



Holbrook Primary School

LEARNING MENTOR POLICY

Rationale

The role of the Learning Mentor was introduced as part of the Government Excellence in the Cities initiative (EIC). Excellence in Cities was a package of measures for improving inner city education. Learning mentors are one strand of this package and are primarily to support schools in raising standards. Since the launch of Excellence in the Cities, the impact of Learning Mentors has exceeded expectation. The initiative has now been extended to rural areas. The Learning Mentor will complement the structured Social Inclusion Policy, covering the whole range of support to our pupils. The role of the Learning Mentor will be customised according to the needs of the school and the pupils in it. However, the broad outline of the generic nature of the role is summarised below:

Vision

- Learning Mentors are to be part of a Whole School policy and strategy for raising achievement and promoting inclusion.
- Learning Mentors aim to take an individualised approach focused on the needs of individual children.
- Learning Mentors aim to promote diversity, recognise excellence and extend opportunity.
- Learning Mentors aim to promote understanding, knowledge and respect of other people, while encouraging and developing individuality.
- Learning Mentors aim to recognise the uniqueness, gifts and needs of all members of the school community so that they feel affirmed and encouraged to continue learning and find fulfilment.

The policy relates to the five outcomes from Every Child Matters, central to the Learning Mentor role i.e.

- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Being healthy
- Economic well being
- Staying safe

Learning Mentors can work on a one to one with pupils, or with small groups. Learning Mentors can work both inside and outside the classroom. They can work with young people on short-term to longer-term intervention programmes, dependent upon the needs of the individual. The recommended timescale is 6-8 weeks.

The key qualities of a mentor involve being reliable, approachable, non-judgemental and realistic with pupils, staff and parents and other organisations who are involved.



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A mentor focuses on the mentee as a whole, concentrating on their personal and academic development.

The role of the Learning Mentor is customised according to the needs of the school and the pupils in it, linked to the key targets identified by the School Development Plan/School Improvement Plan. However the broad outline of the role is summarised below:

Staffing Structure

There is one Learning Mentor employed at Holbrook Primary School.

Name: Sally Delve
 Line Manager: Deborah Moss
 Allocated hours: 10 (Monday 6 hours, Friday 4 hours)
 Location: SEN (Special Education Needs) room

Statement and Objectives

The key principles of learning mentoring are:

- Identifying barriers to learning;
- Removing barriers to learning;
- Setting targets, monitoring progress and providing guidance;
- Building confidence and self esteem;
- Liaising with families, staff and other organisations e.g. social care and EWS (Education Welfare Services) - where appropriate and according to allocation of weekly hours;
- Contributing to a whole school culture of support;
- Working with individuals and focused groups;
- Activities planned will meet the specific needs, learning styles, targets and abilities of the individual child;
- Activities will be lively, stimulating and interesting;
- Learning Mentors have accessed the national training programme and at local level have the opportunity to share best practice, ideas and support through Locality Group/Network Meetings.

Barriers to learning may include:

Lack of confidence;
 Low self-esteem;
 Low aspirations;
 Friendship issues;
 Bullying;
 Peer pressure;
 Family issues/concerns;
 Bereavement;
 Transition;
 Poor social and emotional skills;
 Poor attendance/timekeeping.

If a child experiences one factor or a combination of the above, this may lead to low self esteem/ challenging behaviour/ withdrawn behaviour/ negative attitudes towards learning, ultimately resulting in the pupil not fulfilling their potential. The Learning Mentor helps the child to develop strategies and skills to enable them to make positive choices and learn. The results of this work should impact on:

- Improved levels of attainment;
- Increased attendance levels;
- Improved behaviour;

- Reduced levels of exclusion;
- Increased levels of self esteem;
- Improved confidence;
- Stronger friendship groups;
- Positive attitudes to learning;
- Raised pupil aspiration.

Referrals

Referrals to the mentoring process can be made by the Head Teacher, Class Teachers or the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator). These referrals are passed to the Learning Mentor. The Learning Mentor, Line Manager and SENCO will then prioritise the referrals.

Referral Criteria

Children may be referred for a variety of reasons, but should have clear evidence of at least one of the following:-

- Underachieving;
- Weak social skills;
- New to school and having trouble settling in;
- Challenging behaviour;
- Low self-esteem;
- Lacking in confidence or motivation;
- At risk of exclusion;
- Bereavement/Separation;
- Friendship issues.

Procedure

Prior to mentoring:

- Referral form received;
- Discussion takes place with class teacher, and other staff in contact with child;
- Letter written to parents/carers introducing Learning Mentor support and requesting consent to work with child. Parents/carers are invited to meet Learning Mentor for discussion at this stage. Parental consent is needed for mentoring to go ahead;
- Baseline data is collected (including staff rating questionnaire);
- Observations take place (classroom, playground, as appropriate).

During the first meeting, the following items will be discussed between the Learning Mentor and the child:

- Explanation of the role of the Learning Mentor;
- Reasons for referral;
- Boundaries/rules established;
- Target system and action plan explained;
- Exit criteria explained;
- Confidentiality discussed (child protection issues);
- Class observations explained;
- Feedback/contact with parents/carers/teachers explained.

These one to one meetings/small group meetings provide the child and the Learning Mentor with the opportunity to develop a positive working relationship.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a key part of the role. It is also a challenge, since many of the pupils have a range of complex difficulties and the support they receive may not have an immediate impact on measurable standards.

Many school targets may be around attainment, attendance, punctuality, etc. Evidence of improvement in these areas is relatively easy to prove. It is more difficult to evaluate success with a mentee with low self-esteem or family problems. The work is formally recorded and evaluated. The information obtained through the monitoring and evaluation process helps to demonstrate the impact and inform future developments and target setting.

Files are kept for all mentees on the caseload and these files should include:

- Completed referral form;
- Letters to parents/carers;
- Parental consent form;
- Baseline data and progress data where appropriate;
Action Plan with SMART targets; (SMART = Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time Limited)
- Weekly session reports;
- Meeting records - brief notes of any meetings relating to the mentee;
- Evaluation data (both quantitative and qualitative as appropriate). In particular, questionnaires, pupil, parent, teacher. Staff rating entry and exit questionnaire, case study.

Equal Opportunities

All children have an equal right to the best possible education. It is the aim of the Learning Mentor to help the children that we work with make better use of the school curriculum, become more positive and active participants in their school community and raise expectations. We will provide all referred children with a fresh start without prejudice or preconception.

Health & Safety

1:1 meetings take place in the SEN room. Considerations will be given to the security needs of all concerned, as outlined in the school Health and Safety Policy.

Reviewed: Summer 2010

Governor Signature: **Date**

Next Review Due: