



**Villiers Park**  
Educational Trust



# Impact Report

2018-19

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Empowering young people to succeed

“

If I hadn't been supported by Villiers Park I would never have been exposed to the things I have been. My parents have never set foot in a university, but through Villiers Park I have been to Cambridge University THREE times! When I go to university that will be quite an achievement for my family.”

Demi, Tyneside



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# Letter from Benjamin Wilson, Scholar Alumnus 2017



In my journey of realising my potential, Villiers Park played a vital role. Before joining the Scholars Programme, I was ambitious, but I lacked an understanding of what I was capable of achieving, had no view of my personal definition of success and little faith as to whether I could achieve it. Since neither of my parents went to university, they also struggled with pointing me in the right direction.

Our generation face a great deal of pressures and distractions: mentoring gave me the ability to focus on what was truly important. Through regular meetings, the guidance and accountability they provided meant that during exam seasons and throughout my studies I stayed on track to achieve my goals. Their support gave me confidence in my university application, especially so after visiting several high-ranking universities while on residential

courses and being told that I was capable of being part of these institutions. This faith in my ability and insight into my possible future contributed to the quality of my personal statement and gave me the guts to apply to the London School of Economics.

On the five-day subject-specific residential I rubbed shoulders with students from all walks of life and got a head-start on what to expect from studying a subject like economics at a higher level. This proved especially valuable at a time when A-level pressure was mounting, as it galvanized my ambitions.

The existence of an organisation like Villiers Park, that invests in young people, is essential, especially at a time when public education funding is falling, and educational inequality rising. As a state-school student, to be treated with respect and surrounded by people that believe in your ability is priceless. I remain forever grateful for the opportunities provided to me. The charity's fundamental goal of increasing social mobility is one I also intend to embody throughout my life.

Benjamin

# Introduction from Rae Tooth, Chief Executive



I was blown away by Benjamin Wilson when I met him at the Swindon Scholars Programme celebration event in the summer of 2019. He stood confidently before an audience of students, staff, parents, business people and local dignitaries, to speak passionately about the charity that had inspired and supported him to excel.

Villiers Park Educational Trust is a transformational organisation. We transform the lives of around 2000 less advantaged teenagers, like Benjamin, every year. Most come from areas of the UK where social mobility and the drive to enter higher education is low.

Our programmes have empowered our beneficiaries to apply to the very best courses at top universities – and they have been successful. Our way of working not only benefits our students, but embeds curiosity, tenacity and creativity in their communities, transforming generations to come.

As Villiers Park's new Chief Executive, I am excited by the many great opportunities for such an established organisation. We are working in a complex environment of rapid

change in education, the economy and civic society. More than ever it is essential that all young people, no matter their background, have the chance to fulfil their potential so they can contribute to building a diverse, successful, sustainable world.

When I speak with our students, they buzz with the desire to achieve. I can tell they want to take on the world and leave their mark. They see routes into and through higher education as key to their success. However, vision alone will not get them far enough. This is why we employ expert staff who are dedicated to nurturing their ambition. Our unique mix of skills and subject-focused modules, delivered in a framework of mentoring and coaching, ensures that our beneficiaries have the tools and knowledge they need to succeed.

Our work would not be possible without the generosity of our supporters, both individuals and organisations. Their contributions of time, money and expertise have brought Villiers Park Educational Trust to where we are today and allows us to be aspirational for our future.

We work to our values: Fairness. Aspiration. Courage. Empowerment. With these in mind, we are ever more committed to continuous learning and growth to ensure we make the biggest possible difference to even more young people.

We look forward to sharing our journey with you over the coming months and years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Rae'.

Rae

# Social mobility has stagnated since 2014\*

- More students from low income families are entering university by age 19, but still far fewer than those from more privileged backgrounds
- Only 5% of disadvantaged students enter top ranking universities and once there are more likely to drop out
- Graduates from the least well represented areas (POLAR Q1) earn almost 20% less after five years than those from more affluent areas

Villiers Park Educational Trust is working to improve outcomes for young people from less advantaged backgrounds. We support high ability, highly ambitious teenagers, broadening their horizons, increasing their confidence, encouraging curiosity, tenacity and creativity. Our extensive evaluation, looking at both short and long term outcomes for our students and their personal transformation, demonstrates the real impact Villiers Park has had over its long history.

Our students face multiple barriers to success, often influenced by their varied life experiences:



Eligible for Pupil Premium\*\*



Low household income



First in family to consider university



Young carer



Looked after Child

We want to provide a legacy that is felt down future generations not just for each family, but for the UK as a whole.

The goal of improving outcomes for less advantaged children in the UK is not one we can do alone. We have joined a coalition of other like-minded organisations to influence policy at the highest level.



Our wider team are making their voices heard in the House of Commons, representing Villiers Park at the All Party Parliamentary Group on social mobility.



Our Chief Executive, Rae Tooth, meeting with Chris Skidmore, Minister of State for Universities, alongside other third sector influencers.

\*Social Mobility Commission: State of the Nation report 2019.

\*\*Research shows a continuing widening attainment gap between those on pupil premium and their peers: Education Policy Institute, annual report 2019





# Mikayla's Story

"My brother is 22. He can't walk, talk, or communicate. He also has severe epilepsy. I help look after him before and after school.

My mum and stepdad are full time carers, with no regular income from employment. I work part time in a fast food restaurant to help support the family.

It's really hard to form a normal family dynamic. My mum and stepdad are totally exhausted. Even when my brother is in respite care we all have other things to do. We are under a lot of pressure because of our family life.

Despite everything, I've always had big plans. I want to study neuroscience at university. I am really interested in the brain – I want to know how people work! Neither my mum nor stepdad did A-levels or went on to higher education. Both are immensely proud of me, but can't offer any advice about what to do next.

Being able to take part in the Inspire2INVOLVE programme has broadened my ideas of what I want to do. And it's shown me I am competent enough to get there.



“ Young carers have potential, but don't have the chance to shine.”

A lot of young carers might not find out about opportunities like this, because they just don't have the time or inclination to find them. It's hard to find the energy.

I believe there are other young carers out there who have loads of potential, but don't have the chance to shine because of their commitments at home.”





## Riyadh's Story

"My town has one of the lowest levels of social mobility in the country," says Riyadh. "Young people there are less likely to push for the top universities or the top jobs. Villiers Park is helping to change that."

Riyadh describes himself as coming from an average working class background. His dad is a taxi driver, his mum, a homemaker. He's now in his third year of the Scholars Programme, which has given him access to opportunities – mentoring, residential courses, visits and trips – that he might not have experienced otherwise.

"Through Villiers Park, I visited Cambridge University. It made me realise that all the doubts I had about applying to Oxbridge were exactly that: just doubts, not based on fact," explains Riyadh.

"Villiers Park changes lives. It goes into deprived areas and pushes young people to challenge the stereotypes of where they might typically end up. It encourages people like me to believe that I deserve to reap the benefits of a brilliant university, or that I have the capability to apply for a top level job. That is an amazing thing."

“ Villiers Park changes lives. It goes into deprived areas and pushes young people to challenge the stereotypes of where they might typically end up.”



# Making the Biggest Possible Difference

At Villiers Park, we nurture ambition. Our unique programmes are all longitudinal in outlook, boosting students to think far beyond school and university to their future careers. We support them to develop the tools they need to be more curious, more tenacious, and more creative. We help them navigate the obstacles created by inequitable social structures and also work to remove barriers.



**Last year out of 418 Year 13 students over 80% are going to university.**

Our specialist work includes:

- Mentoring offering advice and support on how to reach potential
- Leadership projects that help students explore potential pathways for their futures
- Subject-specific courses taught at university level

## **What difference might our intervention make to the economy as a whole?**

Evidence suggests that increasing the UK's social mobility to the level of Western Europe would mean an economy boost of **£39 billion**.\*



\*Social mobility and Economic Success: How Social mobility boosts the economy (2017 The Sutton Trust and Oxera)



“ In a more socially mobile society, it is more likely that a job will be filled by someone with the highest level of potential to perform well in a job, rather than someone who may be less well suited but, for example, better connected. This better matching means the average productivity of a job should increase – on average, employees will be more suited to the job they are doing.”\*



# Trusted to Make a Difference

Specialist organisations know that we make a real difference to disadvantaged young people, which gives them confidence to support us through funding and their expertise. For example, MathWorks in Cambridge funds a maths course and sends volunteers to support delivery. The Reece Foundation helps fund our STEM Scholars Programme in Tyneside. Arm funds our 2020 STEM Scholars Programme in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Bedford.

In Swindon, Study Higher, as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme, funds a four year programme called Fantastic Futures.



“ On the 2020 STEM programme I developed so much in confidence, from leadership to public speaking. It made me realise that I wanted to pursue a career within the STEM field.”

Holly, 2020 STEM Programme Alumnus



**41%**

A\*-A grades gained by 2020 STEM Scholars at A-level.

National average **26%** for A\*-A at A-level.

# University Partnerships

Universities spend hundreds of millions of pounds every year working to give all young people, no matter their background, the opportunity to benefit from higher education. They work with the third sector because we are experts with a proven track record of making a difference.

Currently, our university and collegiate partners are: University of East Anglia, University of Sussex and, from the University of Cambridge, Trinity College, Downing College, and Emmanuel College.

## Inspire2INVOLVE

We are now into the third year of our partnerships with Downing College and Emmanuel College, who are funding the Inspire2INVOLVE programmes in Plymouth and South Essex, respectively. The one year programme includes a subject-specific residential course and an INVOLVE leadership project. They also visit the colleges to learn about life at the University of Cambridge.



"Inspire2INVOLVE is something you can put on your university application or talk about in an interview. It is a once-in-a-life-time opportunity. I caught the 5am train to Cambridge, but the long journey was totally worth it. During the week, I got to make friends from all over the UK. Our lectures were intense but that kept them interesting. By the end of the week, I didn't want to leave."

Aggie, Plymouth



**89%**

A\*-C grades gained by I2I students at A-level.

National average **76%** for A\*-C at A-level

“ The Programme is having a huge impact on our outlook and ability to connect students with higher education – the enriched engagement with students and schools in Plymouth is priceless. The teachers at the schools in Plymouth and Villiers Park staff have been instrumental in the achievements we are seeing today.”

Dr Kamran Yunus, Admissions Tutor at Downing College, University of Cambridge



"Being on the I2I programme encouraged me to develop my love of computer science for the benefit for others. It also gave me the chance to meet others like me and not have to dumb down my conversations! Some of my friends ask me why I want to go to Cambridge University, but most people, particularly my family, are really proud of my ambition."

Fabian, Essex



“

Being with the Villiers Park Programme gives high ability students, who aren't from privileged backgrounds, like me, a chance to have extra support and access to experiences I might not otherwise have had.”

Sumayyah, Swindon



# Skills for Success

We are not born with the skills to succeed. These are mastered over time. However, for children from more affluent families these skills, like confidence, initiative, and resilience, are often developed at an earlier age through the wealth of opportunities that are given to them.

Core soft skills are sometimes learnt at school, but more often than not through extracurricular activities. However, research shows that young people from less advantaged backgrounds won't necessarily benefit.

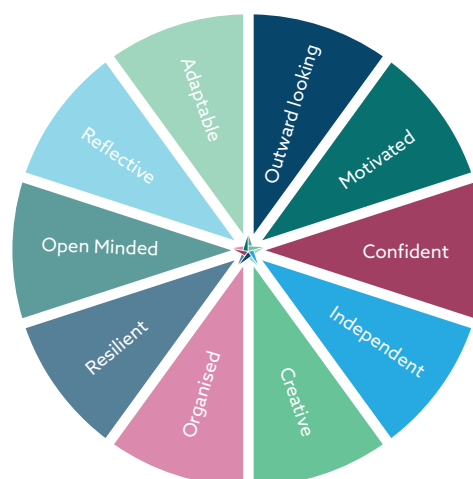
“Children from the poorest backgrounds are often priced out of participation. Sometimes young people do not participate [in extracurricular activities] because they just do not know that they can. And perhaps most revealing of all, some young people do not take part in activities because of their perceived exclusivity. They do not think they would fit in.”\*

These skills help people flourish in their personal and professional lives. Employers actively seek out people who demonstrate these traits: the ones we teach at Villiers Park.

## Behaviours



## Personal attributes



## Learning these skills at Villiers Park is creative and fun!



**Leadership. Project management. Teamwork:** Our students create their own political party ending with a hustings at the Cambridge Union.



**Confidence. Initiative. Risk-taking.** Our students are taught how to network effectively with a competition to gather business cards.



**Organisation. Decision-making. Creativity.** Our students build their own university, from name to courses to wellbeing.

\*Social Mobility Commission: *An Unequal Playing Field*. Foreword by Dame Martina Milburn, Chair of SMC

# Celebrating 10 Years of the Scholars

Since 2009 our Scholars Programme has worked with over 2000 young people, seeing them truly excel beyond what they thought was possible. Our ambitious plans for the future take on board the Programme's unique elements that have seen it thrive, year in, year out.

From Year 10-13, Scholars are supported through: mentoring, skills-based workshops, university masterclasses, subject-specific residential courses, and coaching in key employability skills.



“ There were quite a lot of young people back then who didn't do much outside school. I remember talking to one

girl, who was very able, but when I asked her what she liked to do in her spare time she said she didn't really “do” anything. I had to tease something out of her. You're looking for that little spark of engagement, something that shows a commitment. When you see the young people blossom, you think back to that first day and are reminded of how much they've changed. Most of them do us – and themselves – proud.”

Deborah Richardson, Villiers Park (helped launch the programme in 2009)



“ Being a Scholar opened doors for me which, as the child of a lower-income single-parent family,

would otherwise have been closed. I have many abiding memories of those early workshops – a trading game with tiny pieces of paper flying all over the room, and at one point being asked to re-enact Greek myths. Although I don't think any of us appreciated it at the time, I can see now that those activities provided us with much needed communication and problem-solving skills – plus a few funny stories!”

Connie, Scholar Alumna 2013 (Swindon)



# rs Programme

**Our end of year celebrations were particularly special in Hastings and Bexhill, and Swindon, where the Scholars Programme launched ten years ago.**

In 2018-19, the Programme ran in six areas of the UK, where there is low social mobility and young people are less likely to progress to higher education.



“The growth in their ambition, year after year, astounds me. Furthermore, it is the drive and self-awareness that they develop to achieve those ambitions.”

Alex Grant,  
Hastings and  
Bexhill Programme  
Manager



“I am privileged to be involved with an outstanding Programme that has had a profound and long-lasting impact on hundreds of young people.”

Becki Martin,  
Swindon  
Programme  
Manager



“To grow in confidence to be able to present at our end of year celebration event in a lecture theatre which seats up to 500 people is truly remarkable!”

Laura Anderson,  
Norfolk  
Programme  
Manager



“Having the chance to motivate them to push themselves to achieve what they assumed impossible, is an honour. Every day is completely different.”

Chica Coulson,  
Tyneside  
Learning  
Mentor



“It’s so important that people from all backgrounds are represented in top jobs – it’ll make society more intelligent, compassionate and fair.”

Polly Wallace-  
Kruger, Crawley  
Programme  
Manager

# Our Impact: Personal and Professional Skills

Our students take part in a leadership challenge called INVOLVE, which gives them the chance to create, launch and lead an enrichment activity in their school community.

Last year more than **300** students planned, developed and delivered projects to more than **12,000** beneficiaries.

Recognised on UCAS applications as a contribution towards preparation for higher education, the outcomes of INVOLVE are two-fold: those taking part have valuable information for their CV or interview, plus their peers may be inspired to explore new subjects or careers.

In 2018-19, students taking part in INVOLVE projects reported:\*

**97%** rated their overall experience as Good or Excellent

**94%** said they will write about INVOLVE on their personal statement or CV

**96%** of students had improved their communication skills

**95%** of students had improved their confidence

**93%** of students had improved their project management



“ Employers call these kinds of skills ‘transferable’. In terms of their applicability to the selective processes faced by high-aiming individuals, they could be seen as part of that set of intangible tools which sociologists since the 1970s have referred to as ‘cultural capital’.”

Dr Corinna Russell, Emmanuel College, Cambridge, partner with Villiers Park on Inspire2INVOLVE (Essex)

\*Based on 173 evaluation responses



# INVOLVE Projects

## 2018-19



### Carbon Footprint

Working with the Institute for Research in Schools, these students calculated the carbon footprint of the daily school run and looked at ways to reduce it, including planting saplings in their school grounds.

**Teamwork. Project management. Communication.**



### Spectrum

One inspirational Scholar collected gold and platinum awards for dedicating over 100 hours to setting up and running SPECTRUM, safe spaces within school for young people who identify as queer, questioning or an ally.

