been invaluable to pupils in our schools this year by improving their wellbeing and challenging behaviours*
> *-Vice Principal, Antrim Grammar*



This year, our schools programmes continued to reach young people where they are, delivering high-quality, youth-centred activities inside classrooms and across school communities.
We worked with five schools locally in our communities to provide workshops, mentoring, and personal development sessions that build confidence, resilience, challenging behaviour and attitude, while increasing attendance and positivity towards their education.

Through our in-school provision, young people engaged in practical, interactive learning that supported their personal development, wellbeing and ability to build positive relationships with peers from different backgrounds. Teachers reported increased pupil engagement, improved attendance, and stronger participation in school life, while young people told us they felt more confident, motivated, and better equipped to make positive choices that help them thrive.

Our schools work remains a core part of our mission to ensure all young people, regardless of background or ability, have access to support and opportunities.

This year we were proud to be able to deliver more within schools in Breda Academy, Lagan College, Wellington College, Parkhall Integrated and secure a new partnership with Antrim Grammar. Our schools work is a valuable part of our work, ensuring that not only pupils are supported but also aid schools in delivering quality pastoral support.

> *I really needed the support this year in school, helping me improve my confidence to prove that I can achieve*
> *-Mentee*

Really enjoyed being in a space that you could just get food and ask questions about Faith and religion
-Beth



EXPLORE PROGRAMME

From March 2025 we had the opportunity to run two six-week Alpha Youth Courses, giving young people space to be curious, explore faith, and dive into life's big questions.

We built a core group for the course, and Hannah, one of our youth workers who helped deliver it, shared:

"It was amazing to see a group of teenage boys intrigued about faith and seeking to explore something that would be new to the majority of them. Alpha Youth is designed for teenagers who are curious about faith and addresses young people's big life questions surrounding faith, such as "What is Faith?", "Who is God?"

Other parts of our Explore programme included inviting young people to attend Summer Madness, and, where appropriate, following up to help them connect with their local churches. We have also been able to arrange discipleship classes as part of this programme for those interested.

The Explore programme is an important part of our work where young people, if interested, can get involved and think on some of life's deeper questions.

LEARN TO LEAD

Our new youth leadership programme builds confidence and equips young people to lead themselves and others.

100% of Learn to Lead participants said the programme helped them grow in confidence and become more likely to pursue a career.



In November 2024, we launched our brand-new monthly youth leadership programme, Learn to Lead. Eleven young people embarked on a journey to learn more about leading themselves and leading others, covering topics including self-discovery, teamwork, decision-making, and conflict management. This was a fantastic group of young leaders who showed immense desire to learn and apply their learnings in their personal and professional lives.

In February 2026, we had the incredible opportunity to take our young leaders to Muskoka Woods in Ontario, Canada. Located just north of Toronto, Muskoka Woods is a resort dedicated to children and young people, known globally for its year-round schools and retreats programme, as well as its world-class summer camp. Our group attended a Leadership Retreat at Muskoka Woods, where they immersed themselves in fun winter activities, unique leadership experiences, and a powerful talk from Ellen Brown, one of Muskoka's leaders

Overall, our first Learn to Lead programme was a resounding success, and we're excited to get our next cohort up and running soon.







"TO BE A LEADER YOU ALSO NEED TO BE CONFIDENT IN YOURSELF. IT HAS DEFINITELY MADE ME GROW IN CONFIDENCE AND EVEN WANT TO GO BACK TO MUSKOKA WOODS TO BE A LEADER IN THE FUTURE"

"IT REALLY HAS OPENED MY EYES AND HEART TO THE JOY OF LIFE, ESPECIALLY OUR TRIP TO CANADA"

"IT'S CHANGED MY PERSPECTIVE ON LEADERSHIP AND TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE TINY THINGS IN LIFE"

Our Dreamscheme Youth Council brings together young people from across our different Hubs to create a space where their voices are heard and their ideas matter. Last year, our Council consisted of five young people from the Braniel, Belvoir, Breda, and Four Winds areas who came together to design and deliver a campaign on an issue they were passionate about. Through discussion, ideas, and planning sessions, they chose to focus on mental health - a topic they felt was highly relevant and extremely important in young people's lives. We worked alongside our partners Made For More NI, who were amazing in helping our Youth Council produce a series of workshops.



The group designed an engaging mental health workshop that they delivered across our different Hubs. They challenged themselves to step out of their comfort zones, building confidence as they developed skills in communication, teamwork, and leadership.

Through this workshop, they saw the meaningful impact that can be achieved when young people are given the opportunity to lead. We are incredibly proud of what our Youth Council has achieved.

YOUTH COUNCIL

"OVERALL, BEING PART OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL HAS HELPED ME GROW IN CONFIDENCE, DEVELOP NEW SKILLS, AND FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE" - LIAM

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

HER VOICE MATTERS

1 in 4

GIRLS WILL EXPERIENCE DOMESTIC ABUSE IN THEIR LIFETIME

Domestic abuse remains one of the most pressing issues affecting girls and families in our community. Through our Her Voice Matters programme, we provide safe spaces for girls to share their experiences, access support, and begin their journey toward recovery. Our trained staff deliver trauma-informed interventions that empower participants to rebuild confidence and reclaim their independence.

This year, we supported 47 women through 1:1 sessions and group programmes. Participants reported significant improvements in emotional wellbeing, safety awareness, and self-esteem. By amplifying girls's voices and challenging the stigma around domestic abuse, we are working toward a community where every woman feels safe, heard, and valued.









> RAISING AWARENESS ON THIS ISSUE IS SO IMPORTANT AND BEING ABLE TO GIVE MY VOICE TO THIS HAS BEEN INCREDIBLE.
>
> — Programme Participant

TRIPS AND EXPERIENCES

At Dreamscheme, we believe in the value of trips not only as a reward, but as a way of creating memorable experiences that young people will grow and that they can take with them for the rest of their lives.

"I FEEL THAT WITHOUT DREAMSCHEME, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO SO MANY FUN THINGS WITH FRIENDS!"

— Jake









"I LOVE IT, I GET SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES AS WELL AS MEETING NEW PEOPLE" — EMILY

STORIES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

At Dreamscheme, some of the most powerful impacts cannot always be measured by statistics alone; it is also seen in the journey of transformation and in each young person's story. Here, we share a snapshot of the experiences of six young people who are at different stages of that journey



STORIES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE



Zara first became involved with Dreamscheme through Filter in Four Winds after school, where she was encouraged to attend regularly. The welcoming and friendly leaders had a big impact on her experience and helped make Dreamscheme a place she enjoyed being part of.

By choosing to become part of the community, Zara has had many fun opportunities, including go-karting, a trip to Stormont, and her favourite - the residential! Through her experiences with Dreamscheme and the support of the leaders around her, she has grown in confidence. She has also found the 1:1 mentoring sessions especially helpful, appreciating that the sessions could be relaxed and informal.

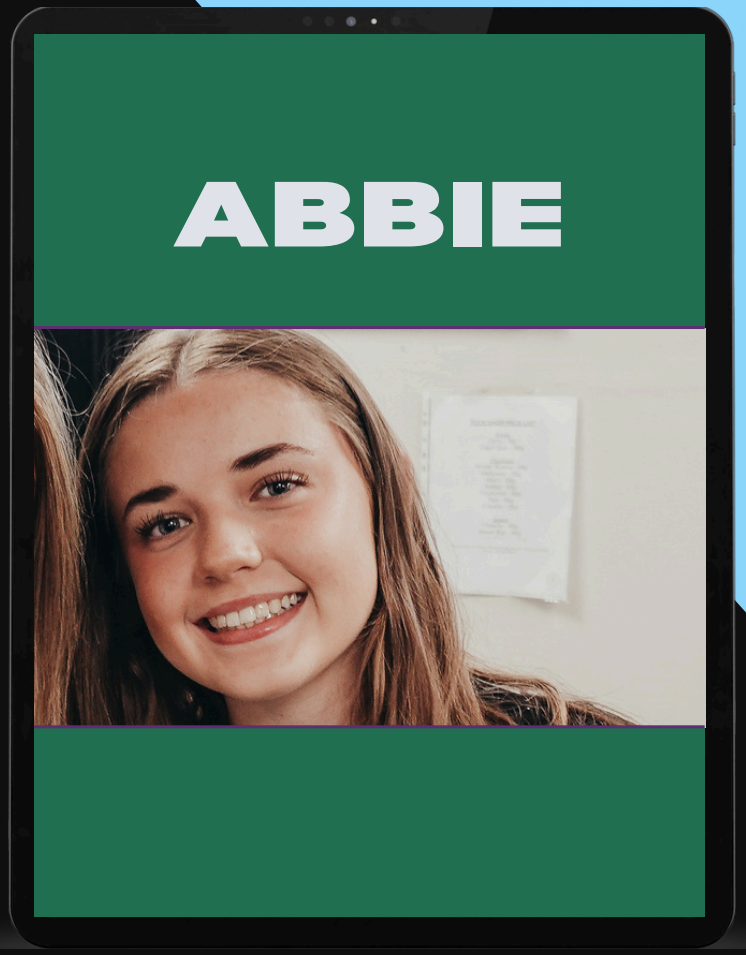
Zara valued having a trusted team of adults around her that she could rely on for support, advice, and encouragement.

STORIES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

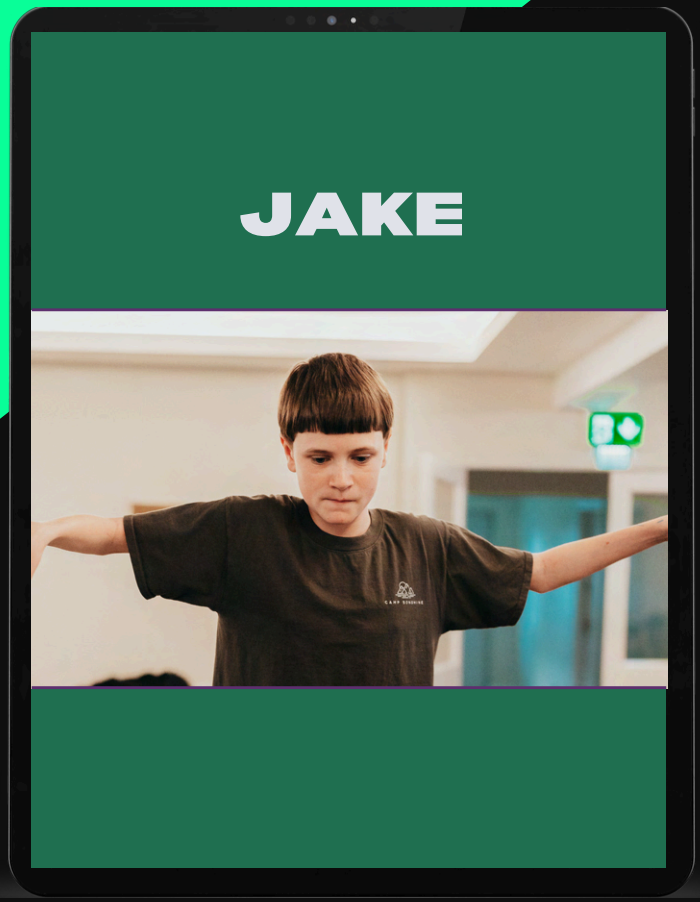
When Abbie first joined Dreamscheme, she was going to a grammar school where she didn't really know anyone and felt a little out of place. She was extremely quiet and shy, and was low in confidence in front of people.

Over time with consistent support and encouragement from Dreamscheme staff members and volunteers, she is a totally different person. She gets involved in all things Dreamscheme has to offer, from workshops and trips to games. She takes part in all activities with enthusiasm but now has the confidence to lead games from the front herself.

She has attended each residential the last few years and we are very excited that she is going to Camp Sonshine, Portugal in the summer this year.



STORIES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE



Jake first came to Dreamscheme after his brother Carl, who attended the Breda Hub, encouraged him to give it a try. What started as a place to spend time with friends quickly became something he looked forward to each week.

Jake loved the trips and activities on offer, but his standout memory is the opportunity to travel to Muskoka Woods, experiencing something completely different and making lasting memories.

Along the way, Jake gained practical skills, including learning how to write a CV. Dreamscheme even helped shape his career ambitions. Having always wanted to become a football manager, a conversation with Dave introduced him to a course to help him take his first steps towards that goal.

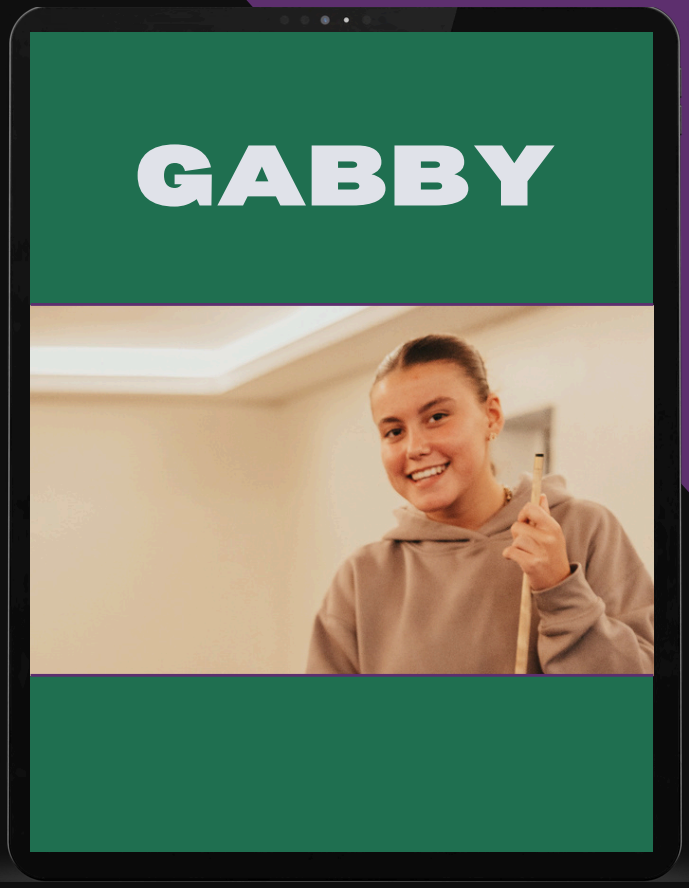
When Jake reflects on the people who made the biggest difference, Jonny stands out, always taking the time to check in with him and helping to make Dreamscheme feel like a second home.

Jake's advice to other young people is simple: step outside your comfort zone and give something new a chance. For him, saying yes to Dreamscheme led to new experiences, valuable skills, and friendships he'll always remember.

