

How to become a learning mentor....



Know the aims

- To identify and remove the barriers to learning that prevent individuals achieving their full potential.
- To reduce exclusion and improve attendance and punctuality.
- To raise academic standards in schools.
- To develop positive relationships with families/carers and outside agencies to broaden the support network for children.
- To develop a distinct learning mentor role which adds to the range of support available to pupils and families
- To integrate learning mentoring into school culture.
- To promote inclusion.
- To develop a holistic approach to children's education where emotional and social growth and academic achievement are all equally valued.

Role

As the name suggests, the learning mentor's role is to act as a *mentor* to pupils with the express objective of ensuring they engage with *learning* - and are therefore able to access all available educational opportunities. In any one day a learning mentor may be helping children with their numeracy skills or with friendship difficulties, talking to social workers, meeting with teachers, running circle time sessions and phoning families - all with the aim of assisting pupils to engage constructively with education and school life.

What does a learning mentor do?

- acts as a role model
- listens
- challenges the assumptions that others have of children and that children have of themselves
- observes pupils to assess their needs & devise support strategies
- runs after school activities
- works 1:1 with pupils
- negotiates targets
- is a reliable, approachable, non-judgemental and realistic supporter of pupils, families and staff
- runs pupil drop-in sessions
- works with small groups on anger management, learning skills & emotional literacy etc
- develops pupils self esteem
- develops strategies to improve attendance & punctuality
- supports KS2/3 transfer
- liaises with outside agencies to gain additional support for pupils & the school
- supports mentees in class as part of a structured programme of mentoring support

Skills and Experience

- The ability to work with and relate to, a wide range of children and families with different ethnic and social backgrounds.
- The ability to work with, and command the confidence of, teaching staff and senior management within the school.
- The ability to assess and review children and family circumstances and plan appropriate responses.
- A proven track record in working with young people, including those who may have challenging behaviour; and the ability to see a child's needs in the round.
- A desire to do something worthwhile for children, to understand their needs and to gain insights into how they think.
- Knowledge of, and ability to work effectively with, a wide range of supporting services.
- An ability to identify potential barriers to learning and to work with others to overcome these.
- Ability to engage in joint goal-setting with individual children.
- The ability to work as part of a team and also to take initiative.
- Energy and enthusiasm.
- Experience and understanding of diverse communities.
- A willingness and ability to learn.
- A good standard of literacy and numeracy.
- Good written and oral communication.
- Excellent interpersonal skills

How ?

- with skills & experience -

If you already have the necessary skills and experience

APPLY !

Most schools advertise in the local press, vacancies can also be found in the Haringey Job Search (In libraries)

How ?

- without skills and experience -

- volunteer at a school, youth club, summer scheme etc;
- seek employment as a teaching assistant, youth worker, on a young peoples' project;
- mentor through voluntary & community projects;
- do some relevant training
(mentoring, child development, anger management, counselling skills, youth work, emotional literacy etc etc)

Application Forms

- Some Tips -

- Address the person specification;
- Make the most of *any* experience you have of *working* with young people;
- Include the skills you have, not just what you have done;
- Show an understanding of the role;
- Include '*extras*' you could offer the school - skills in art, drama, music, sport etc;
- Word process if you can;
- Keep it neat, with good spelling and grammar;
- Not too short (less than one side of A4), not too long (4+ sides of A4);
- Sell yourself, but be honest - it's very obvious at interview if you've made it up!

Interviews - Some Tips

- **Before the interview**
 - Visit the school;
 - Do some research about the job;
- Try to relax – interviewers aren't trying to catch you out, they really do want to hear what you have to offer;
- Make eye contact;
- Take your time, ask for clarification if you need it;
- Repeat relevant evidence from your application form;
- Talk about the skills and qualities you have, don't just list what you've done;
- Show you understand what the job is about;
- Relate your answers to the school and the community it serves;
- Make your commitment to and understanding of equal opportunities explicit;
- Don't over generalise or be drawn into using stereotypical views;
- Answer questions fully;
- Show that you work well as part of a team & can also take the initiative;
- Be yourself and show your passion and commitment.

Useful contacts

- Department for Education & Skills
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/eic/eiclearningmentors
- National Mentoring and Befriending Foundation
www.manbf.org.uk
- Haringey Excellence in Cities
www.haringeylearning.net/eic
- CONEL
www.conel.ac.uk