**Confidence. Resilience. Organisation.**

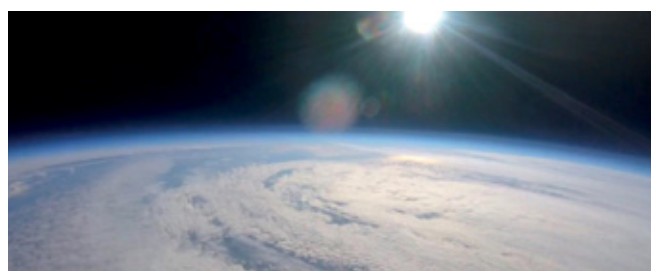


### Class Take Over

These scholars took over from the class teacher to give inspiring lessons on science

and astronomy. At a local primary school they demonstrated how to extract DNA from a strawberry and how to set fire to bubbles!

**Leadership. Risk taking. Adaptability.**

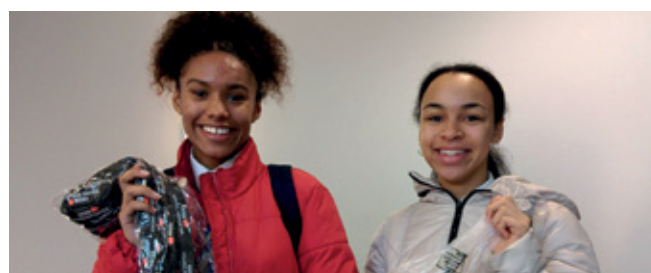


© Mark Rutherford School

### Out of this World

The Spaceflight Project involved designing and building a payload to be sent into the stratosphere via weather balloon. The students were able to track the location via a GPS tracker and took images of the Earth below using a Go-Pro camera.

**Project management. Creativity. Teamwork.**



### Period Poverty

Inspired to raise awareness of a campaign to improve sanitary protection for women and girls around the world, Holly, Dionne and Olivia did a brilliant project about period poverty. They filmed a video about the subject and included animations they'd drawn themselves.

**Initiative. Creativity. Independence.**





# Our Impact: Improving Academic Attainment

The young people we work with have huge potential. They are ambitious. They are curious. They are keen to become the best they can be. And we help them get there.

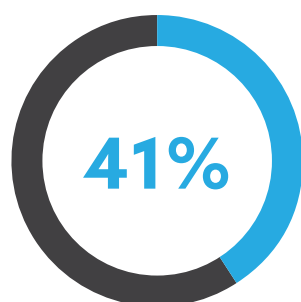
Research shows the attainment gap between GCSE students from less advantaged backgrounds and their more affluent classmates

is widening. Academically, the poorest students will be almost two years behind their peers by the time they finish Year 11. It's estimated that at the current rate of improvement it would take over 500 years to close the gap.\*

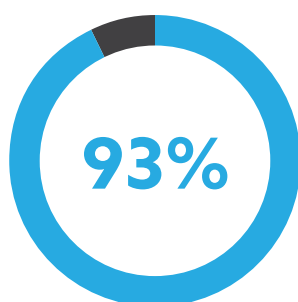
At Villiers Park we are helping to buck this trend, with excellent GCSE and A-level results for 2018-19.

## Scholars Programme (Years 10-13)^

### GCSE results

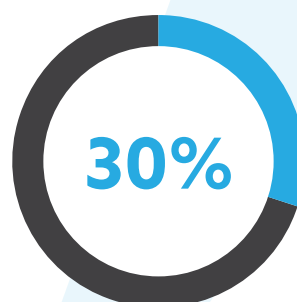


A\*-A/9-7

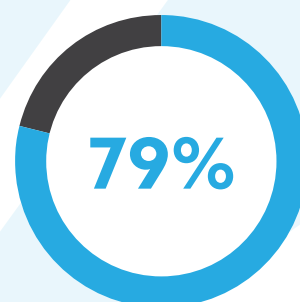


A\*-C/9-4

### A-level results



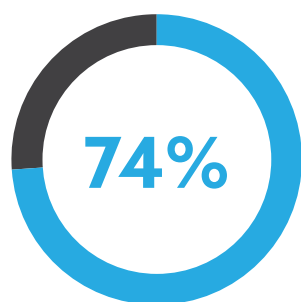
A\*-A



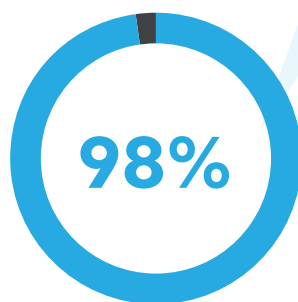
A\*-C

## Inspiring Excellence Programme (Years 12-13)^

### A-level results



A\*-A



A\*-C

By introducing our young people to expert tutors, who inspire them in their chosen subject matter and take their learning to the next level, the results are astonishing.