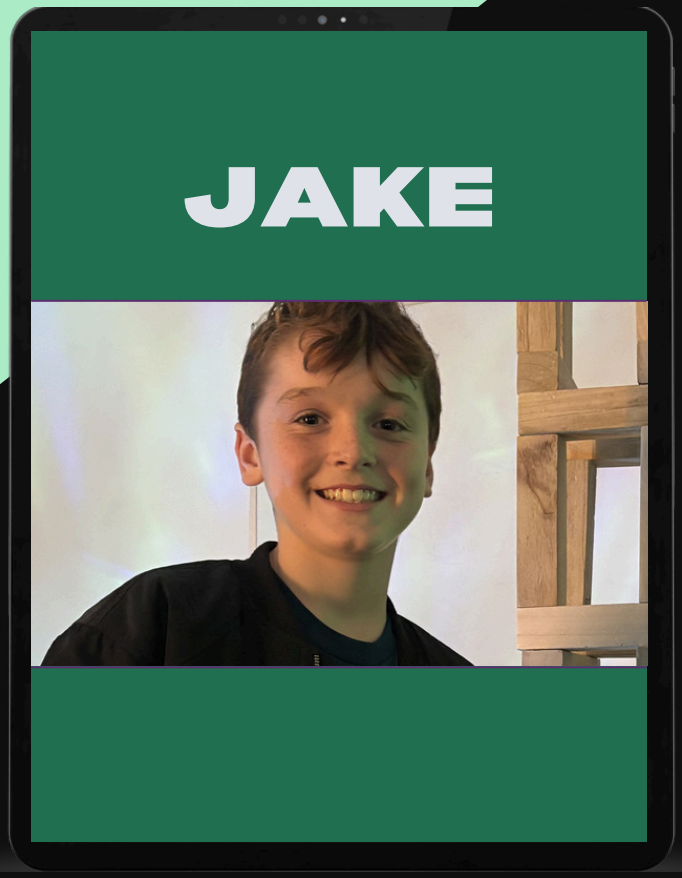
STORIES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Gabby has been part of the North Belfast Dreamscheme group since September 2022 and has continued to look forward to attending each week. Over this time, Dreamscheme has provided her with a safe, supportive space where she has been able to be herself and open up more confidently about things she may once have kept to herself. Her strong relationship with her group and leader, Lizzie, has played an important role in helping her feel listened to, understood, and comfortable seeking support.

Dreamscheme has also had a significant impact on Gabby's confidence in speaking to others and making new friends. What once felt difficult has grown into an opportunity for her to connect with young people from other groups in a positive and non-judgmental environment. With the encouragement of leaders and those around her, Gabby has grown in confidence and become more comfortable in herself. She has valued being part of Dreamscheme and the kindness and support she has received throughout her journey.



STORIES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE



Jake is currently in P7 and attends both Wednesday and Friday nights. He has been coming to Dreamscheme for just over a year, alongside his older brother Josh. When he first arrived, he was quite shy and lacked confidence, but over the past year we have seen a real growth in his self-belief.

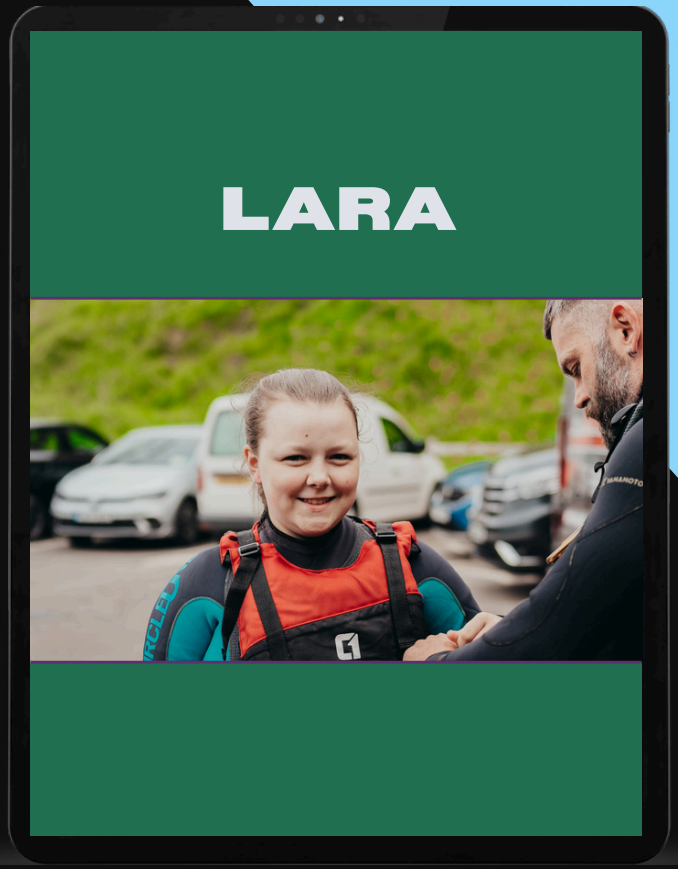
Jake is now much more outgoing, full of energy, and happy to get involved in everything we do. He rarely misses a night or drop-in, and is always eager to take part in games, workshops, and activities. It has been a privilege to support Jake as he has grown in confidence and begun to truly shine.

