

# Light Up Learning 2017/2018 Funders' Report



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Light Up Learning is supported by the Bank of Scotland Foundation and the Rotary Club of Dalkeith.

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is with a huge debt of thanks that I present this year's report to you outlining the achievements and challenges of the past year.

I am pleased to announce that, after nearly four years of running our mentorship programme, three students from our original mentee cohort — Aspen, Thomas, and Cameron — graduated from the programme in July. I am immensely proud of the work that each of them has done over the course of their time with LUL, and I am looking forward to seeing how their relationships with learning continue to grow as they move into higher education (see our **"Impact"** section on **pages 3-8** to find out what Aspen, Thomas, and Cameron are up to now).

On a more strategic level, this year has seen LUL's Senior Management Team deliver on all but one of our targets laid out in last year's Funders' Report. Going into the 2018/19 academic year:

- Our Director position is salaried;
- We have commenced mentoring at Castlebrae Community High School and have an established volunteer within the school to facilitate our activities there; and
- We have recruited two new Trustees to our Board.

Though we were unable to reach our target of supporting 14 mentees during the 2017/2018 academic year (see **"Challenges & Changes"** on **pages 9-11**), we are now offering consistent support to 19 young people within the Lasswade and Castlebrae communities.

Of course, none of this work could be done without our wonderful staff. While we had to say goodbye to our mentor, Ashley, in June as she moved on to a fantastic job opportunity at Napier University, we have counteracted this by hiring two new mentors to join Steph and

I (see **"Challenges & Changes"** to learn more about our new staff members).

Our Senior Management Team has also expanded. At the end of last year, we welcomed Erin McElhinney as our Culture and Community Manager. Erin has helped us to forge connections with a number of key players and organisations within our sector, which will undoubtedly prove useful as we continue to grow.

But things never stay static, and changes are, of course, afoot. By the time this report has reached you, Tom Chambers, our Operations Manager, will have left the programme to establish his own business, and we will be faced with new opportunities for structuring our Operations base. While I will continue to mentor, I intend to stand down as Director in December 2018 to focus on my work as a writer. This means that we will be appointing a new head for the organisation at the end of this year. As that future takes shape, I most sincerely hope that you will want to continue to provide the support that has been so vital to our work so far.

On behalf of the entire Light Up Learning team, I would like to thank you for your continued support to our programme over the past four years. Your support has offered us a solid foundation on which to build the consistent, caring mentoring relationships that helped Aspen, Thomas, and Cameron come out of high school curious about the world and excited to learn more about their place within it.

With all my gratitude,



Richard McLauchlan, Director





## A Complete Four-Year Cycle of Mentoring!

In July 2018, Thomas, Aspen and Cameron graduated from Light Up Learning after almost four school years of working with Richard. They were his first ever mentees and, in many ways, LUL's guinea pigs. Each of them responded to this role with enormous grace, plunging themselves into their sessions and developing a real love of learning.

Aspen and Thomas celebrate their graduation from Light Up Learning at our Graduate Celebration Event this past August. Thomas' Mum and Aspen's Dad (both pictured above) joined in the festivities alongside our team, Lasswade staff members, and many of our funders.



# Programme Outcomes

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**100**

hours of mentoring  
offered in 2017/2018



**23**

students have been  
supported for more than one  
term



**19**

students have been  
supported for at least one  
academic year



**74%**

of our students have been  
eligible for Free School  
Meals



**86%**

of students who were with  
LUL until they finished school  
have gone on to higher  
education





## STUDENT PROFILE: ASPEN

Aspen's story is a testimony to the positive effects of our approach. For her final year project, she single-handedly learned to video blog and chose LUL's work as her focus. The impressive results of her labour were shown at our August Celebration Event for program graduates. It is not a surprise that, in the past year, Aspen won a highly competitive scholarship to study Mandarin at Tianjin Normal University in Tianjin, China. She will then return to Scotland to study Psychology at Queen Margaret University, where she is sure to prosper.

