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It's Good to Talk:

An enquiry into the value of mentoring as an aspect of professional development for new headteachers

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Contents

Introduction

This report summaries the enquiry I have undertaken as part of the Research Associate Programme set up by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL). The research was undertaken between April 2002 and March 2003.

The training and professional development of headteachers has had an increasing focus over the past few years with some major development initiatives established, such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH). These initiatives generally include mentoring as a component of the programme and this is often seen as an essential and important element. Responses from mentors and mentees as part of this research indicated that both mentor and mentees found the mentoring process supportive and at least two mentees interviewed described it as being "crucial" to their development and functioning as a new headteacher.

It is perhaps surprising therefore that there has not been significant research into the effectiveness of mentoring.

> Despite repeated and persistent recent suggestions that mentoring programmes might serve as a central part of initial pre-service leadership preparation programmes, induction schemes, and ongoing in-service and professional development activities, however, there has been a remarkable lack of systematic analysis of this issue in the research literature. (Daresh, 1995)

I hope my research throws some new light on this issue.

Findings

The benefits of mentoring

All the mentees interviewed could clearly describe ways in which the experience of being mentored had helped them become more effective. These ranged from very practical examples to just feeling supported. Typically several mentees said that the experience of being mentored was the best part of the Headteachers Leadership and Management Programme (Headlamp) and that mentoring had stopped them from 'going under'.

Mentoring supported the development of all the skills outlined in the National Standards for Headteachers. The experience of mentoring reported by the mentees was particularly effective in supporting the development of problem solving and leadership skills, as well as promoting greater self-confidence.

Support in the second year of headship

All of the mentoring schemes, except the Welsh Professional Headteachers Induction Programme (PHIP), that were studied in this research provide support in the first year of a new headship only. Many mentees said that in their second year they were beginning to explore their role in greater detail and take a more strategic overview. The evidence of this research would indicate a need for some access to mentoring or possibly coaching in the second year of a new headship also. More focused support in the form of coaching might well be appropriate in the second year when headteachers are often able to see their development needs more clearly.

NPQH

NPQH was clearly having a very positive impact on new headteachers. They were more confident and had a clearer idea of their developmental needs than headteachers who had not completed the course. This sometimes caused problems in some mentoring schemes. One mentee suggested that the mentoring scheme just repeated work undertaken during NPQH. It is important that any mentoring scheme builds on the work undertaken by colleagues on NPQH. It would be useful for mentors who do not have much knowledge of NPQH to have this included in their training.

Matching

All mentees said that match was very important but in many cases there was a lack of clarity about how matches were made. Few mentees that were 'allocated' a mentor knew the criteria that were used. Left to choose, most mentees chose a mentor that had experience of their own context and setting, or who was someone "like them". It would be helpful if providers of headteacher mentoring schemes made their arrangements and rationale for matching more transparent. Sometimes a contrast in personality and/or leadership style can actually promote greater learning. An overemphasis on similar personalities could lead to 'cosy' relationships with a poor focus on learning and personal development. Some mentees would benefit from more advice regarding how to choose a effective mentor.

Mentors

Some mentoring providers have used retired headteachers or advisers as mentors. The data showed clearly that mentors benefited from the experience of mentoring as well as mentees. It

would seem sensible therefore that mentors should be drawn from the ranks of serving headteachers as this could provide a 'double whammy' of professional development. However, it was clear that many of the mentees who had retired heads/advisors as their mentors were very happy with the experience that they brought to the role and in one case a serving head mentor had to be replaced with a retired head as the serving head could not meet the commitment. Mentoring scheme providers should consider carefully the relative merits of using serving headteachers or retired headteachers as mentors.

Confidentiality

Both mentees and mentors considered the issue of confidentiality to be very important. For all mentees it was felt essential that discussions with their mentor were not discussed or passed on to the LEA. Considering how important this issue was felt to be, it was surprising that it was commonly left to the mentors to establish the boundaries of confidentiality in the relationship. This implies that a level of trust needed to be established very quickly and that mentors already possess the necessary interpersonal skills. A simple mentoring contract/agreement would make this process very explicit and provide reassurance for mentees.