STORIES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

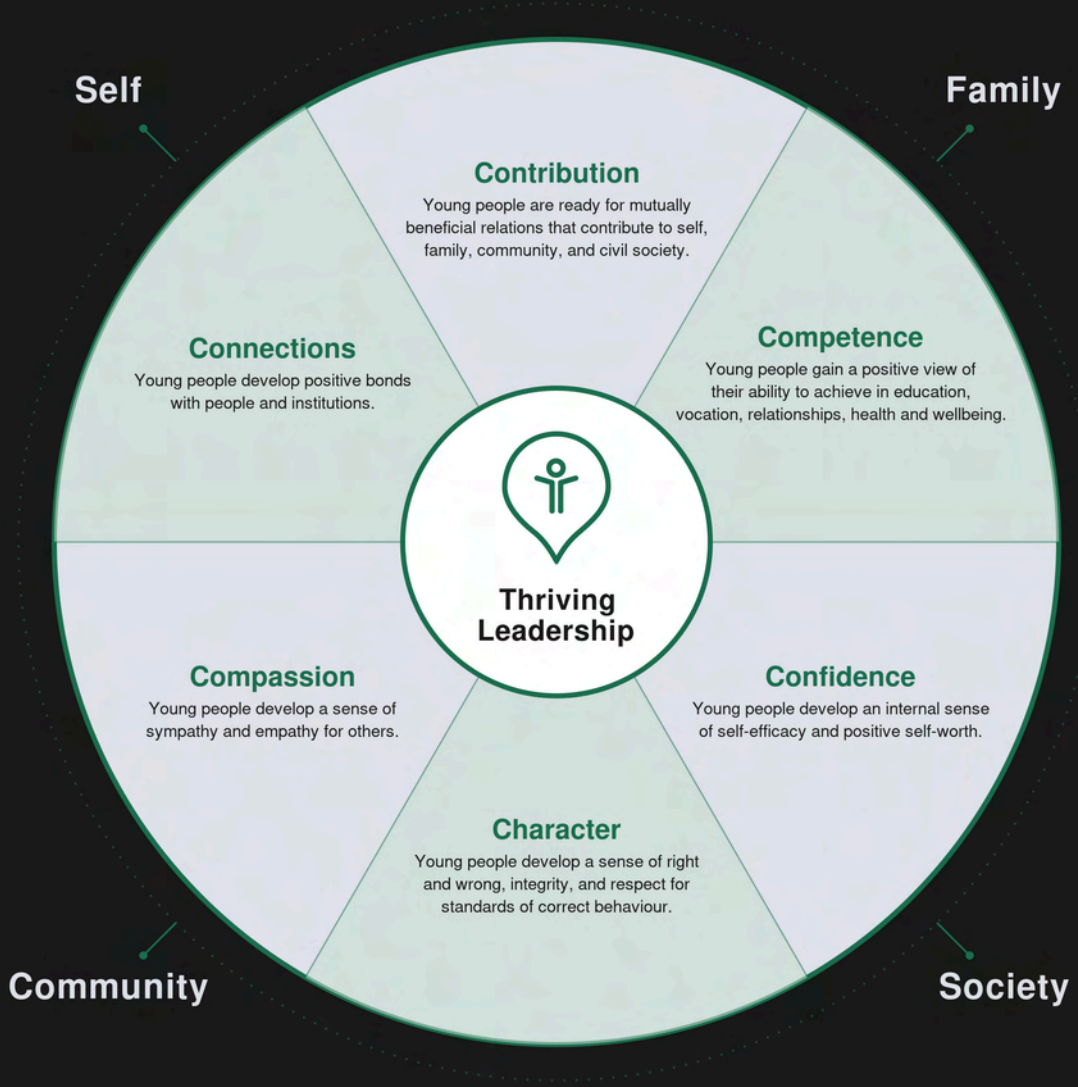
Lara is a young person from our Antrim Hub who has attended since we launched in the area four years ago. She first discovered Dreamscheme through a flyer and was curious to find out more.

Over her teenage years, Lara struggled with her mental health and, before coming to Dreamscheme, often found herself lashing out at others or withdrawing when she was overwhelmed. Since becoming involved, she has grown in her understanding of herself and, with support from youth workers, has developed ways to help regulate her emotions.

Through a range of experiences, workshops and challenges, Lara has grown significantly in confidence and resilience. She has valued the opportunity to connect, have fun, and build relationships with other young people in her area. We are very proud of the journey she has made and the challenges she has overcome.



