



Parent/Guardian/Carer information leaflet

Introduction

STEM Learning's national online mentoring programme runs in partnership with [Brightside](#) and aims to help **13–19 year-olds** explore their future career options in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

Young people taking part will receive:

- **one to one support** and inspiration from a STEM Ambassador mentor
- training on how to use a **secure and moderated online messaging** system
- **support and resources** to help them make informed decisions about their future.

When does it start and what does it involve?

This cohort will run for 10 weeks from Monday 26 February - Monday 6 May 2024.

Mentoring for Years 9/10/11 or S3/S4 focuses on providing career insights into sectors of interest for the young person. Years 12/13 or S5/S6 receive mentoring on life after school, whether that be Higher Education, Apprenticeships or preparing for employment.

STEM Ambassador mentors are ready to answer questions on topics such as the range of STEM career or education options available to young people, the **pathways into different sectors** and the essential **professional skills** required for success. Students also have access to a suite of fun and fascinating "Bright Knowledge" resources on matters such as health and wellbeing, independent living, money and housing to help prepare them for the future.

How does the mentoring take place safely?

We use a **bespoke mentoring platform**, Brightside Mentoring, that is **purely text-based** to ensure all young people are appropriately safeguarded. All messages submitted via this platform are automatically filtered and if any "stop" conditions are flagged (e.g. attachments, web links, special characters like "@" that potentially indicate an email address etc.), the message is then manually **reviewed and moderated** by a person. If needed, the sender may be asked to amend their message before it is re-checked and sent on.

The mentors are all STEM Ambassadors who have undergone a **criminal record check** (DBS or PVG) and are informed no email addresses or personal contact information can be exchanged, nor are mentees and mentors allowed to meet in person – all mentoring must occur via the Brightside platform. The young person does need to provide an email address to create an account on the platform, but this information is not shared with their mentor or anyone else.

What do I need to do?

An educator known to your child has identified this programme as a beneficial opportunity for them to take part in so will be supporting them with next steps. Please simply encourage your child to ask any/all questions they may have so they can get the most out of this experience. Occasionally the email invitation for your child to sign-up to the Brightside mentoring platform may go into their spam/junk folder so please remind them to check this if they haven't received it. If you have any questions, please contact STEM Learning via students@stem.org.uk

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