



Coaching in Schools: A Teacher Guide

What is Coaching?

“Supporting someone to come to their own decision or action by asking effective questions.”

“Coaching is a collaborative, non-directive conversation that brings about change through inquiry, reflection, choice and new behaviours..”

Coaches guide and encourage students to develop key skills, but it is crucial that the student takes ownership of their own journey, driving their personal development forward and reflecting on their progress.

It's a transformative approach with young people because it develops agency and ownership, independent thinking and responsibility.

What is the GROW model of coaching?

GROW is a model that provides a framework for a coaching session, a conversation, a meeting or a project and is the best known coaching model in the world today.

Goal: The Goal section of GROW is addressed at the beginning of each session and referred to again from time to time to keep the focus moving forward. It identifies what we want to achieve and puts us on the path to accomplishing it by focusing on the solution rather than the problem.

Reality: This is an exploration of the coachee's world at the moment. Time spent here helps people get clear about what is happening and how it affects them and others. It provides an opportunity for viewing issues from different perspectives.

Options: Coachees will move naturally towards the Options stage as their Reality becomes clearer. Often they show a new energy by sitting up and smiling, or a lighter tone of voice. Then it is useful to ask some of the coaching questions below:

Will: This is about discovering which actions the coachee can commit to undertaking. When asked, *'What will you do about this?'* they need to choose a pathway which suits their talents and ways of behaviour.

Who can Coach and do they need to be Qualified?

Any adult in the school who takes on a **coaching approach** when speaking to, nurturing and approaching students can develop the role of a coach. By asking open/coaching questions that gives **agency to the student**, rather than just directive or closed questions. Making space for a student to consider and explore ideas and then following up with the student's progress. In order to be an effective coach you would need to have the **time and space** to develop a rapport and begin **setting goals**. This is when change begins, it does not happen in one session. You can also work with qualified coaches and/or external volunteers.

What is the difference between Coaching and Mentoring?

Coaching	Mentoring
+ Encourages autonomy and self-discovery, empowering individuals to find their unique solutions.	- Promotes a dependency culture where individuals rely heavily on mentors.
+ Prioritises asking open, non-directive questions, nurturing a mindset of independent problem-solving .	- Often adopts a directive approach, inadvertently discouraging critical thinking .
+ Specific to individual needs, recognising and addressing their unique challenges.	- Tends to be generic, neglecting the diverse challenges faced by individuals.
+ Fosters a culture of empowerment, promoting proactivity and self-confidence.	- Can create a dynamic where individuals feel disempowered to take charge.
+ Provides tools for self discovery and embed confidence, breaking the cycle of constant guidance-seeking.	- May not effectively equip individuals with problem-solving skills.
+ Encourages adaptability and innovation by fostering a growth mindset .	- Conditions individuals to resist change , hindering adaptability.
+ Offers continuous support through Self-Coaching , ensuring individuals have the necessary tools to navigate challenges.	- Often lacks consistency and ongoing support mechanisms.

How can Coaching help in my school?

Youth coaching offers the only space that carries neither expectations of the young person nor any special authority, knowledge or superior understanding. It is the only place where the young person can open up and know that they are seen as a peer at that moment.

Young people often find it hard to choose a goal to work on in coaching. Their life is often in flux with transitions from one state to the next, changing pressures, life phases and much more. To help both the young person and the coach find the important issues for exploration it can be useful to map out the young person's world.



A Coach's role is to guide, encourage and importantly, allow the student to take ownership of their personal development journey. Therefore, all you need to do is establish a **safe and positive environment** in which students can **reflect** on their personal development. Here are some ideas used by the Finding Futures and Rising Futures Programmes:

- To begin coaching, all aspects of the **young person's world** need exploring; the emotional responses, aspirations and perceived reality.
- Young people (and indeed adults too) will usually focus initially on their feelings towards an aspect of their life. Someone is annoying them, they don't like their teacher, they are bored of their new job, etc. **Feelings offer a great foundation to explore** where important change needs to happen in a young person's life. However, feelings only give us an overview, we then need to establish the facts.
- A student and their coach must then identify areas of strength and development. At Yes Futures we use the **4 Talent areas** (Appendix 1): **Confidence, Communication, Resilience and Self Awareness**; and specifically our **Talent Scorecard** as a tool to track this.
- Encourage the students to **set themselves a goal**. Ask them to consider how they can achieve it and guide them towards the **SMART principles** (Appendix 1). The goal should be specific to them and achievable in their circumstances, with a clear timeframe.
- Make it clear that they are **responsible for setting and achieving their goal**. Ensure they record it somewhere and tell someone so they become accountable. This helps with motivation.
- Let the students know when and how they will be asked to **review their goal** against the **SMART principals** (Appendix 1)
- Encourage them to **consider their own progress**, perhaps using Yes Futures talent areas to identify and measure this progress. Ask them to use real life examples to support their opinions (*e.g I felt confident when I took my French test last week because I'd spent a lot of time revising. I wasn't very resilient in PE because I gave up in the cross-country*).
- **Be consistent** with when and where to meet and review progress, so this becomes a routine that students can then build into their own routines when self-coaching

How can I support students once they've set their goal

Although it's important that the students take ownership of their goal, your support will significantly increase the progress they will make.



Top Tips for supporting students on Coaching Journeys

- ✓ Regularly check-in with students' progress
- ✓ Discuss the purpose of their goals - What is the benefit to you and others?
- ✓ Encourage students to record their progress
- ✓ Continue to mirror the language used by the students
- ✓ Help to break the big goals into smaller steps using a **goal ladder** (Appendix 2)
- ✓ Support students to develop their progress by asking them **challenge coaching questions** (see below) and link this to the skills they have been using
- ✓ Brainstorm potential barriers and solutions
- ✓ Continually ask students **general coaching questions** (see below) to help inspire future goal setting

General Coaching Questions

- What are your three main strengths?
- Tell me about a time that you've demonstrated resilience/confidence/self-awareness in the last week...
- How has your approach to your personal skill development changed?
- What do you wish you had more time to do?
- What goals do you have for the next week?
- What barriers are you facing in achieving your goals? How can you overcome them?
- How can I best support you?
- What would you like to stop doing?
- What are you spending most of your time on?
- What part of your life are you most happy/least happy with?
- What are you doing best now - where are you excelling?
- Where are you facing challenges?
- What experience and skills do you need to get to where you want to be/reach your goal?
- Are you getting these experiences and skills now? If not, what can you do?

Challenge Coaching Questions

- What are some barriers you might face?
- What might get in the way of you reaching your goals?
- What would it mean to not take that action?
- What are you learning the most from?
- What will happen if things don't change?
- What's the ideal outcome for this problem?



How are legal and ethical dimensions addressed?

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check

At Yes Futures, all coaches are required to have an enhanced DBS check before starting on the programme. In brief, the DBS makes the relevant checks to ensure that all of our coaches are safe and fit to work with young people. If you're working with external volunteers or paid freelancers as coaches you will want to go through your own checks.

You will have your own school approaches to '**managing confidentiality**' with young people, which can be applied to the coaching situation. At Yes Futures all coaches are trained to understand the parameters of confidentiality when working with young people. The ground for confidentiality is laid out at the start openly and honestly and then maintained.

This training includes a specific understanding of all areas for concern, and that these are shared with the Programme Manager and School Lead. That the conversations are private but not 'Confidential' if something is shared that may cause harm to themselves or others. This training is compulsory, before explaining the rules of confidentiality to the young person at the start of our programmes. Coaching is built on this trust and the role of the coach here is to be open and clear about the extent of the confidentiality.

Parental consent is always obtained through a consent form, with only **essential** information received about the student being shared with the coach ahead of the session.

Appendix

1. Talents and SMART goal setting

https://www.yesfutures.org/_files/ugd/15874d_383b709c5a6d44e08c4cc05fa4e9cef0.pdf

2. Journey Planner

https://www.yesfutures.org/_files/ugd/15874d_bc623e78d20e416d914544095ae5d273.pdf