^Based on 2018/19 survey responses

\*The Education Policy Institute, in partnership with the Fair Education Alliance: Annual Report, 2019



# Safia's Story

"I lived in a country with a poor healthcare system," says Safia. "My mum lost two of her children, my brothers, all because there wasn't basic healthcare. A person's life can change dramatically, depending on the care they receive in hospital."

Safia is now at the University of Swansea studying medicine. She wants to specialise in obstetrics and gynaecology, so she can help people like her mother.

"Eventually I would like to be in a position to go back to Afghanistan and help some of the poorest communities. I would like to pass on my knowledge, teach people about medical advancements and how they can improve the healthcare system out there."

Safia, who moved to England from Afghanistan at the age of 7 and spoke little English, joined the Villiers Park Scholars Programme in Year 12. It changed her life in so many ways.

**“ My mentors were incredible. They helped me with the application process to apply for university, prepare for interviews and support me with what to put on my personal statement.”**

In addition, Villiers Park ran a medical society for aspiring medics, with group work, guest speakers, and work experience opportunities. Safia spent one eye-opening summer shadowing a hospital doctor, witnessing first-hand the highs and lows of the profession.

Moving to Swansea is the start of another new chapter for Safia. It is her chance to make a real difference to society, both in the UK and the Middle East.

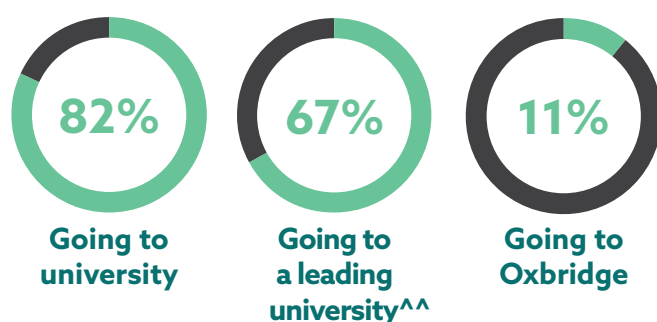


# Our Impact:

## Ambitious Destinations

With our help, our young people not only aim high, but also far and wide.

### Year 13 Destinations<sup>^</sup>



We encourage our students to be bold, to think big, to think of the mark they want to make on the world. This is why their chosen university courses and apprenticeships were so rich and varied, including:

- Cancer science
- Aerospace electronic engineering
- Architecture
- Music
- Psychology and forensic investigation
- Zoology
- Fashion design
- Air traffic control apprenticeship
- Royal Navy

Schools trust that we are going to make a real difference to their students, both academically and personally.



“ With such a range of courses on offer, and taught at such a high standard, it is not a worry taking the pupils out of school. It’s a light bulb moment for a lot of them. One of the problems we have is they don’t realise how good they are. Villiers Park helps them realise this.”

Felicity Padley, Teacher,  
Gower College Swansea

<sup>^</sup>Based on 2018/19 survey responses

<sup>^^</sup>A university listed in the top 25% of UK universities as ranked by Times Higher Education (THE)





# Noah's Story

"I didn't know anyone who had gone to Cambridge University from my town. I thought it was a prestigious thing and you had to be very well off. If you had said I would get an offer to Cambridge, I would not have thought it was possible," says Noah, who is from Hastings, a coastal town where the number of young people going on to higher education, or leaving the area, is low.

At his admissions interview Noah was asked about drug development, exactly what he learned on a medicinal chemistry course at Villiers Park. "It was the perfect question!" Noah laughs, "I knew exactly what to say because I'd learnt it on the course!"

During his GCSE years, Noah lost both his mum and his aunt. "Villiers Park didn't just help me with my studies, but also with how to clear my head. I had a mentor who was really helpful. He listened to me and advised me on ways to cope with stress and how not to overwork myself."

After securing excellent A-level results, Noah is now an undergraduate at Homerton College, reading biological natural sciences.



