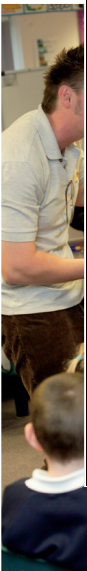


Supporting the new agenda for children's services and schools: the role of learning mentors and co-ordinators

A guide for planners and decision-makers in schools and local
authorities to sustain and develop successful provision

September 2005

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Every Child Matters
Change For Children

department for

education and skills

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Acknowledgements | 2 |
| 1 Introduction | 3 |
| 2 The changing agenda for children's services and schools | 4 |
| 3 The role and impact of learning mentors and co-ordinators | 12 |
| 4 Introducing and developing learning mentor provision in a climate of change | 20 |
| 5 Actions for those currently in learning mentor and co-ordinator posts | 22 |
| 6 Actions for leaders and managers in schools and colleges | 23 |
| 7 Actions for governors | 31 |
| 8 Actions for strategic managers in local authorities and children's trusts | 32 |
| 9 Conclusions | 34 |

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Introduction

Since their introduction in 1999, learning mentors have made a significant contribution to re-engaging pupils in learning and helping to raise standards in primary and secondary education. For example, research has shown that pupils receiving support from learning mentors were one and a half times more likely to achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C than young people with similar prior attainment who had not been mentored.¹ In many cases learning mentors succeeded in raising pupil performance above the levels indicated by these pupils' Key Stage 3 outcomes.

As children's services develop in line with the requirements of the Children Act 2004, the contribution that learning mentors can make to children's health, well-being and achievement becomes even more important.

This guide has been developed to assist planners and decision-makers in schools and local authorities in mainstreaming the role of learning mentors and maximising their contribution to the new agenda. It also highlights the importance of maintaining and developing co-ordination roles in this changing environment, to ensure coherence and continuity of support for children and young people. It gives an overview of the main issues and offers practical suggestions and strategies on how to develop and mainstream the role of learning mentors and to maximise their contribution to the new agenda.

The boxes at the end of each chapter include useful tips, sources of further information, suggested effective practice examples and links to resources. We hope you find these helpful for information and training purposes.

For further information on learning mentor provision please go to www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/ or email learning.mentors@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

“*The most successful and popular of the EiC strands is learning mentors. The creation of these posts has been greatly welcomed and has enabled the majority of schools to enhance the quality of support they offer to disaffected, underachieving or vulnerable pupils... Overall, the programme was seen as providing good value for money.*”
Ofsted, 2003

¹ Morris, M., Rutt, S. and Eggers, M. 2004. *Pupil Outcomes: The Impact of EiC*. Slough: NFER.

The changing agenda for children's services and schools

This chapter gives an overview of the most significant changes taking place in children's services and schools. **Table 1** at the end of the chapter indicates the impact these policy changes are likely to have on learning mentor provision, and the contribution that learning mentors can make to achieving the aims of the new agenda.

2.1 EVERY CHILD MATTERS

Every Child Matters: Change for Children is a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19.

The Government's aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being.

This means that the organisations involved with providing services to children - from schools and hospitals, to police and voluntary groups - will be teaming up in new ways, sharing information and working together, to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life. Children and young people will have far more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively.