Our Curriculum



STAFF AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

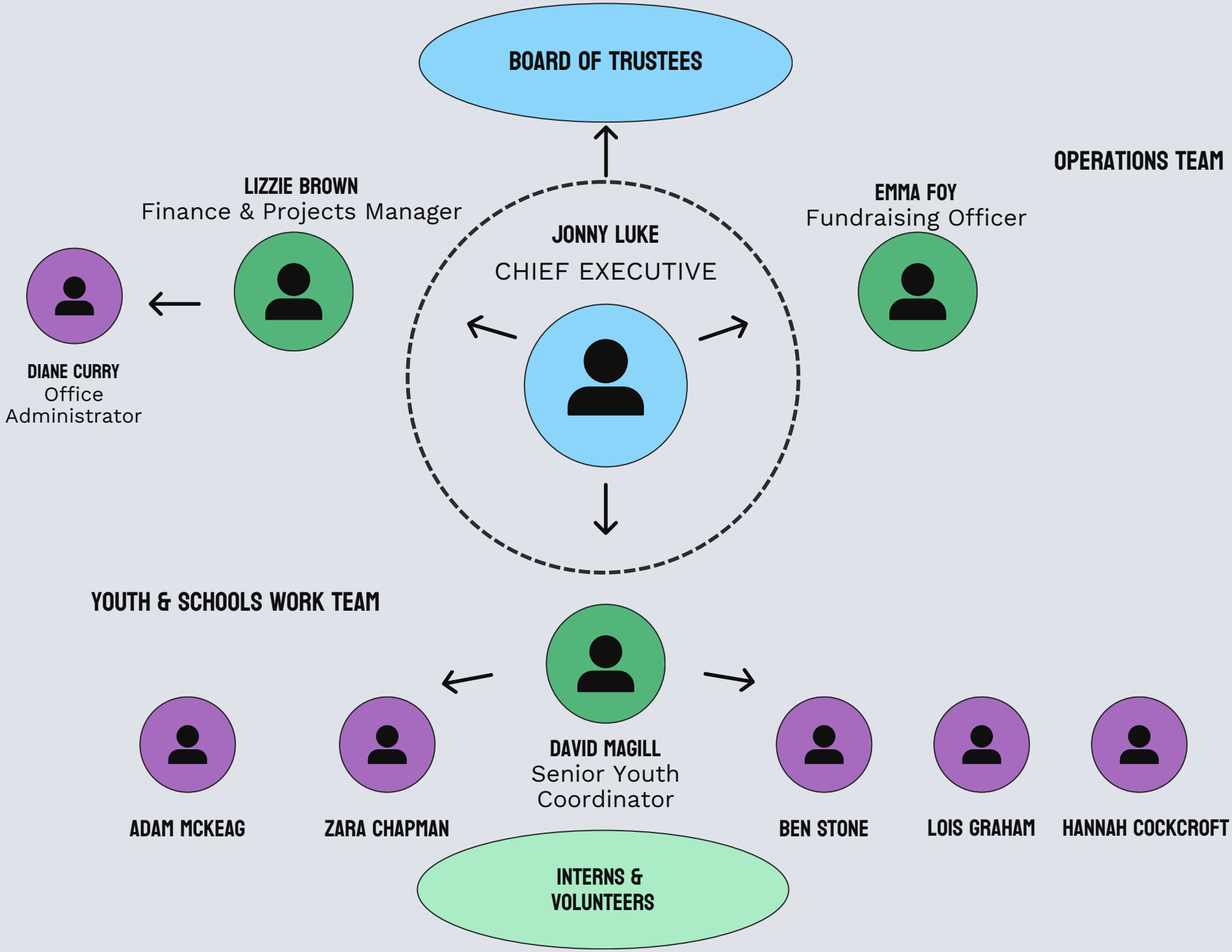


This year, we placed a strong emphasis on building the skills and the confidence of our staff and volunteer team, as well as a focus on wellbeing. Investing in our team's development is essential to delivering high-quality, safe, and impactful youth programmes across our Hubs. Our team engaged in ongoing learning to ensure they meet the evolving needs of young people.

Key development activities included:

- Safeguarding and wellbeing training – ensuring all staff and volunteers maintain the highest standards of care
- Trauma-informed practice – building skills to support young people who have experienced hardship
- Leadership development – supporting youth workers to grow as confident, capable leaders
- Digital safety – equipping our team to navigate online spaces responsibly with young people

Our staff team evolved over the past year to help with planning and individual roles to ensure that all operations and youth work tasks are being actioned and developed. Structures were put in place to ensure that our team developed in efficiency to meet the growing needs of our programmes and young people.


BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OPERATIONS TEAM
LIZZIE BROWN
Finance & Projects Manager
EMMA FOY
Fundraising Officer
JONNY LUKE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
DIANE CURRY
Office Administrator
YOUTH & SCHOOLS WORK TEAM
DAVID MAGILL
Senior Youth Coordinator
ADAM MCKEAG
ZARA CHAPMAN
BEN STONE
LOIS GRAHAM
HANNAH COCKCROFT
INTERNS & VOLUNTEERS

INTERNSHIP

Our internship programme offers young people a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in youth work, develop professional skills, and build confidence while making a meaningful impact in their communities.

In September 2025, we welcomed four new interns to the team: Andrew Rea, Rachel Warren, Romy Douglas and Jake Murray. All of our interns are long-term members of Dreamscheme, and we were so glad to see them take this step. Our interns have been hard at work learning the tricks of the trade in youth work, and have also been getting hands-on experience with workshop planning and delivery, event organisation and fundraising. We are so grateful to our team of interns for all the work they have put in so far!





"I joined the Dreamscheme internship to support the new generation that I saw my younger self in. Transitioning to intern opened my eyes to the passion leaders pour into each night. I've learned patience and how to balance authority with being someone young people feel safe around"

— **Rachel**



"I've learned there's so much more behind the scenes than just opening the youth centre for two hours. There's extensive planning to deliver workshops well, ensure nights run smoothly, and make fundraisers nearly perfect for them to work"

— Andrew



"I've learned so much more than expected—especially how vital a consistent, positive role model is for young people. I've picked up practical skills like managing group dynamics and building trust with closed-off kids. This has boosted my confidence and prepared me for a future in social work"

— **Romy**



"I've learned to tailor my patience to different young people, knowing Dreamscheme may be their only support —and these relationships last a lifetime. I also learned to deliver workshops that are both fun and educational"