“ I didn't know anyone who had gone from my town. I thought it was a prestigious thing and you had to be very well off. If you had said I would get an offer to Cambridge, I would not have thought it was possible.”



# Our Impact: Growing Opportunities for Students

While it is crucial that we work with our students to help them secure the best possible academic outcomes, our ambitions don't stop there.

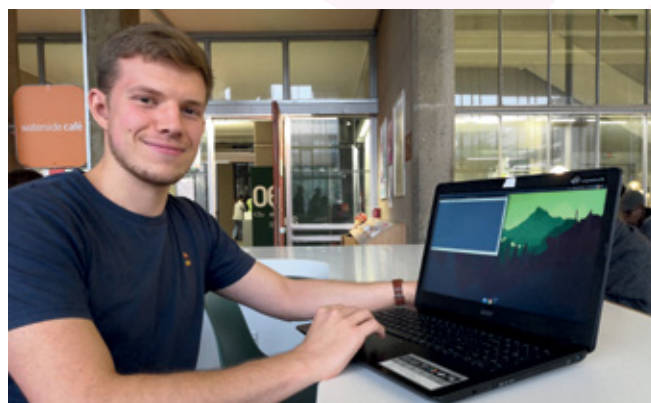
The Opportunities Board on our website is a platform for students and graduates to seek out graduate schemes, summer schools, internships and career-related events. We build relationships with employers who can give students an insight into a certain career path, and also connect students directly to mentors in their chosen field.



Ella was interested in children's literature, so we introduced her to a well-known children's author.

“Right from the start Ella was so articulate, enthusiastic and passionate about what she wanted to do. She was like a sponge absorbing what she was being told!”

Helen Moss, Author of Adventure Island and Secrets of the Tombs



Dan was interested in cyber security, so we introduced him to a leading expert in the field.

“I advised him about working in the field and tips on what interviewers might be looking for. Dan was so focussed and very sensible in his questions.”

Max Heinemeyer, Cyber Defence expert at Dark Trace

Employers and educators must work together to broaden the horizons of children and young people, particularly those from more deprived areas.

“Not only will these kinds of efforts give young people the best possible start in life, they will reduce mismatch between young people's aspirations and the demands of the labour market, thereby ensuring that we have a workforce that will secure our economic prosperity in the future.”<sup>+</sup>

<sup>+</sup>Envisioning the Future for Education and Jobs: Trends, Data and Drawings. Report by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UK-based charity, Education and Employers.





# Beth's Story

If you come from a family where no one has first hand knowledge of higher education, it is unlikely that university will be a backdrop to your childhood. As in Beth's case. Her parents left school at 16, with a handful of GCSEs between them. She received free school meals. She was also a young carer for her mum and brother.

Beth had no idea what she wanted to study at university and, even if she did go, she never intended to go far from home.

The Villiers Park Scholars Programme changed everything.

"It was the first time I'd been pushed to come out of my shell," says Beth. "When I started I was awkward, hated speaking to new people and couldn't even be called on to answer a question without turning bright red and feeling like I wanted to cry."

Beth is now studying International Economics at university in Sweden, grabbing every opportunity that comes her way.



“All this is a result of the confidence, encouragement and personal development I received thanks to Villiers Park.”





# Our Impact: Empowering Students to Succeed

We work to ensure our students are fully prepared for the university or apprenticeship process: the application, the personal statement, the interview. This is never more crucial than for Early Entry applicants, those applying to Oxbridge or to study medicine, veterinary medicine, and dentistry.

Typically, our volunteers are subject-specific experts who know first hand what will make an applicant shine. Out of 13 Scholars\* who received our early entry support in 2018, all of them are now at top universities\*\*, with four of them at Oxbridge.



**Dr Richard Barnes,  
Chair of Trustees  
at Villiers Park and  
Director of Studies  
in Medicine,  
University of  
Cambridge**

For almost fifty years, Dr Richard Barnes has been interviewing students who want to study at the University of Cambridge. He's now helping our students with their Early Entry applications.

“ They are very bright, but for the most part they have not experienced the level of questioning and interrogation that they'll get at interview and they are not as used to thinking on their feet. Students from private schools or more privileged state schools have been preparing for university or high level apprenticeships practically since they were in the cradle!