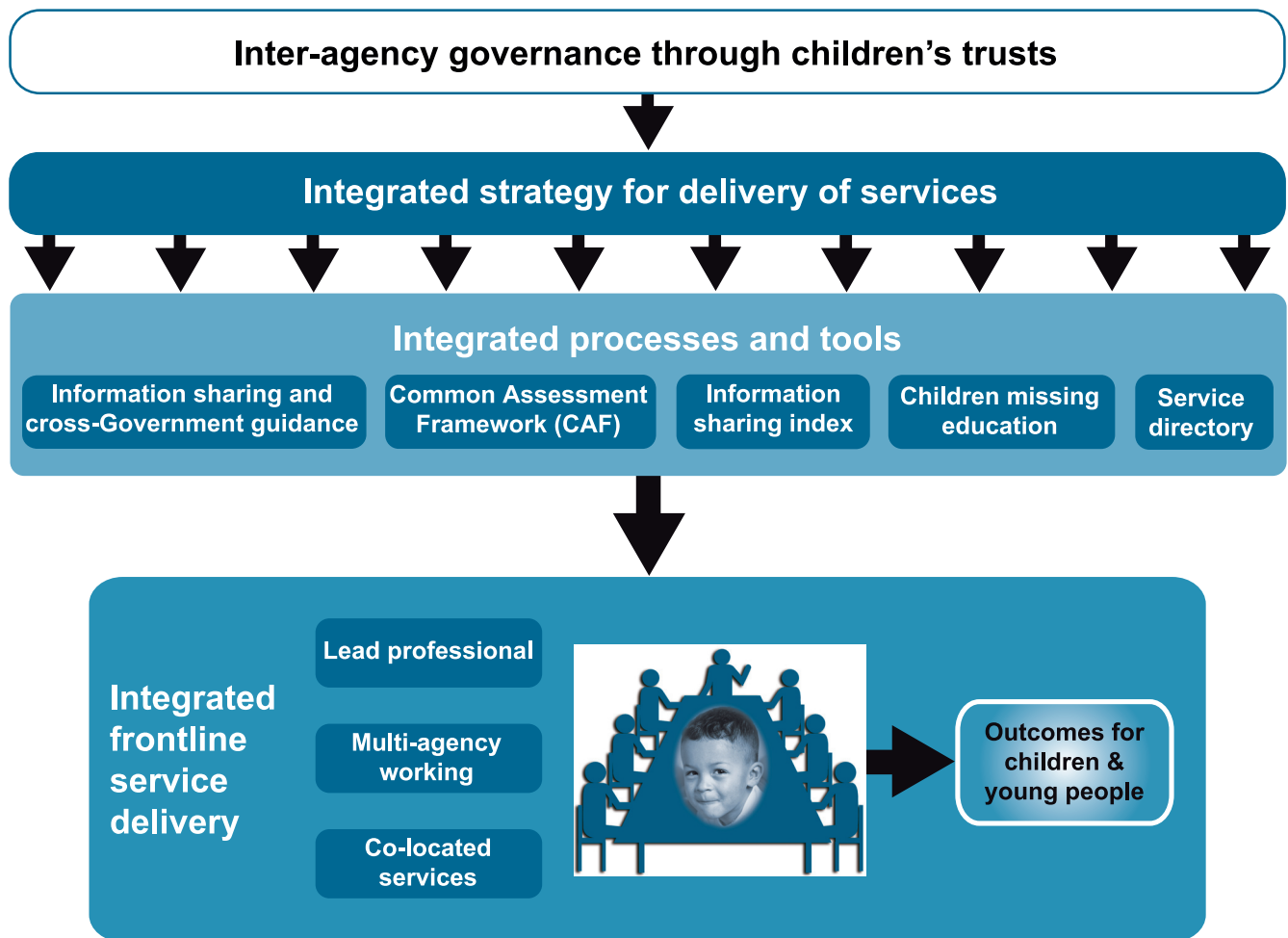
Over the next few years, every local authority will be working with its partners, through children's trusts, to find out what works best for children and young people in the local area and act on it.

Children's trusts bring together all services for children and young people in an area, to focus on improving outcomes for all children and young people. All areas should have children's trusts by 2008, and many will be in place by 2006. They will be led by a director of children's services, who will be accountable for education and social services and for overseeing services for children delegated to the local authority by other services.

Children's trusts will be supported by new, integrated processes which will help to facilitate more joined-up working (see **Figure 1**). Some of these processes will be specified at a local level. Others will be centrally driven, for example:

- an integrated inspection framework based around the five outcomes for children and young people
- a Common Assessment Framework to identify individual needs
- cross-government guidance on information-sharing between practitioners and agencies
- an information-sharing index to make sure no young people fall through the net and to make it easier to share information
- the introduction of the lead professional to co-ordinate and oversee work
- more integrated working, for example through multi-agency services working in and close to schools.

FIGURE 1: INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN THE FUTURE



All local authorities have 'change teams' whose brief is to identify and collate information that supports change to management structures within schools. These teams are a useful source of information for schools, partner agencies and learning mentors and co-ordinators, if you want to find out more about what is happening in your area.

Implications for schools

The Every Child Matters agenda has a number of key implications for schools, which are set out in *Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools*.² Its starting point is that pupil performance and well-being go hand in hand: pupils can't learn if they don't feel safe or if health problems are allowed to create barriers. The Every Child Matters programme reinforces the work schools are already doing to raise educational standards by:

- Encouraging schools to offer a range of extended services that help pupils engage, achieve, and building stronger relationships with parents and the wider community, through a core offer of:
 - high quality childcare available 8am-6pm all year round
 - a varied menu of activities such as homework clubs, study support, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs
 - parenting support including family learning sessions
 - swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services
 - wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities, including adult learning.

¹ DfES. 2004. *Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools*. London: DfES.

- Supporting closer working between universal services like schools and specialist services so that children with additional needs can be identified earlier and supported effectively.

2.2 SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Closely linked to Every Child Matters are two other developments:

- the Children's Workforce Strategy (this is one of the elements of the Change for Children programme)
- school workforce remodelling.

These developments are particularly important for learning mentors as they are members both of the children's workforce **and** the schools workforce.

Children's workforce strategy

Workforce development is a major element of Every Child Matters. The overall aim is to ensure that the skills and capacity exist across the children's workforce to enable services to deliver on the five required outcomes of Every Child Matters. The workforce strategy sets out the Government's vision for a workforce that:

- is competent and confident
- people aspire to be part of and want to remain in – where they can develop their skills and build satisfying and rewarding careers
- parents, carers, children and young people trust and respect.

It identifies four key strategic challenges:

- to recruit more high quality staff into the children's workforce
- to retain people in the workforce, for example by offering better development and career progression
- to strengthen inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working
- to promote stronger leadership and management.

These strategic aims will be achieved through a number of elements, including:

- The establishment of the Children's Workforce Development Council to promote workforce excellence through training provision, career development and improved workforce mobility, as well as encouraging better integration (see section 3.3 for more information).
- The introduction of a 'Common Core' of skills and knowledge for the children's workforce, covering the six key areas of
 - effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families
 - child and young person development
 - safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child
 - supporting transitions/transfer
 - multi-agency working
 - sharing information.
- A single qualifications framework across all sectors
 - to help people progress more easily in their chosen roles and support their retention in the children's workforce.
- The introduction of 'Championing Children'
 - a set of skills, knowledge and behaviours for those leading and managing integrated children's services.

These developments will influence the training and development routes for learning mentors and for those managing them.

School workforce remodelling

In 2003, the Government, employers and teaching unions signed the National Agreement. This set out timescales for a number of changes in working conditions for teaching and non-teaching staff. Its primary aim was to alleviate the pressures that schools were under to raise standards and address unacceptable levels of workload. It called for a structured change process which would help schools implement the contractual changes and embrace wider workforce reform.

The school remodelling programme is a support programme for schools to:

- Help them develop the most appropriate structures to achieve the aims of the National Agreement. Part of this involves remodelling roles in schools so that teachers can focus on teaching rather than other administrative or pastoral roles. It is expected that schools will, increasingly, make greater use of high level non-teaching roles and specialist support. Schools might consider the deployment and development of learning mentor provision to improve engagement in and reduce barriers to learning.
- Support them in delivering the core offer for extended schools so that all children and families have access to additional services via their school (see section 2.1 for more information).

The National Remodelling Team (NRT), established by the DfES and hosted by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), supports schools in making their ideas and aspirations reality. The programme enables schools to find their own solutions to their own individual issues and to share learning and ideas with schools and partner organisations.

National occupational standards

In 2003, the DfES commissioned a project to develop national occupational standards and a qualification framework for learning development and support services, a sector which covers the work of learning mentors, education welfare, Connexions personal advisers and others who work in similar services. The standards are underpinned by functional maps for education welfare officers, Connexions personal advisers and learning mentors. These maps describe the roles and scope of the work in detail. The standards themselves describe the competencies required to operate as an effective worker, and can help inform workforce development. Going forward, the CWDC will be gatekeeper of the national occupational standards, as part of its role to improve training provision, career development and workforce mobility. See section 3.3 for more information on the learning mentor role and national occupational standards.

2.3 THE NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOLS

The New Relationship with Schools (NRWS) provides the protocols for working between schools and the local authority and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The aim is to help schools raise standards – with clearer priorities, less bureaucracy, greater accountability and better information for parents.

As part of the NRWS, the Government proposes to increase legal and financial flexibility for all schools alongside the introduction of a more streamlined accountability regime. Schools will become more autonomous and funding will be increasingly devolved from 2006, with little ring-fencing. Money will go instead into a dedicated schools grant (DSG) which will operate on a simplified three-year funding cycle. This will include money from existing funding streams such as Excellence in Cities. To ensure stability for schools during the move to new arrangements, the distribution of the grant in 2006-07 and 2007-08 will reflect the current distribution of its constituent grants. That means there will be no loss of EIC funding. The difference is that schools will be able to choose which services and programmes they want to maintain and develop.

Other elements of the NRWS include:

- school self evaluation, incorporating the use of the Self Evaluation form (SEF), providing the starting point for planning, inspection, local authority liaison and the school setting its own targets
- shorter, more focused inspections
- direct support to schools provided by nationally accredited School Improvement Partners (SIP), incorporating a 'single conversation', or focused dialogue, between the school and the SIP
- more streamlined systems of data collection and the alignment of data used by the school, the SIP and inspectors.

2.4 THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY NATIONAL STRATEGIES

The Primary Strategy encourages schools to use the freedoms they already have to suit their pupils and the context in which they work. The goal is for every primary school to combine excellence in teaching with enjoyment of learning. Schools will:

- develop the distinctive character of the school, building on existing strengths (e.g. sport or music) or working closely with the community
- take ownership of the curriculum
- be creative and innovative in how they teach and in how they run the school
- use tests, targets and tables to help every child develop their potential and measure school performance.

For two years from September 2003, the DfES ran a pilot programme in 25 local authorities to trial a comprehensive approach to promoting positive behaviour and attendance, including a taught programme of social, emotional and behavioural skills. In June 2005, this resource was updated and made available to all schools under the title: *Excellence and Enjoyment: Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning*. All local authorities have been provided resources within their Standard's Fund Grant to support about 20% of their schools to implement the materials.

The Secondary Strategy (previously the Key Stage 3 Strategy) aims to raise standards in the early years of secondary education by strengthening teaching and learning across the curriculum. It is made up of a number of strands, including the behaviour and attendance strand which recognises that positive behaviour and attendance are pre-conditions for improving standards in secondary schools. The strategy makes help and resources available to schools to develop effective whole-school approaches to improving behaviour and attendance.

2.5 THE YOUTH GREEN PAPER

The Youth Green Paper - *Youth Matters* - was published in July 2005. Building on Every Child Matters, it reinforces the vision that all young people should achieve the five key outcomes. It aims to help them do this through a radical re-shaping of services for young people aged 13 to 19.

The three main areas of change are:

- Ensuring young people have more things to do and places to go in their local area.
- Better information, advice and guidance about issues that matter to them, delivered in the way they want to receive it. Local authorities will work in partnership with children's trusts, schools and colleges to deliver this.
- Better support for those who have more serious problems through integrated packages of support involving all relevant agencies and utilising lead professionals to make sure that support is co-ordinated, convenient and integrated. This will be delivered through targeted youth support teams working in and close to schools.

Table 1 summarises the key policy changes, indicates the impact that each policy area is likely to have on learning mentor provision, and the contribution that learning mentors can make to achieving the aims of the new agenda.

| TABLE 1: POLICY CHANGES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING MENTOR PROVISION | | |
|---|---|--|
| Area of change | Impact on learning mentors | Contribution of learning mentors |
| <p>Every Child Matters: change for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on five key outcomes - more multi-agency support - integrated strategic planning through Children's Trusts - emphasis on self-evaluation and evidence gathering | <p>Likely to increase demand for roles like learning mentors</p> <p>Could lead to more opportunities for learning mentors</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skills and role complement the aims of Every Child Matters ● Already place strong emphasis on evaluating and reflecting on practice so can provide evidence to support the delivery of Every Child Matters ● Could take on the role of lead professional with appropriate training and support |
| <p>Every Child Matters: change for children in schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more emphasis on personalised learning - extended schools - links between special schools and mainstream provision | <p>Schools will gear learning, pastoral and support services to meeting the five outcomes - to impact on all those working with children and young people</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take pupil-centred approach to learning ● Understand and work with different learning styles ● Could play a key role in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supporting pupils from special schools in mainstream programmes - supporting transition and transfer |
| <p>School and children's workforce development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing skills and capacity of the whole children's workforce - school workforce remodelling | <p>Learning mentor roles will need to be reviewed as part of the remodelling process, with reference to the national occupational standards</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At the interface between the schools workforce and the children's workforce, so learning mentors bring valuable knowledge about each workforce to forge understanding and more integrated ways of working |
| <p>New relationship with schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - schools becoming more autonomous and funding fully devolved from 2006 | <p>Schools can decide whether or not to fund or continue to fund learning mentor provision</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrable contribution to school standards as well as promotion of children and young people's health and well-being |
| <p>Primary and secondary national strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - behaviour and attendance strands in both strategies - development of social and emotional aspects of learning | <p>Schools likely to want learning mentors to play key role in this area, as aims of the behaviour and attendance strands overlap strongly with learning mentor remit</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adept at identifying barriers to learning so could contribute effectively in this area ● Can be key practitioners in early intervention strategies because of understanding of learning context and regular contact with pupil |
| <p>Youth Green Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more activities - better information and advice - better support for those with problems | <p>Learning mentor resources and roles likely to be part of the package of support for young people in and around schools</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support schools in all four of the strategic challenges: empowering young people, helping them make a positive contribution, offering information and guidance, supporting young people to make choices and helping young people achieve |