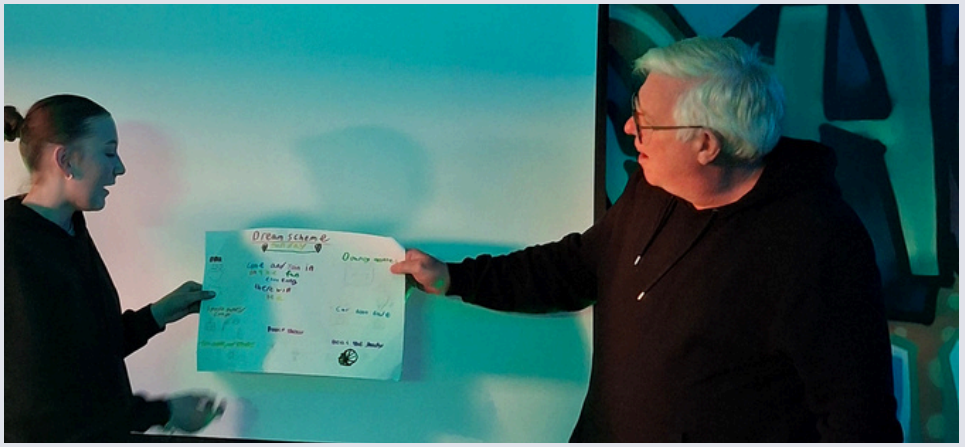
— **Jake**

VOLUNTEERS

We take great pride in our volunteers, whether they are directly supporting young people or contributing behind the scenes to ensure things run smoothly. This year we had 27 volunteers helping us support young people, lead programmes, and act as role models.











ONLINE ENGAGEMENT





FACEBOOK

107,000 views
1,550 accounts engaged

TIKTOK

140,000 views
3,600 accounts engaged

INSTAGRAM

280,000 views
3,000 accounts engaged

LINKEDIN

1,500 profile interactions
24% post engagement

WEBSITE & MAILING LIST

over 900 website visits
30% engagement on mailing list

STRATEGIC AIMS

THESE AIMS WILL ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY, IMPACT, AND GROWTH OF DREAMSCHEME FOR YEARS TO COME

YOUNG PEOPLE

EFFECT TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES IN COLLABORATION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

COLLABORATION

EXPLORE AND DEVELOP COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS THAT FURTHER OUR MISSION

YOUTH WORK

MAINTAIN A BEST-IN-CLASS PROGRAMME IN ALL ESTABLISHED HUBS

COMMUNICATIONS

DEVELOP A NETWORK OF SUPPORT BY CREATING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR STAKEHOLDERS

GROWTH

ESTABLISH NEW DREAMSCHEME HUBS IN AREAS OF IDENTIFIED NEED

OPPORTUNITIES

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PROVISION OF YOUTH WORK SECTOR TRAINING THAT WILL GENERATE INCOME

FINANCE

MAINTAIN SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR CURRENT HUBS AND EXPANSION

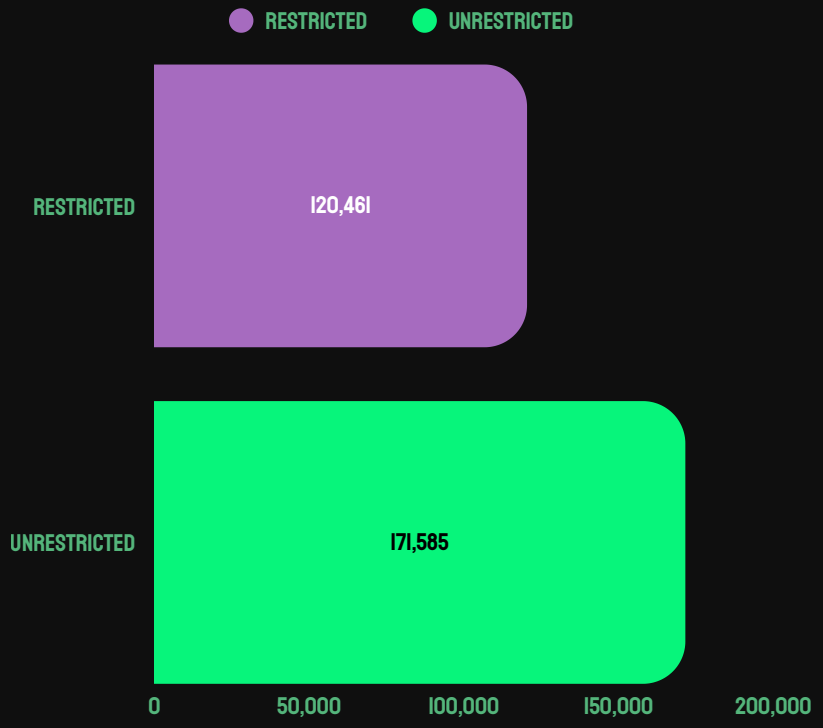
TEAM

INVEST IN THE CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT OF A WELL-TRAINED AND MOTIVATED TEAM OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