At Villiers Park there are young carers who look after loved ones. There are students who have paid employment to help support their families. There are those who contribute to their local communities. What they have learnt through these responsibilities are so intrinsic to them that they don't realise how important those skills are, nor how impressive they are.”



**Mabel, Prospective Law candidate for  
Downing College, Cambridge**

“ I honestly don't think I would have been able to get my UCAS application in without Villiers Park's help because it was only very recently that I found out what a personal statement actually was! My mentor helped me write and refine my personal statement. I had a mock interview with Richard Barnes which gave me a real idea of what to expect. I was hesitant to apply to Oxbridge, but Richard gave me positive feedback and urged me to go for it which was a real boost!”

\* Out of 16 Scholars who received the support 13 responded to our survey

\*\* A university listed in the top 25% of UK universities as ranked by Times Higher Education (THE)



# Villiers Park's Future

**Our vision is a world in which everyone can realise their potential and lead society into an equitable, healthy future.**

**In the last year,** we have worked with around

**2,000**

**young people.**

**By 2024,** we aim to work with over

**8,000**

**students a year.**

## Driving change

We are committed to driving transformational change for current and future generations. We will do this by delivering impactful programmes that are underpinned by evidence and evaluation, increasing the number of young people and teachers we reach through our work, and influencing policy to make systems and structures work more equitably.

## A unique approach

We will root our work in the 'Possible Selves'\* framework.

Research shows young people from less advantaged backgrounds often have more negative conceptions of what they might be and what they might achieve, finding it harder to imagine pathways to outcomes that are different to the ones they see in their everyday lives. But evidence suggests 'possible selves' are malleable. They can be influenced and enhanced.

Our intervention will help focus young minds on what they might become in the near and more distant future, which then becomes central to goal setting and motivation.

In the coming years, working in partnership with others who share our vision and values, we will enable transformational change for even more young people from less advantaged backgrounds.

\*Neil Harrison, 2018. "Using the Lens of 'Possible Selves' to Explore Access to Higher Education: A New Conceptual Model for Practice, Policy, and Research," Social Sciences, MDPI, Open Access Journal, vol. 7(10), pages 1-21, October.

# Ioana's Story



Ioana's family moved from Romania to the UK in the hope of a better, easier life. It didn't work out like that. Neither of her parents, both highly qualified in their fields, could find skilled jobs. They lived in a house with ten other people. The family shared one bedroom.

Despite the language barrier, Ioana excelled at school and she was invited to join the Villiers Park Scholars Programme.

Her mentor, Dan, became a listening ear, helping her cope with the struggles at home. He encouraged Ioana to see the bigger picture, giving her revision tips, support with time management, and advice on filling out university application forms.

"I loved the trips, the residential weeks, and the masterclasses. Those are experiences that not everyone has. Regardless of my struggles at home, I had these little getaways. I even did work experience at the Houses of Parliament."

Ioana is now at the University of Edinburgh studying psychology and linguistics.

“ Immigrant students are surrounded by an invisible wall ... Villiers Park helped me break it down.”

"It's a fact that immigrant students have an invisible wall around them that they want to break. You want to do things just like everyone else, but you have to constantly prove yourself," says Ioana.

"I have put in the effort and I now want to make sure all the stress and pressure has been worth it. It's true that Villiers Park really does help people from disadvantaged backgrounds go further in life."



# Our Impact Calculator

Our Impact Calculator shows how your money is **making the biggest possible difference.**



## MENTORING

Visualise future self > develop key skills > increase resilience > higher attainment > success



**£77**

**for one hour of  
expert one-to-  
one coaching**



## LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE (INVOLVE)

Student led > develops leadership > whole school benefit > stronger UCAS application > success



**£421**

**for five students  
to take part in  
the challenge**



## RESIDENTIAL COURSE

University level > deepen subject understanding > inspires positive future self > success



**£1,494**

**for three students  
to take part in a  
three day residential**



### Outcomes

- The skills developed empower young people to thrive in education and early careers.
- Confidence and a diverse world view make them insightful, approachable and successful leaders.
- In leadership positions they have the power to influence diversity in workforces.
- As a group they are the catalysts of a cultural change towards greater social mobility for all.

We are grateful to all our  
supporters, without whom our  
work would not be possible.  
**Thank you!**

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MathWorks  
The Reece Foundation  
Study Higher  
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