“Learning mentors are very skilled at helping students work through and overcome problems, often from outside school, which are preventing them from learning. Through a combination of individual counselling and support sessions, group work, residential trips, and after-school activities, they are helping students to achieve significantly higher grades than originally predicated. They are providing support for those students considered the most vulnerable.”
Hanson School, Bradford, September 2005



DfES strategy

Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners (DfES, 2004)
www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/5yearstrategy/

Every Child Matters

The key strategic and legislative documents are available at
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/publications/

Other documents that might be of interest are:

Lead Professional Good Practice Guidance (DfES, 2005). Guidance to help operational managers and senior officers successfully develop and implement a lead professional role. Available at: www.ecm.gov.uk/leadprofessional/

Championing Children: A Shared Set of Skills, Knowledge and Behaviour for those Leading and Managing Children's Services (DfES, 2005). Available at www.ecm.gov.uk/deliveringservices/

Scoping the Market for Children's Services (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2004) Provides information on the market for children's services, identifies gaps in provision and considers capacity and potential for expansion. Available at www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RW24.pdf

Local Authority Trading and Children's Services (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2004). Investigates options for local authorities to provide children's services other local authorities. Available at www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RW25.pdf

School and children's workforce development

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/remodelling/
www.remodelling.org/

Information on the remodelling agenda, including the process model and the national agreement.

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/workforcereform/

Information on the national strategy for reforming the children's workforce so that it supports the five Every Child Matters outcomes more effectively.

Considerations on Recent Developments relating to Workforce Reform for Learning Mentor Strand Co-ordinators: Summary Grid (Workforce Reform Learning Mentor Strand Co-ordinator task group, 2005). Available at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/sfp/support/

Workforce Change: Issues and Information for Learning Mentor Strand Co-ordinators (Workforce Reform Learning Mentor Strand Co-ordinator task group, 2005). Available at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/sfp/support

New relationship with schools

A New Relationship with Schools: Next Steps (DfES/Ofsted, 2005)
For more information see www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/newrelationship/

Primary and secondary strategies

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/secondary/

Youth Green Paper

www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth/

All of these materials can be viewed and downloaded at
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/sfp/csandschools/

| | |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Every Child Matters: How learning mentor training fits with the five outcomes (Word doc). Bradford. |
| 2 | Role of the learning mentor: slides (Powerpoint). Bradford. |
| 3 | EiC service level agreement which shows how EiC supports both teaching & learning and social inclusion (Word doc). Bradford. |
| 4 a-g | Common Assessment Framework (Word docs). Sheffield. a) Role and remit of lead managers b) Threshold and application c) Work plan for lead managers d) Consent and information sharing e) Guidance for services on when to complete an assessment f) Contacts guide g) Example common assessment framework form |
| 5 a-b | Common Assessment Framework presentations (Powerpoint). Sheffield. a) The form b) The process |

The role and impact of learning mentors and co-ordinators

Learning mentors were introduced in 1999 as part of the Excellence in Cities (EiC) initiative – a package of measures designed to improve inner city education. As the programme progressed, this focus was extended to incorporate areas previously covered by Education Action Zones as they transformed into Excellence Clusters (ECs).

Between 1999 and 2005, learning mentor provision spread quickly, and it is now estimated that around 12,000 EiC/EC learning mentors are in place across the primary and secondary sectors. The total number of learning mentors is significantly higher than this as a large number of posts are funded through alternative streams, or paid for directly through school budgets in non-EiC/EC areas.

The learning mentor role is now well established. It is supported by:

- an initial training programme
- national occupational standards (NOS) which detail minimum standards of practice
- a functional map which outlines the role in detail
- a national accredited training framework with national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 3 and 4, plus an emerging range of foundation degrees and related courses.

In many EiC/EC areas, learning mentor co-ordinators are also in place with overall responsibility for learning mentor provision. They are supported through a national and regional network structure, alongside a DfES-funded central support team drawn from co-ordinators across the country.



As we move into new, more flexible funding arrangements from April 2006, all schools and colleges will have the opportunity to develop learning mentor provision. So what can they expect from investing in this type of provision?

3.1 THE ROLE OF LEARNING MENTORS

Learning mentors support schools in raising standards, specifically through raising pupils' achievement, breaking down barriers to learning, improving attendance and reducing exclusions.