Evaluation

I found very little evidence of attempts to systematically evaluate the impact of the mentoring schemes. Even the newest scheme did not have any qualitative evaluative mechanisms built in. All the evaluations that were undertaken concentrated on the mechanics of the mentoring scheme, such as whether the mentees were happy with the mentor, the number of meetings, etc. It would be relatively simple to ask mentees how the experience of mentoring helped them to be more effective. The evidence of this research is that mentees would find no difficulty in identifying aspects of their leadership role that were improved through the process of mentoring.

Needs analysis

There was considerable variation in the response to the needs analysis used by the schemes. Some found it too bureaucratic – other that it was just repeating work already undertaken during NPQH.

Email and ICT

There were relatively few examples of the use of ICT in mentoring or other support for heads, with the exception of Newport where it seemed to be being used very effectively. It will be useful to evaluate this aspect of the PHIP scheme as it may provide guidance for effective ways of providing future ICT support, particularly in LEAs where schools are widely spread geographically. The data suggests that the use of email, as opposed to 'chat rooms', would appear to offer the most potential for self-sustained support.

Range of activities

All the mentoring reported in this research took place in one-to-one mentoring sessions between the mentor and mentee. There was no use of 'shadowing' as a development activity by the mentor and mentee or the use of work diaries. Although many mentees did have the opportunity to visit their mentor's school and at times took up this offer, most meetings still took place in the mentee's school as this was seen as the easiest arrangement. It is a shame that there was not a more creative use of the potential benefits of mentoring to observe a skilled practitioner in action. Mentor scheme providers could provide more advice and guidance on the range of development activities that the mentoring relationship could support.

Background and methodology

What is mentoring?

It is probably wise to start by providing a definition of mentoring. This is more easily said than done! Mentoring is often seen as an umbrella term covering a range of development activities. The original definition comes from Homer's Odyssey.

> Mentoring to enhance professional preparation is not a new idea. The concept dates back to Homer's Odyssey, where Mentor was the teacher entrusted by Odysseus to tutor his son, Telemachus. Based on this description, we have been provided with an image of the wise and patient counselor serving to shape and guide the lives of younger colleagues. This image of mentoring lives on in many recent definitions. (Daresh and Playco, 1992)

Definitions of mentoring can also be found in business and other professions such as medicine:

> Mentoring may be summarised as the voluntary process whereby an experienced, highly regarded, empathic individual (the Mentor) guides another individual (the Mentee) in the examination and development of their own ideas and learning, both personal and professional. This is achieved by listening and talking in confidence. (North of Scotland, General Practice Mentoring Scheme, 2002)

This definition has three important elements:

- that the mentor is a volunteer
- that he/she should act as a 'guide', and
- that listening and talking is the mechanism by which mentoring takes effect

When providers of headteacher mentoring schemes were asked for their definition they provided a wide range of responses. Richard Lewis, in charge of the London Institute of Education Headlamp Scheme defined mentoring as follows:

> Mentoring is coaching and counselling. Coaching can be characterised as working from the mentor to the mentee (instructing) and counselling as from the mentee to the mentor (listening).

However, some mentoring scheme providers are adamant that mentoring is quite distinct from coaching. In contrast to mentoring, coaching can be seen as a paid activity focusing on a more narrow range of skills.

The definition provided by PHIP in their documentation concentrates more on the characteristics of the mentoring relationship:

> Mentoring is an educational relationship in which:
>
> - there is mutual trust, respect and valuing
> - there are opportunities to share, reflect on and learn from experiences in a non-judgmental way
> - independence and autonomy are encouraged
> - there are clear limits and boundaries
> - there is an opportunity to explore alternative views and options

The definition provided by the headteacher mentoring scheme in Surrey returns to the notion of a mentor as a guide:

> A mentor is a guide and support and critical friend.

Mentoring can then have several definitions, covering as it does a range of activities; coaching, counselling, guiding, etc. Any mentoring scheme provider must therefore develop its own balance of these different activities to provide its own working definition. In truth, the most useful definitions are probably those that concentrate on the purpose of mentoring, as in this definition:

> Mentoring means guiding and supporting the trainee to ease through difficult transitions; it is about smoothing the way, enabling, reassuring as well as directing, managing, instructing, It should unblock ways to change by building self-confidence, self-esteem and a readiness to act as well as to engage in ongoing interpersonal relationships. (Fletcher, 2000)

What is meant by effective?

The research question here is 'How effective is mentoring in supporting early headship?' The use of the word effective is crucial. What does it mean in this context?

It order to judge the effectiveness of any course of action it is necessary to have some notion of what is hoped to be achieved by that course of action. An aim, in other words. The aim of headteacher mentoring should be to make headteachers more effective. In order to pursue this research I decided to use the five skills outlined in the National Standards of Headteachers as a useful working definition for the effectiveness of headteachers. These skills are:

1. Leadership skills – the ability to lead and manage people to work towards common goals

2. Decision-making skills – the ability to investigate, solve problems, and make decisions

3. Communication skills – the ability to make points clearly and understand the views of others

4. Self management – the ability to plan time effectively and to organise oneself well

5. Attributes – the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and develop self confidence

I used these headteacher leadership skills as a template against which to judge the effectiveness of the mentoring schemes.

Methodology

In order to pursue my research it was clear that I needed to gather data from mentors, mentees and mentor scheme providers. The structure provided by using the headteacher skills in the national standards enabled me to consider using a semi-structured interview technique to ensure focused responses:

> A semi-structured interview ... allows respondents to express themselves at some length, but offers enough shape to prevent aimless rambling. (Wragg, 1994)

I considered three data gathering options:

- questionnaires
- telephone interviews
- face-to-face interviews

I quickly rejected questionnaires as I felt the response rate would be unacceptably low. This was confirmed by some mentees that I interviewed who confirmed that they would not have completed a written questionnaire!

I felt that it would be appropriate to interview mentor scheme providers face to face, but that this would be difficult to undertake for the mentor and mentees interviews, due to pressure of time. I had long been interested in the possibility of undertaking telephone interviews as these seemed to offer the best change of combining quality and consistency of data with quantity:

> Comparisons of interviewer effects on face-to-face interviews show a fair measure of variability which is reduced in telephone surveys… interviewing done by telephoning most closely approaches the level of unbiased standardisation that is the goal of all good surveys. (Fidler, 1992)

I developed a telephone interviewing structure which I then piloted before use (see Appendix 3). At the conclusion of my research I had undertaken face-to-face interviews with five mentor scheme providers and completed 27 telephone interviews with mentees and mentors (see Appendix 2).

Mentoring schemes

The five headteacher mentoring schemes considered were based in:

- Wiltshire
- Surrey
- Institute of Education (IoE)
- Hertfordshire
- Newport (PHIP)

These mentoring schemes fell into three categories:

- brand new schemes, such as PHIP in Wales
- well-established schemes (usually as a result of the Management Task Force initiative set up by the DfES in the early 1990s), ie Wiltshire
- schemes which were already in place but were being significantly redeveloped

The involvement of the LEA in each of the schemes varied considerably. In Wiltshire there is very little involvement of the LEA – the scheme is managed directly by the headteachers themselves via a committee structure.

In most schemes the LEA has the responsibility for managing the scheme and particularly training and matching. The IoE manages the mentoring aspect for LEAs but does involve LEA advisors in matching.

Most schemes prioritise new headteachers in post and are generally financed from Headlamp budgets. This has limited the range of headteachers that can access mentoring to new headteachers. However, LEAs are also aware of the need and sometimes are able to cater for acting headteachers, headteachers new to post but not new to headship, and headteachers not new to headship but new to the LEA.