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**“LUL has made me realise that my opinion is valid and that there are people that want to hear it. It's also helped me with my anxiety, because, by having someone to listen and show that they care, it has helped me see the better parts within myself, and, when I forget these parts...LUL is something I can look back on to remind me. I think LUL is to show people that learning is more than just sitting bored in a classroom. It shows people that there are so many ways of learning about the things they are interested in, and it is so easy to do so.”**

- Aspen

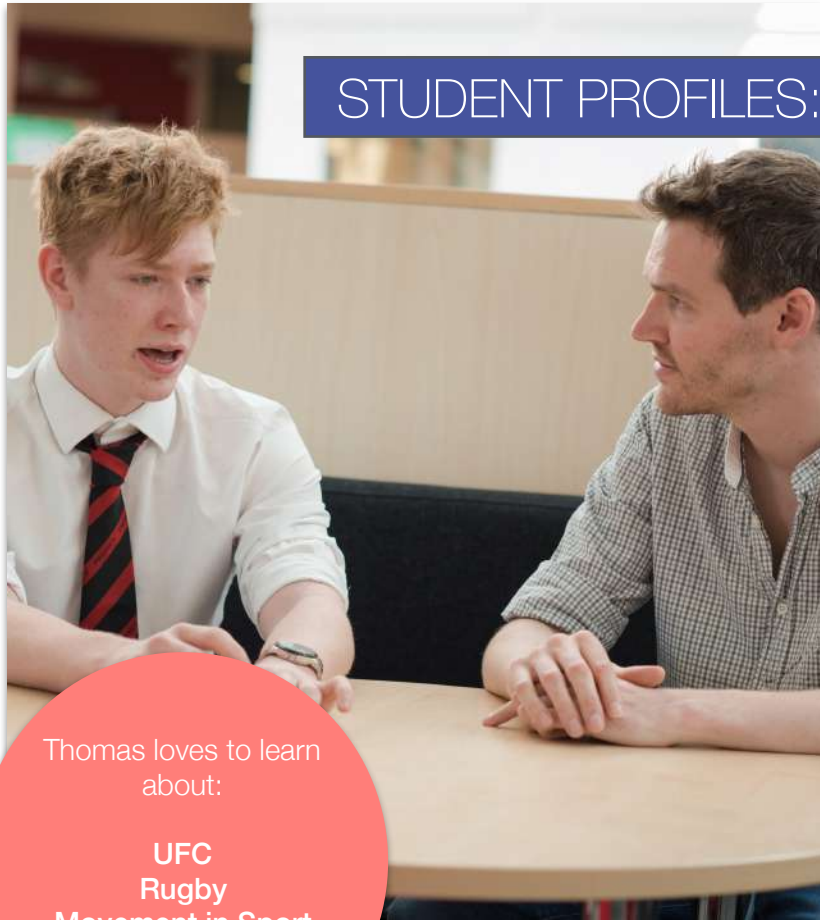


Aspen loves to learn about:

Japanese Animé  
Architecture  
Psychology



## STUDENT PROFILES: THOMAS AND CAMERON



Thomas loves to learn about:

**UFC  
Rugby  
Movement in Sport**

Across their four years, Thomas and Cameron often struggled with school work and exam performance. The radical independence they were given in directing their final year project was also a challenge, and, while important lessons were learned, neither accomplished exactly what they set out to do.

Nevertheless, both remained at school until the end, even when leaving early was a real option, and both will be moving on to Edinburgh College: Cameron to study Travel and Tourism, and Thomas to study Coaching and Developing Sport.

Cameron hopes to one day become a police officer, while Thomas is committed to following his course through to university level, where he plans to read Sports Psychology. As Thomas insisted at the event celebrating his and his peers' graduation, his sessions with LUL are what gave him this direction and drive. His belief in our process is captured by his desire to return as an assistant mentor for LUL over the coming year.



Cameron loves to learn about:

**Air Travel  
The Police  
Norway**

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**"LUL has...taught me more about myself than I think any classroom ever could and has given me the confidence to reach for my aspirations instead of settling for mediocrity...Light Up Learning has been the best thing Lasswade High School has enrolled me in."**

- Thomas



## STUDENT PROFILE: JAMIE

This June also saw the graduation of one of Steph's first mentees. Jamie started with Steph when he was "a shy, yet troublesome, 13-year-old." He was getting into trouble in every sense of the word, and many of his teachers assumed that he was following the same path as his older brother, who had been expelled from Lasswade when he was just 11. Here's what Steph had to say about her work with Jamie this year:

This year with Jamie has been a happiness whirlwind for me! He hasn't been getting in trouble half as much as previous years; our sessions are genuinely a time we both look forward to each week; and he seems to come across a happier person. At the end of April, he finished school; however, Jamie asked me if we could continue with our sessions for May and June! So, he came to school during his holidays, prompt as always, just for sessions with me.

At the end of June, Jamie presented an amazing and cleverly-written presentation on conspiracy theories to me, his mum, his guidance teacher, and the deputy head. After Jamie presented, the four of us had a chat about Jamie's LUL experience. The deputy head said he didn't even recognise Jamie and couldn't believe the man he'd morphed into. And Jamie said he didn't know where he would be now had he not had the opportunity to be enrolled in the programme.

I feel like I've watched Jamie grow into a gentleman, he took a different path in life than many thought he was destined for, and I completely believe (as does his mum, the deputy head, and his guidance teacher) that LUL had a huge role to play in this.

Jamie left school this year with AAB at National 5 level, one apprenticeship, another company trying their hardest to scout Jamie for their apprenticeship, and a college placement. Had someone told Jamie, his mum, or many of his teachers that this would be his outcome three years ago, I'm sure no-one would have believed it.

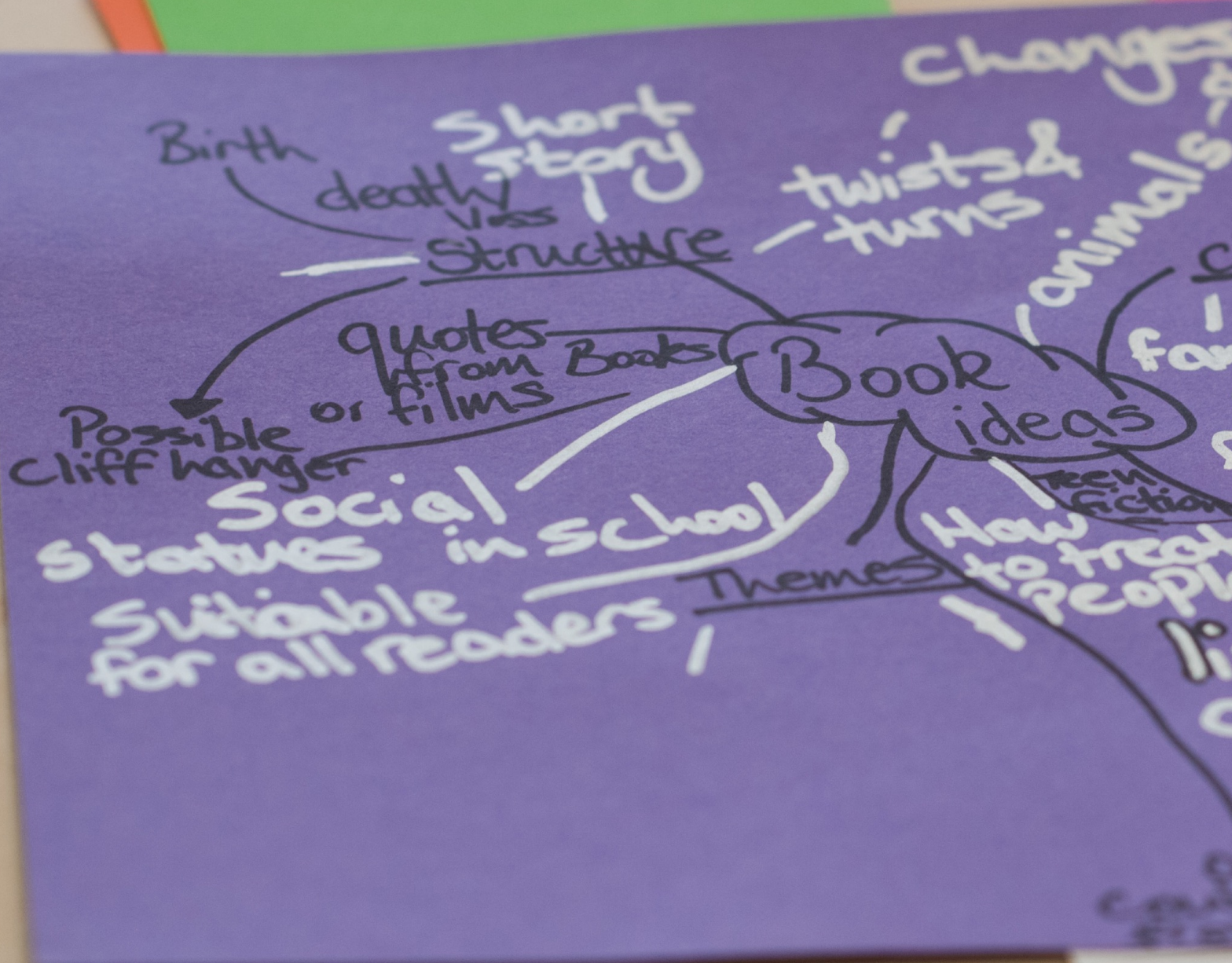
Recently, Jamie started his dream apprenticeship, and he is loving it.