The learning mentor functional map describes the role as being to provide support and guidance to children, young people and those engaged with them, by removing barriers to learning in order to promote effective participation, enhance individual learning, raise aspirations and achieve full potential. This is achieved through activity in three specific areas:

- To provide a complementary service that enhances existing provision in order to support learning, participation and encourage social inclusion.
- To develop and maintain effective and supportive mentoring relationships with children, young people and those engaged with them.
- To work within an extended range of networks and partnerships to broker support and learning opportunities and improve the quality of services to children and young people.

 *Learning mentors make a good contribution to the standards achieved by those pupils who experience some difficulties in keeping up with school work.* 
Wellington Primary, March 2004

Learning mentors bridge academic and pastoral support roles with the aim of ensuring that individual pupils and students engage more effectively in learning and achieve appropriately.

Pupils of all ability levels can underachieve, and learning mentors target these pupils and help them to identify and address what it is that is getting in the way of their learning. These barriers can be wide-ranging and often very personal to the individual pupil. They may include the need to develop better learning and study skills, personal organisation, difficulties at home, behaviour, bullying, or disaffection and disengagement from learning. Targeted pupils may be demotivated or lacking in self-esteem, they may have fallen behind in their work or find communication difficult and they may have high rates of absenteeism. In some instances they may be young carers or have suffered bereavement. There is a range of other activities they may also carry out, as illustrated in **Figure 2**.

FIGURE 2: THE LEARNING MENTOR ROLE IN PRACTICE



Whatever issues they are facing, learning mentors can help pupils develop respect not just for themselves but also for those around them. They help break down the barriers to learning so that pupils can improve their attainment and self confidence.

The learning mentor’s caseload varies from school to school, depending on the complexity of pupil needs and broader duties – an active caseload can vary between 10-15 to more than 30, balanced between short and long term intervention. This allows a learning mentor to perform a range of duties and give ‘quality time’ to pupils.

The flexibility of the learning mentor role means that it can be adapted to the needs of any school or individual, but what makes learning mentors special is their ability to break down barriers to learning, unlocking educational opportunities for pupils, improving self esteem and confidence and releasing untapped potential. They can make a valuable contribution to the work of children’s services in general as they strive to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people. The ways in which learning mentors can contribute to the five Every Child Matters outcomes is summarised in **Table 2**.

| TABLE 2: EXAMPLES OF LEARNING MENTOR ACTIVITY SUPPORTING THE FIVE EVERY CHILD MATTERS OUTCOMES | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Be healthy | Stay safe | Enjoy and achieve | Make a positive contribution | Achieve economic well-being |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support schools to achieve Healthy School Standard ● Breakfast clubs ● Support for making positive choices ● After school clubs (including sports and dance) ● Sexual health and relationship support ● Supporting pupils with mental health difficulties ● Being a protective factor and building pupils’ resilience ● Supporting pupils experiencing bereavement and loss ● Multi-agency links (CAMHS, education welfare, health, social services) ● Developing confidence and self-esteem ● Working with families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bullying prevention programmes and strategies ● Encouraging and modelling positive play including peaceful playground projects ● Making positive choices ● Contributing to drugs education programmes ● Child protection work ● Family liaison ● Multi-agency links (education welfare, youth offending teams, social services, police, tier 1, 2 and 3 health and social care providers, community and voluntary sector, school teaching and support staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting learning and participation through one-to-one and group work ● Supporting engagement with school ● Work with education welfare to support attendance ● Programmes to support personal and social development ● Study support and study skills programmes ● Work with families, parents and carers, including family learning programmes ● Homework clubs/ summer school ● Support transfer and transition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with student councils ● Peer support programmes (including peer mentoring and peer buddying) ● Bullying prevention programmes and strategies ● Programmes to enable pupils to support the environment and their communities (e.g. Princes Trust and award schemes) ● Programmes to develop confidence and self-esteem ● Programmes to support social and emotional aspects of learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting exam success/ qualifications ● Programmes to help pupils prepare for further education and employment ● Progression planning ● Raising motivation and aspirations ● Employability skills ● Study support programmes supporting exam success ● Progression planning |

3.2 THE ROLE OF LEARNING MENTOR CO-ORDINATORS

'Learning mentor co-ordinator' is a generic term given to people with area-wide responsibility for learning mentor provision, in a programme management capacity. Co-ordinators may be employed by local authorities or clusters of schools, or they may be employed by one school but work on behalf of a cluster. They have been a key feature of EiC provision but going forward such a role is also likely to be useful in a broader children's services context. Those currently working in this role have come into post from a variety of differing backgrounds and experiences - many from managerial posts in schools, local authorities or other agencies.

