ISRCTN97394558 https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN97394558

Evaluating the Breakthrough Mentoring scheme: a feasibility pilot randomised control trial (RCT) with vulnerable adolescents deemed at risk of exclusion in a secondary school setting.

Submission date
24/08/2015

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
08/09/2015

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
15/10/2020

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[ ] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Many young people experience mental, social and behavioural problems that can lead to negative consequences in later life, and the costs to society are high. It is proposed that providing a young person with an adult mentor (someone who is a positive force in their life) can help develop life skills, confidence and positive health which could avoid negative outcomes (e.g., poor attendance at school, engaging in risky behaviour). However, little research has been done to investigate whether mentoring programmes for young people can achieve some of these goals as there is a lack of well-designed studies within the United Kingdom. The Breakthrough mentoring scheme has been running in South Gloucestershire and other authorities for over 10 years. It is an activity-focused scheme in which a young person receives an adult mentor. There have been reports of positive outcomes for this scheme but it has not as yet been scientifically evaluated. This study aims to evaluate the Breakthrough mentoring programme and investigate whether providing students with a mentor can increase health, well-being and educational outcomes in these individuals.

Who can participate?
Students aged 11-16 years identified by school staff members as pupils that would benefit from Breakthrough mentoring scheme.

What does the study involve?
Participants are randomly allocated into one of two groups. Those in group 1 receive a Breakthrough mentor (the intervention group) for the coming school year. Those in group 2 (the control group) do not receive a mentor .' Irrespective of which group participants are allocated to, both continue to receive all the usual care and support provided by their school. All study participants are asked to complete a questionnaire at the start of the study (baseline), 6, 12 and 18 months later. This questionnaire asks about participants' feelings, health, behaviour and well-being. We also run interviews with participants to explore, for example, what they thought about participating in the study, having or not having a mentor and completing the

questionnaires. In addition, we interview or have small group discussions with other people involved in the process such as teachers and parents to explore their views of the study. Later, we look closely at both groups to see if there are any differences. However, as this is a feasibility study, sometimes called a 'pilot,' we would need to conduct a further larger study (a definitive randomised control trial) to check if these differences were related to mentoring.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participants taking part in this research have the opportunity to participate in this research project and to tell us about their experiences of this. Each time participants complete a questionnaire (and an interview) they are provided with a gift voucher of £15. Regardless of whether participants are selected to receive a mentor or not, they will receive the same amount of overall money. Additionally, participants have a 1 in 2 (50%) chance of getting a mentor. This mentor will then be with the participant for a school year and will engage in activities that the participant would like to do. Participants can decide on the activities they want to do, when they want to meet with their mentor and on the goals they would like to set for themselves. There are no known risks in taking part in this study other than participants are required to spend approximately an hour of their time completing the questionnaire and taking part in an interview. Some participants as a result of completing this questionnaire and talking to the researchers may reveal very personal information that may have to be acted upon. Thus, whilst all information that participants provide is treated as confidential and no information about what they say is shared with others, the researcher may have to break confidentiality and inform another person if they believe a participant's health or safety is in danger. All study participants allocated to either the intervention or control group are made aware of the possible need to break confidentiality during the consent process at the start of the study.

Where is the study run from?
School of Community and Social Medicine, University of Bristol (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
June 2013 to September 2015

Who is funding the study?
National Institute for Health Research (UK)

Who is the main contact?
1. Dr Angela Beattie (public)
angela.beattie@bristol.ac.uk
2. Professor Rona Campbell (scientific)

Contact information

Type(s)
Public

Contact name
Dr Angela Beattie

Contact details
University of Bristol
Canynge Hall
39 Whatley Road

Bristol
United Kingdom
BS8 2PS
+44(0)117 9287351
angela.beattie@bristol.ac.uk

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
Prof Rona Campbell

Contact details
University of Bristol
Canynge Hall
39 Whatley Road
Bristol
United Kingdom
BS8 2PS

Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
Version 1 dated 12/12/2013

Study information

Scientific Title
Mentoring vulnerable and excluded adolescents to achieve better health and well-being: A feasibility study and pilot randomised control trial (RCT) of the Breakthrough Mentoring Scheme.

Study objectives
This study will assess and evaluate the perceived helpfulness of the Breakthrough mentoring programme. It will also explore the feasibility and acceptability of individually randomising vulnerable young adolescents to intervention and control groups, collecting outcome data and estimating the parameters needed to design a definitive RCT.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Committee for Ethics (FCE), University of Bristol, 20/06/2013, ref: 121358

.

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design

A feasibility study and pilot randomised control trial (RCT) of the Breakthrough Mentoring Scheme, compared with usual care including an embedded process and cost evaluation.

Study type(s)
Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Vulnerable young people (11-16 years) engaging in multiple risk behaviours deemed at risk of exclusion by school staff.

Interventions
Participants allocated to the intervention will receive Breakthrough mentoring for a school year in addition to any on-going support provided by the school.
Control group participants will continue to receive care as usual i.e., any on-going support provided by the school.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
This study will assess and evaluate the perceived helpfulness of the Breakthrough Mentoring Programme by conducting a qualitative process evaluation. It will also explore the feasibility of collecting data and estimating the parameters needed to design a definitive RCT.

Measured at baseline, 6, 12 & 18 month follow-ups.

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire (SDQ)
2. Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)
3. Social Connectedness Scale- Revised (SCS-R)
4. Questions about risk behaviour (sexual health, alcohol and drug taking)

Assessed at the start of the study (baseline), 6, 12 and 18 months later

Completion date
30/09/2015

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Students aged 11-16 years identified by school staff members as pupils that would benefit from Breakthrough mentoring scheme.

Participant type(s)
Healthy volunteer

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group

Child

Lower age limit
11 Years

Upper age limit
16 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
21

Key exclusion criteria
Students will be excluded if they are either currently receiving or have received Breakthrough mentoring in the past.

Date of first enrolment
10/09/2013

Date of final enrolment
18/12/2013

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
School of Community and Social Medicine, University of Bristol
Canynge Hall
39 Whatley Road
Bristol
United Kingdom
BS8 2PS

Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Bristol

ROR

https://ror.org/0524sp257

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
National Institute for Health Research

Alternative Name(s)
National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not provided at time of registration

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Abstract results	abstract	01/11/2016	15/10/2020	No	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes