

PROGENY THE BRIDGE

WORKING SERVICE DEFINITION | ONE SERVICE • THREE TOUCHPOINTS • FLEXIBLE ENTRY

A relational pathway into connection, learning and wider possibility

The Bridge is Progeny's relational outreach and staged engagement service for young people who need a gentler route into education, support and wider life. It includes Touchpoints A, B and C — not outreach alone. A young person can enter at whichever touchpoint fits their current capacity, and the Bridge Mentor(s) lead and deliver support across all three.

ONE BRIDGE THREE TOUCHPOINTS

A young person may begin at A, B or C — there is no requirement to “earn” the next touchpoint by completing the one before it. Movement can be forwards, backwards or sideways as capacity changes. The aim is the best-fit next step, whether within Progeny or elsewhere.

1. The Bridge remit

A OUTREACH	B LOW-DEMAND TOUCHPOINT	C STAGED BRIDGE PROGRAMME	NEXT STEP
Go to the young person and family. Build trust through low-demand contact at home, in the community, online where appropriately safeguarded, or another place that feels possible.	Offer one preferred activity or short visit: cooking, art, games, music, outdoors, practical projects or another shared interest — usually at Progeny, but shaped around what feels manageable.	Lead a small, predictable programme of activities, relationships and gradually increasing learning. The trusted mentor remains alongside while peers and other staff are introduced.	Help the young person move towards the most suitable education or support pathway. Progeny Education may often be next, but another school, hub, training route, service or community option may fit better.

2. Flexible entry and a staged curriculum

The Bridge is designed around readiness rather than a fixed sequence. Some young people will need Touchpoint A first; others may be ready to begin at B or even C. The Bridge team owns and delivers A–C as one joined-up service.

A	OUTREACH / GO TO THEM	Relationship, family support and gentle contact where the young person currently feels safest. This can include appropriate pastoral contact during periods of illness, hospitalisation or significant family difficulty.
B	ONE LOW-DEMAND ACTIVITY	A short, preferred activity with low expectation and a familiar mentor — for example cooking, art, games, music, outdoors or practical projects.
C	SMALL STAGED PROGRAMME	One or more regular Bridge sessions, perhaps a short half-day, combining connection, activity and gradually increasing learning or group participation.
→	BEST-FIT NEXT PATHWAY	Fuller Progeny Education may be the typical route, but the mentor helps the young person and family navigate the option that fits best — including another school, hub, college, training, therapy/support or community pathway.

Possible Bridge strands: Create • Cook • Play • Make • Explore • Connect • Learn

3. The Bridge Mentor: a role across A, B and C

Purpose: to lead and deliver the relational journey across all three Bridge touchpoints. A mentor may hold a mixed caseload of young people at A, B and C, meeting some in their own world and supporting others within Progeny. Where possible, the same trusted person stays alongside as the young person moves between touchpoints and towards their next pathway.

TOUCHPOINT A GO TO THEM Build one-to-one trust, support the family, meet where engagement is possible, maintain gentle contact and provide appropriate pastoral presence when life becomes difficult.	TOUCHPOINTS B + C BRING THE BRIDGE IN Lead and help deliver low-demand activities and the staged Bridge curriculum. Make the environment predictable, connect through shared interests and gradually introduce peers, staff and learning.	TRANSITION WIDEN THE PATHWAY Help the young person explore the best-fit next step, whether Progeny Education or another school, hub, training or support pathway. Stay alongside transition where appropriate and plan endings rather than disappearing.
THE PERSON WE NEED • Christian pastoral heart: naturally notices, cares and goes towards the young person • Warm, calm, approachable and genuinely interested • Patient with silence, uncertainty and slow progress • Reliable, predictable, non-judgemental and low-pressure • Playful and participative; curious about youth culture and interests • Flexible, neurodiversity- and trauma-informed • Emotionally mature, boundaried, safeguarding-aware and open to supervision • Educationally curious: sees learning beyond the classroom		WHAT THEY DO • Lead and deliver support across Touchpoints A, B and C • Build relationship before asking for major change • Use shared interests and ordinary activity as points of connection • Offer consistent contact and meaningful choice over pace/place/activity • Lead/help deliver cooking, art, games, outdoor, practical and learning sessions • Offer appropriate pastoral presence, including hospital/illness contact where agreed • Where welcomed, reflect Progeny's Christian ethos through prayer, encouragement and compassionate presence • Work with parents/team; recognise when clinical or safeguarding input is needed • Stay alongside transitions and support planned handovers/endings

The mentor is not

An attendance enforcer • a replacement therapist or clinician • an unboundaried friend • a lone worker without team oversight • someone expected to “fix” the young person • a route only into Progeny Education • an on-call crisis service or substitute for hospital/statutory care.

4. Who might become a Bridge Mentor?

The role could form an attractive supervised internship, placement or early-career pathway for people who want meaningful experience in Christian relational youth work, pastoral care and alternative education.

Christian youth work / ministry trainee	Relational youth work, informal activity, pastoral presence and strong alignment with Progeny's Christian ethos.
Teacher-training student / education graduate	Especially SEND, nurture, pastoral or alternative education; learns how relationship can precede formal learning.
Youth / community work student	Strong fit with outreach, shared activity, informal education and gradual participation.
Psychology / counselling / social-care student or graduate	Useful developmental understanding within a clear mentoring — not therapy — remit.
Mature gap-year / lived-experience candidate	May bring relatability and credibility, with the maturity, stability and boundaries the role requires.

Working title: Bridge Mentor – Outreach, Education & Pastoral Support | Progeny Bridge Internship

5. A practical pilot model

A Bridge Mentor's caseload should intentionally be mixed. One young person may need outreach at A; another may start at B; another may already manage C. The mentor therefore spends time both out in the community and leading/delivering Bridge provision within Progeny.

ILLUSTRATIVE MENTOR CASELOAD • Around 3–4 named young people across a mix of A, B and C • A combination of outreach and Bridge sessions at Progeny • Family communication and transition planning • Regular team time, recording and supervision	WHAT SUCCESS MAY LOOK LIKE • Accepting contact or choosing to begin at B/C • Trusting a consistent adult and sharing an interest/activity • Attending a preferred Bridge session or small group • Trying learning with less threat • Moving towards the best-fit next pathway — at Progeny or elsewhere
--	--

6. Development steps

1. FINALISE THE A–C MODEL	Agree eligibility, flexible entry at A/B/C, movement between touchpoints, review points, duration and when a young person is ready to transition beyond The Bridge.
2. DESIGN THE BRIDGE CURRICULUM	Build a simple menu of low-demand B/C activities, predictable session rhythms, staffing, capacities and gradual routes into learning.
3. MAP OUTWARD PATHWAYS	Identify Progeny Education and external schools, hubs, colleges, training, therapy/support and community partners so transition is based on best fit, not organisational destination.
4. BUILD THE MENTOR ROLE	Finalise role description, person specification, mixed caseload, pastoral expectations, internship/placement/employment routes, recruitment and matching.
5. SAFEGUARD + BOUND PASTORAL CARE	Agree consent, home/community/digital contact, lone working, transport, hospital visits, faith/prayer practice, information-sharing, risk and clinical escalation protocols.
6. TRAIN + SUPERVISE	Train in relationship-building, EBSA/anxiety, neurodiversity, trauma awareness, safeguarding, boundaries, pastoral care and graded reconnection; establish reflective supervision.
7. PILOT A MIXED CASELOAD	Begin with a small number of mentors and young people across A, B and C. Test whether the hybrid role is practical and sustainable.
8. LEARN + REFINE	Gather young-person, parent, mentor and partner feedback; track safety, engagement, wellbeing, participation and destination outcomes; refine before scaling.

7. Non-negotiables for the pilot

- The Bridge is the whole A–C provision — outreach, low-demand touchpoints and the staged Bridge programme — not outreach alone.
- Young people can enter at A, B or C according to current capacity; movement is flexible and individualised.
- The best next pathway is the one that fits the young person. Progeny Education may be typical, but it is not the only destination.
- The same trusted mentor remains alongside across touchpoints and transitions where appropriate; endings are planned rather than abrupt.
- Christian pastoral care is part of the role, expressed through compassionate presence and practical care, but always within consent, safeguarding, team oversight and professional boundaries.
- Mentoring is relational and pastoral support, not therapy, clinical care or a substitute for statutory/hospital services.
- Interns/placements are properly structured, trained, supervised and legally appropriate; substantive staff duties are not disguised as unpaid internships.
- Young people and parents with lived experience help shape the pilot before wider rollout.

THE WORKING DEFINITION

The Bridge is Progeny’s joined-up A–C relational pathway: meeting young people where they are, offering low-demand and staged opportunities for connection and learning, and carrying a trusted relationship towards the education or support pathway that fits them best — whether at Progeny or elsewhere.

ROOTED IN FAITH • SEEKING THE ONE • VALUE • IDENTITY • PURPOSE

Basis: Progeny parent/carer consultation and qualitative findings, the original “The Ones in Their Rooms: Creating The Bridge” vision, and subsequent service-development work. This remains a working model for pilot development, not a final operating specification.