The key objectives of the role are to support learning mentor provision in a local area by:

- providing leadership and supporting learning mentors in managing their role and caseload
- establishing common standards of service for learning mentors, and networks in which they can exchange information and best practice
- leading the development of induction packages in conjunction with individual schools
- co-ordinating the dissemination of effective practice and professional development programmes
- monitoring and evaluating the quality and impact of learning mentors in schools and reporting back to strategic bodies
- liaising with and working in partnership with other support agencies to enable a co-ordinated response for pupils and co-operation with project groups in complementary initiatives.

Under EiC, co-ordinators have received peer support through national and regional support networks. A peer support team has been established by the DfES to provide or broker additional support where necessary.

The co-ordinator role is wide, varied and is seen as being key to the successful implementation of the learning mentor programme in schools. They often work at different levels, reflecting local organisational needs. Consequently the role demands a high level of communication and organisational skills. There is also a need to have knowledge of:

- effective strategies for working with schools and establishing relationships with senior managers
- how to work effectively inside a local education authority and access support and information
- how to plan strategically and link with local and national initiatives
- effective strategies to monitor and evaluate the impact of learning mentors in schools
- other agencies and contacts
- examples of best practice across the country
- how to access knowledge and support from the DfES.

Policy developments over recent years have provided opportunities for co-ordinators to become increasingly involved in leading, or contributing to, related initiatives alongside their learning mentor co-ordination role.

Such a breadth of activities has made the role invaluable, but sometimes hard to define. Some have described it as the 'glue' which helps many programmes stick together. Co-ordinators have played a crucial role in supporting partnership planning and the implementation, monitoring and support of EiC programmes. They have also had a crucial role in supporting school-based line managers and supervisors in helping them to construct, lead, develop and integrate their learning mentor programmes, providing support and guidance on the work itself, but also in relation to programme management, staffing issues and the new and developing policy context. They have provided similar support to school and college leadership teams. They have developed, co-ordinated and delivered training programmes for learning mentors and related staff, facilitated practitioner networking and practice sharing and have acted as gatekeepers for the role itself. Additionally they have actively linked with related support agencies and provision, often facilitating the development of operational and multi-agency working protocols and joint training.

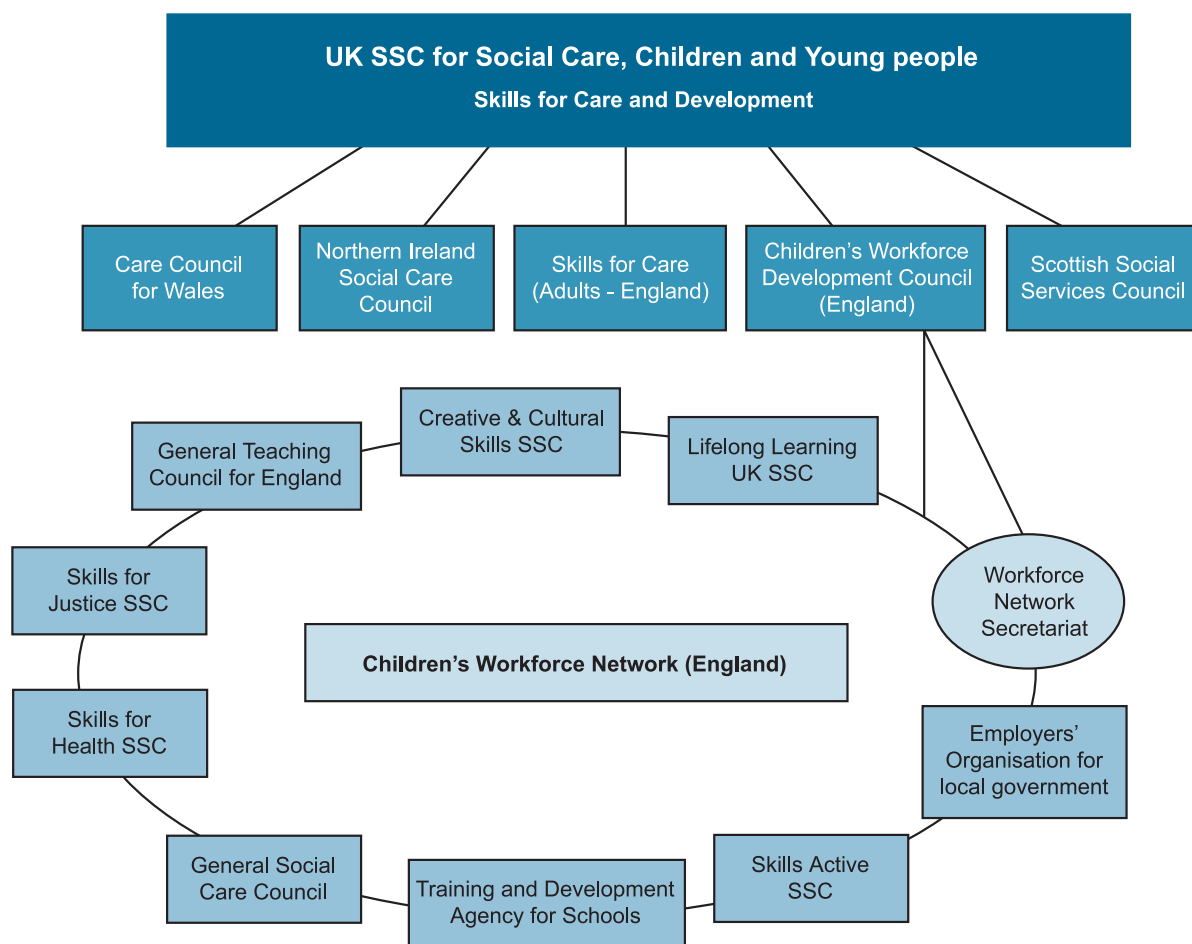
One EiC co-ordinator has described this broad role as follows: ‘We are change agents through our wide and diverse role, our knowledge, and our good practice in working collaboratively with other local and national strategies and multi-agency partners.’