FINANCIALS 2025/26

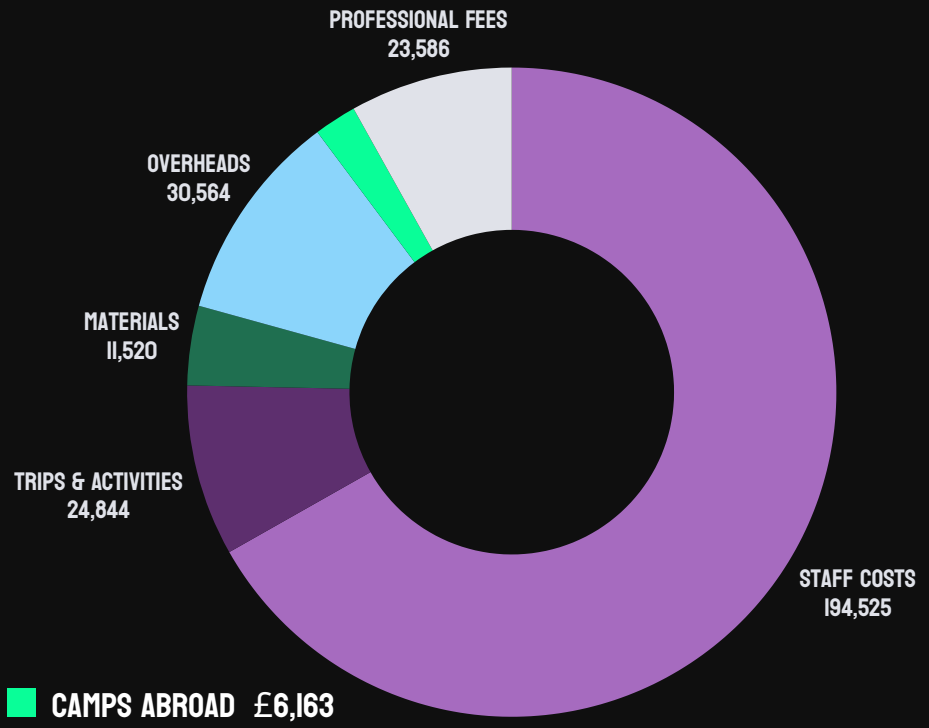
INCOME

TOTAL £292,046



EXPENDITURE

TOTAL £291,201



SURPLUS = £845

END OF YEAR CASH RESERVES = £17,654

Thank you to all our funders for their support! We are truly grateful for your continued generosity and commitment to our work with young people.

FUNDERS

Education Authority	Victoria Homes
RAISE Antrim	KFC
The James Kane Foundation	Enkalon Foundation
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	LCCC Policing and Community Safety Partnerships
Belfast City Council	BCC Policing and Community Safety Partnerships
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council	ANBC Policing and Community Safety Partnerships
Garfield Weston Foundation	House of Vic-Ryn Trust
Ardbarron Trust	Public Health Agency CLEAR Project
TBF Thompson	The Walter Watson Charitable Trust
The Steel Charitable Trust	Youth Justice Agency
Good News Evangelical Mission	The Executive Office Together: Building a United Community
Danske Bank	Garfield Weston Foundation
Unitrunk Ltd	Irish Youth Foundation
R.A. Irwin & Company Limited	

PARTNERSHIPS

We are thankful for all of our partners, including local schools, churches, and organisations. We see collaboration as an important part of our work, helping to provide young people with a holistic approach to their support and development.





MADE FOR MORE NI

“The work of Made for More across the education and youth sectors, reveals the growing need, not only for education and strategies that promote holistic well-being, but also the increasing need for continued support.

Each young person needs a positive role model to help guide and empower them. Each young person deserves to have someone see their God-given potential, and help them fulfil it.

This is where the work of Dreamscheme is invaluable.”

MADE FOR MORE NI

GAMELOCKER

CAMP SONSHINE PORTUGAL

MUSKOKA WOODS, CANADA

MILLTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH

BRANIEL CHURCH

NEWTOWNBREDA BAPTIST CHURCH

BREDA ACADEMY

LAGAN COLLEGE

WELLINGTON COLLEGE

ANTRIM GRAMMAR SCHOOL

PARKHALL INTEGRATED COLLEGE

THE FOUR WINDS BAR & GRILL

GOVERNANCE



OUR STRUCTURE

Dreamscheme Northern Ireland was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in May 2013 (NI618264) and registered as a charity in March 2014 (NIC100033).

Dreamscheme is governed by a Board of seven Trustees with a range of knowledge, skills and experience to govern the organisation.

The Board has appointed a Chief Executive to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity within a Framework of Control established by the Board.

OUR TRUSTEES

David Nicholl LLB, FCPFA (Chairman)

David Wilson FCA (Treasurer)

Lex McVicker (Secretary)

David Currie

Heather Grills

Billy McClean

Jeff Neill

Board Administrator - Liz Cameron

The Board of Trustees met five times during 2025/26.

RISK

Dreamscheme Northern Ireland maintains a Risk Register which records the risks that may affect the delivery of our Strategic Plan. The Risk Register provides an assessment of each risk and the actions being taken or needed to reduce the risk to a level acceptable to the Board.

The Secretary reports on the Risk Register at every Board meeting, outlining the main changes in the 'risk scores' since the previous meeting. The Board undertakes a review of the key risks facing the organisation every six months.

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND CONTROLS

Our Treasurer is a qualified accountant and provides assurance to the Board that sound financial systems and controls are in place and are operating effectively. The Board considers a detailed financial report at every meeting.

SAFEGUARDING

All of our Trustees, staff and volunteers are AccessNI cleared and receive regular training on our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and child protection matters generally.

Our Safeguarding Policy is reviewed and updated annually, and safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda of every Board meeting.


UNITE
AGAINST
HATE


THANK YOU
www.dreamschemeni.org



"DREAMSCHEME IS MORE THAN JUST A PLACE — IT'S WHERE I'VE LEARNED TO GROW, FIND NEW INTERESTS, CONNECT WITH FRIENDS WHO TRULY SUPPORT ME, AND MAKE EVERY YEAR THE BEST IT COULD BE"

WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE THRIVE

WWW.DREAMSCHEMENI.ORG

EMAIL: INFO@DREAMSCHEMENI.ORG

DREAMSCHEME NORTHERN IRELAND
77A SAINTFIELD ROAD
BELFAST, BT8 7HN