All the mentoring schemes except PHIP operated for just the first year of the headteacher in post. Some mentees commented that they would welcome support in their second year. They described their first year as concerned with the 'nitty-gritty' of the job, but that they were beginning to think more strategically in their second year. In his research on stages of headship, Weindling has this to say about the second year in post:

> After a year in post most heads felt more confident and were beginning to feel that they could take off their 'L' plates! They had experienced a complete annual cycle of school events and learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the staff. Conversely, the staff had also learned about their strengths and weakness, and their mutual expectations had become more realistic. The seeds planted in the previous stage now produced the implementation of major changes to reshape the school. This was the period of major change. (Weindling, 1999)

Given this information it is a pity that most new heads are not offered mentoring in their second year. It will be worth following the new PHIP in Wales as it enters its second year of support. This may provide the best model of support for headteachers in the future.

Matching mentors and mentees

Effective matching of mentee to mentors is clearly critical to the success of any mentoring scheme:

> The matching process, then, is a critical element in determining the success of mentoring. In one East Midlands LEA, a careful approach is adopted taking account of location, phase (primary or secondary) and the expressed preferences of the new heads. All mentors must be trained. In a few cases the new head nominates the mentor but more often the LEA co-coordinator makes the allocation, taking account of any 'negative preferences' expressed by the new heads. (Bush and Coleman, 1995)

In most of the mentoring schemes matching is undertaken by the LEA. In the IoE scheme this is undertaken by the IoE but with advice from the LEAs. All scheme providers emphasise that the placement of a mentor is negotiated with the mentee and that he/she has the final say. All providers report that their system works and interview data generally confirmed this.

A different strategy used by Wiltshire is to let mentees choose from a list of trained mentors. The list normally also contains contextual information to help the mentee make a choice.

The factors that were most commonly mentioned in terms of matching by all providers, mentors and mentees were:

- phase
- size of school
- status
- location
- similar issues
- personality

Although these factors are mentioned, there was very little attempt to explain to mentees how the matching process is undertaken. Given the importance that all the mentees place on the quality of the mentor this was surprising. One is often left with the impression that the whole process is done by 'feel'. All mentees felt they had the opportunity to state a negative preference. One mentee was very specific about what she wanted from a mentor and took a very proactive part in the matching process. She rejected the initial mentor, feeling that it was vital that her mentor was from outside the LEA and not a head of any of the local schools. She was happy with her final match. Some mentees reported that they had heard 'horror' stories of mismatched mentoring pairs.

Confidentiality

All scheme providers emphasise the importance of confidentiality. Mentees attach a great deal of importance to confidentiality between the mentoring relationship and the LEA. Many mentees felt that their mentor should not be drawn from the LEA – at times this included serving headteachers within the same LEA. Although confidentiality is mentioned as being important, and forms part of the training for mentors, none of the schemes had any sort of formal contract which would spell this out. In most cases it was left for the mentor to discuss the issue of confidentiality directly with the mentee:

> … the mentor will be responsible … for ensuring that the boundaries of confidentiality are clearly identified at the needs assessment meeting. (Job description of the mentor, IoE)

Is it reasonable to leave such a vital aspect to the mentor? It places a great weight on the mentor's ability to establish trust very quickly.

How are schemes evaluated?

Most scheme providers found it surprisingly difficult to articulate what they hoped headteachers would gain from mentoring. However, the following were mentioned:

- having someone experienced and confident to work with
- transference of expertise
- access to the LEA network
- support for the development of their practice
- a sounding board
- explore ideas/brainstorming
- another pair of eyes

They found it even more difficult to say what they hoped the mentors would gain. The following were the only responses:

- a professional development opportunity
- a chance to reflect on their own practice
- generating ideas

Without a clearer idea of what the likely benefits of mentoring are it is difficult to see how a mentoring scheme can be successfully evaluated.

Most schemes now use some formal needs analysis as part of their mentoring process but practice was very variable. Sometimes the needs analysis was very detailed (IoE/ Wales PHIP/ Surrey), but at other times it is quite informal in nature. Although all schemes encouraged the use of a needs analysis of some sort, none of them insisted on its use.

The value of the needs analysis was very variably received by mentees. Some found it a useful process, others not at all useful:

The form filling wasn't useful. I was well aware of my development needs due to NPQH.

Some of the needs analysis appeared to be rather bureaucratic and burdensome. This was reported by at least one mentor. One mentee suggested that some colleagues like to use forms, others just need to discuss with the mentor – it's very much a case of personal preference.

No attempt is made to use the needs analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of mentoring, probably due to concerns around confidentiality. However, one mentee suggested that it would have been useful to return to the needs analysis at the end of the mentoring process.

There was the strong feeling that whatever the value of the needs analysis, the agenda of the mentoring sessions must follow the concerns that were current for the mentee. Those mentees that had experienced NPQH had a very good notion of their developmental needs upon starting the mentoring relationship. One mentee said that the Headlamp scheme just repeated what he had undertaken under NPQH.

Evaluation in general appears to be an underdeveloped aspect of many schemes. Even providers that do undertake some evaluation rarely seek to discover the effect of mentoring on headteacher performance. Evaluation that does take place often focuses on process (how was the matching? etc) rather than outcome.

What makes a successful mentor or mentee?

The range of responses provided to the questions of the skills necessary for a successful mentor or mentee co-relate very closely with research and are listed in Appendix 1. The importance attached to listening skills is a recurrent theme:

> Mentees noted that it was important for the mentor to first listen and seek to understand them rather than jumping in with solutions and recommendations.

There was a lot of divided opinion on the issue of whether serving heads or retired heads should be used as mentors. One mentee had an initial mentor who was a serving headteacher who was unable to make their commitment of time needed due to her own issues at her school. The mentor was replaced with a retired head with whom the mentee was very happy. All mentees said that experience was vitally important for the mentor's credibility. Should mentors be serving heads or should retired heads/advisors be used? It should be noted that by not using serving headteachers an opportunity for professional development for them will be missed.

Mentor training

Given some of the issues already raised it is essential that mentors should be suitably trained if the mentoring experience is to be positive.

> A 1987 study of [business] mentoring in eight countries – Australia, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Spain, the United States and the United Kingdom found that … where mentoring had failed, the main reason was inadequate training for the mentors. (Clutterbuck, 1985)

All of the scheme providers ensured that their mentors were trained. Sometimes this was provided solely in-house, but more often than not it involved support from a higher education institution. It typically involved a one or two-day intensive course, with the possibility of refresher courses later on.

Other support

The mentoring scheme is often one element of a much broader package, involving a range of courses provided for the new headteacher and access to peer group networks. All the mentoring schemes in this research were part of a broader Headlamp entitlement.

Some schemes were offering coaching. This was most often characterised by more focused intervention and was seen as a way of supporting schools in challenging circumstances. There is also coaching being offered by external consultants that heads can buy in.

Mentee/mentor interviews

The mentoring experience

The vast majority of mentees and mentors spoke of mentoring as being a positive experience. Many of those who had been mentored in their first year would have liked that support to continue:

> In my second year I needed to take a step back, look at where I'd got to and where I needed to go.

Most mentoring sessions lasted from an hour to half a day. Many mentees mentioned the ability to contact their mentor on the phone or via email as being essential. Meetings generally took place every half term or term. No one mentioned greater frequency.

The venue for the mentoring meeting varied widely from the mentor's school to the local pub! However, most meetings took place at the mentee's school. Mentees did appreciate meeting in the mentor's school.

Although the needs analysis sometimes provided the agenda for mentoring meetings, there was surprisingly little exploration of ideas beyond a general chat:

> Somewhat surprisingly, certain other activities occurred infrequently. Thus, one might have anticipated that mentors and new heads might have appreciated seeing each other in work settings, yet observing one's partner in meetings was generally regarded as either unhelpful or unnecessary. Similarly, even though shadowing figured prominently in their preparatory training in at least five of the consortia, only 36 mentors reported having 'work shadowed' their partner. Meeting members of staff from one's partner's school, maintaining a record or diary of meetings and specifying a clear agreement as to the nature and purpose of the mentoring at the outset, all took place relatively infrequently but, significantly, they and work shadowing were all valued by those mentors and mentees who had experienced them. This suggests both that their potential value remains under explored and that the preparatory training needs to be reinforced by follow-up training if the value of such activities is to be fully realized. (Bolam and McMahon, 1995)

Those responsible for the training of mentors may do well to look towards encouraging a wider range of activities within the mentoring relationship.

Responses to telephone interviews

All the mentees and mentors could easily point to very practical ways in which the experience of mentoring had helped to improve their skills and made them more effective headteachers.

For example, under the first leadership skills of developing your ability to lead people to work towards common goals, mentees said that mentoring had helped them to develop their expertise in such diverse matters as:

- interviewing new staff
- dealing with difficult personnel issues
- motivating people
- organising staff meetings
- appointing a new deputy headteacher
- resolving conflicts

- devolving responsibilities
- prioritising
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning

Mentors were also able to point to benefits they had gained in this area:

- reflecting on practice
- bringing about a change in attitude amongst the senior management team
- coping with issues to do with staff competencies by having a more objective view
- keeping a sense of strategic planning and direction

Mentees could point to benefits they had gained in their ability to investigate, solve problems and make decisions, by:

- managing the transition from being a deputy head to a headteacher
- developing strategies for managing data analysis
- challenging in-built assumptions
- learning to pace themselves more effectively
- developing problem-solving skills
- gaining validation for decisions
- developing an objective view
- dealing with aggression and abuse to staff from parents
- drawing up an effective school action plan

Mentors commented that their experience of mentoring had helped to develop their questioning techniques and their ability to think logically. Some mentors also revealed the extent to which they saw the experience of being a mentor as a being a very positive development activity for themselves:

> You can only be a head of so many schools – visiting other schools is the best INSET you can have.

Perhaps, not surprisingly, there were less benefits quoted for developing communication skills. Most headteachers interviewed felt that this was a strength they already possessed. However, developing communications with parents, governors and the LEA were all mentioned as areas of benefit.

Many mentees felt that the experience of being mentored had helped them develop their time management techniques, with reflections such as:

- "It gave me practical advice on time management"
- "It made me realise the importance of prioritising my time"
- "It helped me develop the school's planning and self evaluation"
- "It helped me deal with work/life balance"
- "It helped me to reflect on how I'm using my time"
- "It helped me to pace myself"
- "It helped me to prioritise"
- "It helped me timeline actions on the school plan"

Even the mentors found the experience useful for developing their time management:

- "I have developed strategies to ensure things get sorted while I'm out!"
- "As a mentor you take responsibility for the mentee so you have to organise yourself"

The question that prompted the most positive responses from mentees was the question regarding the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and develop self-confidence. It was clear from the responses that many mentees had found the experience of being mentored very motivating:

- "It helped me have confidence that the decisions I made were right"
- "It helped me persevere under demanding circumstances"
- "It gave me confidence in myself as a leader"
- "My mentor never made me feel a failure"
- "It gave me confidence to try out new things"
- "My mentor came in when I was very low and made me reflect on success"
- "It helped me persevere with a premises issue. I was able to stick to my guns and not compromise on quality."
- "Mentoring was definitely a factor in my school getting a good OFSTED and me getting 'good' for leadership"
- "It gave me confidence to deal with a failing teacher"
- "It helped me to maintain enthusiasm. I've gained in self-esteem."
- "It forced me to undertake some self evaluation"

It is important not to forget the benefits of mentoring for mentors. Mentoring provides the opportunity for renewal and rejuvenation of the experienced headteacher. It provides clear benefits for both the mentee and the mentor.

Conclusion

When the responses to the telephone interviews were analysed it was clear that the experience of being mentored had had a positive impact on the effectiveness of both the mentors and the mentees. An analysis of the responses shows that headteachers benefited most from being able to develop their self-confidence and problem-solving skills.

Aggregated responses to telephone questions

Skill	Helpful or very helpful	Not helpful or don't know
Developing self-confidence	23	4
Problem solving	23	4
Leadership	21	6
Personal organisation	20	7
Communication	19	8

The clear evidence of this research is that mentoring is indeed a powerful professional development activity that can successfully increase the effectiveness of both mentees and mentors.

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Appendix 1: Mentee and mentor characteristics

Responses to the question "What are the characteristics of a successful mentor or mentees?"

	Characteristics of a successful mentor	Characteristics of a successful mentee
Scheme provider	A successful practitioner A good communicator Able to listen High powered interpersonal skills The ability to be analytical as well as supporting and challenging. Good listening skills Good questioning skills Make good relationships with people Sensitive Respect confidentiality Open minded Not impose their ideas on the mentee	A clear view of their development needs
Mentees	Experience An effective headteacher with strengths to share Good listener Offer balanced advice Someone who is impartial (not LEA) Prepared to answer silly questions Supporting, encouraging and generous Approachable and committed Empathetic Constructive Discretion Challenging Know when to listen and when to move forward Can provide further contacts Knowledge of working with governors and the LEA	Honest Be able to identify where the greatest need is Prepared to listen Take advice Willing to ask for help A learner Commitment – wanting it to succeed Willing to share ideas Keeping your mentor informed about what you've gained from the mentoring Ability to maintain a work/life balance. Confidence to put own ideas forward Reflect after the meeting

Mentors	Good listener Question appropriately To give ideas but ensure that the mentee has ownership Give support Offer different perspectives An ability to analysise one's own experience Be reflective Being sensitive Letting the mentee 'sound off' Being able to refer on for more specific support Willingness to share own problems Non-judgmental Be able to emphasise Challenging Credible Don't dominate agendas Humility	Reflective Ability to review practice Take responsibility Need to be open to discussion Prepared to be honest Humility Professional in approach Willing to listen to advice. Able to accept positive criticism View the process as a learning experience Have aspirations to improve their own performance Have the confidence to judge whether to take the advice offered

Appendix 2: Mentee and mentor interviews

Basic data set

		Mentee	*Mentor	Total
Gender	Male	7	3	10
	Female	14	3	17
School type	Primary	15	6	21
	Junior	4		4
	Infant	2		2
	First			
No. on roll	<100	2	1	3
	101–249	10		10
	250+	9	5	14
FSM	0%–8%	11	3	14
	8%–20%	2		2
	20%–35%	1		1
	35%–50%	1	2	3
	>50%	6	1	7
Setting	Rural	5	3	8
	Suburban	5		5
	Urban	6	1	7
	Inner city	5	2	7
LEA	Hertfordshire	1		1
	Wiltshire	5	3	8
	Barnet	2		2
	East Sussex	3		3
	Enfield	1	1	2
	Newport	5		5
	IoE		1	1
	Kent	1		1
	Westminster	1		1
	Powys	1	1	2
	Haringey	1		1

* Not all mentors were serving headteachers

Appendix 3: Telephone survey structure

HEADTEACHER MENTORING TELEPHONE SURVEY

Name:………………………………………….. Date: ………………………

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey/questionnaire. It will provide important information for research on headteacher mentoring. This survey/questionnaire is split into 3 sections and should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

All the information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. You will not be identified in any resulting research documentation.

Thank you

SECTION A – ABOUT YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL
The first section asks some questions about you and your school.

Are you – (please circle)   male   female

What type of school are you a headteacher of? (please circle)

     nursery   primary   primary with nursery unit

     infant   junior   secondary

Approximately how many children, (inc. nursery) are on roll? …………….....................................

What percentage of your children are eligible for free school meals? …………….......................

How would you describe your school setting? (please circle)

     rural   suburban   urban   inner city

For how many years have you been headteacher at your present school? ……………..................

For how many years have you been a headteacher? ……………...

SECTION B1 – MENTEES

The next section asks you some information about how your experience of mentoring was organised.

If answering as a mentor go to section B2

1. Are you being mentored at present? YES / NO

If **YES –**

a) How long have you been mentored? (i.e. a year, a term, etc.):

b) How much longer do you expect your mentoring to last? (i.e. another term, year, etc.)

If **NO –**

a) When during your headship career did your mentoring start? (i.e. in the first term, as acting head, in the 2nd year, etc.)

b) How long did your mentoring last? (i.e. a year, four terms, etc.)

2. How did you choose or were allocated a mentor?

3. How long on average did each mentoring session last? (i.e. a hour, ½ hour, etc.)

4. How often did/do mentoring sessions take place? (i.e. twice a term, etc.)

5. At what venue did mentoring sessions take place? (school, external venue, etc.) Was this negotiated?

6. Did you undertake a needs analysis as part of your mentoring? YES / NO

If **YES**, what form did this take and was it useful?

7. What do you think are the main personal and professional characteristics required by a mentor?

8. What do you think are the main personal and professional characteristics required by a mentee?

SECTION B2 – MENTORS

The next section asks you some information about how your experience of mentoring was organised.

If answering as a mentee, go to section C.

1. Are you mentoring a colleague at present? YES / NO

2. How many colleagues have you mentored? ……………...

3. On average, how often did/do mentoring sessions take place? (i.e. once a week, twice a term, etc.)

4. How long on average did each mentoring session last? (i.e. a hour, ½ hour, etc.)

5. How were your mentees allocated?

6. Have you received any training as a mentor? If yes, briefly describe the training you received? (i.e. a one day course , etc.)

7. Where did mentoring sessions take place? (i.e. in the mentee's school, at an external venue, etc.). Was this negotiated?

8. Did your mentee undertake a needs analysis as part of your mentoring? YES / NO

If **YES**, what form did this take and do you think it was useful?

9. What do you think are the main personal and professional characteristics required by a mentor?

10. What do you think are the main personal and professional characteristics required by a mentee?

SECTION C – THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING

The following set questions ask you to identify how you feel the experience of mentoring or being mentored has helped you to be a more effective headteacher. The questions are linked to the national standards for headteachers. For each question you are asked to make a response against a ranking of; very helpful, helpful, not helpful, unhelpful (or possibly don't know/not applicable). Then please add further comments, such as specific examples of how mentoring has helped you in your leadership role.

Remember that if you are a mentor, you are asked to consider the benefits for you (not the mentee).

1. To what extent has the experience of mentoring/being mentored helped you to:

      develop your ability to lead people to work towards common goals?

This includes skills such as creating and securing commitment to a clear vision, managing change, prioritising, building teams, devolving responsibilities and dealing sensitively with people to resolve conflicts.

In the light of this question has your experience of mentoring been: (please circle)

      very helpful   helpful   not helpful   unhelpful   don't know/na

Comments/examples?

2. To what extent has the experience of mentoring/being mentored helped you to:

      develop your ability to investigate, solve problems and make decisions?

This includes skills such as making decisions, interpreting data, thinking creatively and solving problems.

In the light of this question has your experience of mentoring been: (please circle)

      very helpful   helpful   not helpful   unhelpful   don't know/na

3. To what extent has the experience of mentoring/being mentored helped you to:

      develop your ability to make points clearly and understand the views of others?

This includes skills such as communicating effectively, negotiating and consulting, and developing and maintaining an effective network of contacts.

In the light of this question has your experience of mentoring been: (please circle)

      very helpful   helpful   not helpful   unhelpful   don't know/na

Comments/examples?

4. To what extent has the experience of mentoring/being mentored helped you to:

your ability to plan time effectively and to organise yourself?

This includes skills such as: prioritising and managing your time effectively, working under pressure, achieving challenging goals and taking responsibility for your own professional development.

In the light of this question has your experience of mentoring been: (please circle)
very helpful   helpful   not helpful   unhelpful   don't know/na

Comments/examples?

5. To what extent has the experience of mentoring/being mentored helped you to:

adapt to changing circumstances, and develop self confidence?

This includes skills such as adapting to changing circumstances, persevering and maintaining self-confidence, enthusiasm, energy and commitment.

In the light of this question has your experience of mentoring been: (please circle)

very helpful   helpful   not helpful   unhelpful   don't know/na

Comments/examples?

6. In what other ways has your experience of mentoring/being mentored helped you become a more effective headteacher?

7. Any other comments?

Thank you for taking part in this telephone survey.