LUL wishes these wonderful young people every success in the future!

Jamie loves to learn about:

Architecture  
Banksy  
Conspiracy Theories







# CHALLENGES AND CHANGES



In the past year, we made a renewed effort to ensure that we were connecting with the students that most needed our support. While this is undoubtedly a good thing, it also brought about its own challenges.

At the time of selecting a student for our programme, they may appear in a stable situation and attendance and enthusiasm for what we do looks promising. But problems at home and at school can flare up very quickly, impacting their ability to participate in their sessions. Our mentor Ashley found her cohort a particularly difficult group, and the problems she faced meant that certain students could no longer participate in the programme.

With students coming and going within the year (sometimes for very positive reasons, such as gaining places to college or on an apprenticeship), not only do we struggle to meet our target numbers, but we also find it hard to carry out the evaluation measures that help us demonstrate our impact. The fluctuations of the past year meant the distribution and retrieval of questionnaires was not entirely successful. As a result of this, we've had to find alternative ways of measuring impact, which is not always easy in an age when quantitative data is often more highly regarded than qualitative.

Moving forward, we plan to expand our distribution of questionnaires, so that we are not simply relying on students' feedback but are also gathering the feedback of parents, guardians, and teachers in a measurable way. What's more, attendance and tracking grades will also be closely monitored to determine how our work is impacting student engagement within the classroom setting.

Growth also brings its own financial challenges. For more on these, please see **pages 12-13**.



# NEW PARTNERSHIPS: THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH'S CHAPLAINCY

Prepared by: Reverend Dr. Harriet Harris, University Chaplain, University of Edinburgh

We became aware of Richard McLauchlan's work with Light Up Learning while organising the event, **"When Education Becomes Possible."** This day-long event ran as a part of the International Storytelling Festival and sat within the Chaplaincy initiative, **"A Light for All,"** and as an expression of the University of Edinburgh receiving the status of Sanctuary University. The purpose of the day was to capture a range of initiatives that enable people, who might otherwise experience obstacles, to gain access to education.

We were keen to hear from some of the teenagers with whom LUL works. Richard brought four young people from Lasswade High School who are on the Light Up Learning programme. They ran a stall, showcasing both how LUL operates and the benefits it brings. They engaged with University students and staff members and with members of the public, and impressed everybody by their manner, confidence, and articulacy, and by their enthusiasm for learning.

LUL also had a slot in the plenary presentations. Richard, as LUL's Director, and Thomas, as a LUL student, gave an interview-style presentation. Thomas was extremely articulate and impressive regarding the challenges he has faced with learning and how LUL has given him fresh perspectives and insights.

He came across as very confident in a way that made me want to look for other opportunities for the University to engage with LUL – particularly because we would like to instil confidence in our own students. Richard and I, therefore, looked for a suitable follow-up event.

We decided that it would be interesting to invite LUL students to interview people at the university about their own passion for learning. Aspen, another student from LUL, was developing her skills as a Vlogger, so we thought that we would make this a dimension of the follow-up event.

We invited filmmakers from the Edinburgh College of Art to give some tutoring in skills of conducting film interviews. We all learned a lot from that! And we invited professors and lecturers in the subjects that most interested the participating LUL students: Psychology and Sport.

The academics who took part were Prof. Grant Jarvie, Professor of Sport, who told stories about his interactions with Sir Alex Ferguson; Dr. Amanda Martindale, Sport Psychologist, who has trained Olympic athletes; and Dr. Laura Candiott, who teaches the Philosophy of Wellbeing. We held a conversation between all present, in which all had a chance to talk about turning points for them in enjoying learning. Thomas and Aspen were, again, extremely articulate about their challenges and ways of overcoming them and about the skills and insights they had gained through LUL. Aspen also took the opportunity to speak to each of the participating academics in 1-1 interviews.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening day and one that certainly put the University members back in touch with why they have a passion for learning and for education.

If you're interested in learning more about the Chaplaincy's work, take a look at their website, at: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/chaplaincy>



# NEW PARTNERSHIPS: CASTLEBRAE COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

In August 2018, we began mentoring in Castlebrae Community High School in the Craigmillar area of Edinburgh. The school also serves Niddrie, one of the most deprived data-zones in Scotland according to the 2016 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. The school was in crisis just a few years ago and on the verge of closure, due to an appalling fall in the pupil roll and numerous managerial problems, but the local community campaigned to have it saved and the Edinburgh Council responded. Under fresh headship and a new, dynamic Senior Leadership Team, the school – which still only consists of 180 pupils, but is forecast to grow rapidly over the next five years – is experiencing significant renewal. A host of internal programmes and external organisations are now at work within the school, supporting pupils and families in the multiple challenges they face. LUL is one of these organisations.

The five young people we've chosen to participate in the programme are an exciting group, but the scale of their personal challenges will prove a new test to LUL's methods. Still, the school's Guidance Teachers are confident that attendance and commitment to the programme will be strong, and we look forward to seeing where our approach will take these young people.

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## NEW DIRECTIONS: LEADERSHIP

At the time of this report going to press, the Board was in the final stages of recruiting a new Director to replace Richard McLauchlan as of December 2018.



Following this appointment, Richard will continue on as a member of our team — leading up our mentoring programme at Castlebrae and working to introduce the new Director to the organisation over the next few months.

One of the first tasks of the new Director will be to participate in a full strategic review with Richard and the Board with the goal of updating and finalising the board's interim five-year strategic plan.

As Richard heads over to Castlebrae, Steph will take on the new title and duties of Head of Mentoring - Lasswade.



She will be responsible for overseeing the embedding of our two new mentors:



**Lisa Kearney**, an inspiring former Judo Olympian from Belfast; and **Mark Patterson**, a law graduate, who sits as a panel member for Children's Hearings Scotland.





# FUNDING NEEDS

Thanks to your generous support, LUL has grown significantly over the past few years. Now, with two new mentors on staff, a new partner school for the 2018/2019 academic year, and upcoming changes to the Director and Operations Manager roles in sight, our funding needs are growing, too.

(£)	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Committed Funding*	54,698	82,798	44,500
Additional Funding Needed to Achieve Plan	0	34,202	90,500
<b>Total Funding**</b>	<b>54,698</b>	<b>117,000</b>	<b>135,000</b>
Number of Mentees	11	19	20

\*Based on existing private donors who have indicated a willingness to continue to support the charity along with income from gift aid and our partner schools (based on historical contributions).

\*\*As of FY 18/19, a percentage of LUL's Total Funding will be used to build a strong reserves base for the charity. This will allow us to offer uninterrupted program delivery to our mentees, even if faced with fluctuating funding trends and economic uncertainty. At the AGM in September, the Board agreed to a reserves target of 25% in FY 18/19; 50% in FY 19/20; and 75% by the end of FY 20/21.

# Funding Facts

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The charity is working with a fundraising specialist and has grant applications live with **5** organisations. We've applied for **£39,543** in funding to help us grow over the next few years.



As we were preparing this report, we learned that two of our recent grant applications were successful! We're excited to share more about our new funding partners as the next fiscal year unfolds.

Thanks to the learning and development we've done over this past year with the help of our Operations Manager, we've diversified our funding base.



We're now supported by a number of community organisations, including the **Rotary Club of Dalkeith.**

We're looking to invest in **IT equipment** to support our staff. Currently, we rely on staff to use their own equipment, which isn't sustainable as we continue to grow.



With the introduction of GDPR this year, it's important that the organisation manages data appropriately. This means using better, more secure IT equipment.





# OUR TEAM: 2017 - 2018



Richard McLauchlan  
*Mentor, Director, and Co-Founder*

Currently learning: the language of the ancient Greeks.



Erin McElhinney  
*Culture and Community Manager*

Currently learning: about the origins of language and how accents develop over time.



Stephanie Bell  
*Head of Mentoring - Lasswade*

Currently learning: about autoimmune diseases and whether specific diets/nutrition can help rather than medication.



Tom Chambers  
*Operations Manager*

Currently learning: photography, with a focus on lighting and portraiture.



Ashley Mclean  
*Mentor*

Currently learning: about what makes people “cat people” or “dog people.”



Daniela DiGiacomo  
*Researcher*

Currently learning: how to make young people feel valued in educational settings.





Will Ferguson  
*Co-Founder and Chair*

Currently learning: about Bolivian and Peruvian history, with a particular interest in Wari art and architecture.



Jane Cormack  
*Trustee*



Lynsey Struthers  
*Trustee*

Currently learning: about motherhood and Persian cookery.



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