Such a role is likely to continue to prove beneficial in helping local authorities make operational and strategic links as the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programmes gather pace.

3.3 TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

The recently established Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC) is one of five bodies that form the federated UK Skills for Care and Development Sector Skills Council. The CWDC represents learning mentors as well as workers across a range of other sectors, including early years, education welfare, Connexions, foster care and social care. Its main role is to support the development of this workforce through improving training provision, career development and workforce mobility, as well as encouraging better integration. It also coordinates the Children’s Workforce Network, which includes professional representation of teaching and other school staff, child health staff, youth workers, youth justice workers and play workers (see **Figure 3**).

FIGURE 3: NATIONAL CONTEXT FOR THE CHILDREN’S WORKFORCE AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



As an arm of the Sector Skills Council (SSC), the CWDC will be a gatekeeper of the range of relevant national occupational standards covering the work of this sector. The standards for learning development and support services cover the work of learning mentors, education welfare staff and those working in Connexions and related services. They are underpinned by functional maps for the three main areas which describe the roles and scope of the work in detail. The standards themselves describe the competencies required to operate as an effective worker. The minimum standards of competence are set out in **Table 3**.

TABLE 3: MINIMUM STANDARDS OF COMPETENCE FOR LEARNING MENTORS

| Standard/unit of competence | The learning mentor must be able to: |
|---|--|
| Facilitate children and young people's learning and development through mentoring | Identify the learning and development needs of children and young people |
| | Plan with children and young people how learning and development needs will be addressed through mentoring |
| | Mentor children and young people to achieve identified outcomes |
| | Review the effectiveness of mentoring with children and young people |
| Support the child or young person's successful transfer and transition in learning and development contexts | Plan for transfer and transition |
| | Support the child or young person to prepare for transfer or transition |
| | Monitor the success of transfer and transition and identify continued support needs |
| Contribute to the protection of children and young people from abuse | Identify signs and symptoms of possible abuse |
| | Respond to a child's disclosure of abuse |
| | Inform other professionals about suspected abuse |
| | Promote children's awareness of personal safety and abuse |
| Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety | Identify the hazards and evaluate the risks in your workplace |
| | Reduce the risks to health and safety in your workplace |
| Review own contribution to the service | Assess own contribution to the work of the school |
| | Develop oneself to achieve work requirements |
| Enable children and young people to find out about and use services and facilities | Enable children and young people to find out about services and facilities |
| | Enable children and young people to use services and facilities |
| Operate within networks | Maintain membership of networks |
| | Exchange information within networks |

These developments mean that the training and development of learning mentors will now sit within a national framework. From late 2005, the CWDC will be taking a proactive role in delivering services for learning mentors and to ensure continued support for their schools and colleges.

3.4 THE IMPACT OF LEARNING MENTORS

Many schools across the country have successfully introduced learning mentors and have found their impact to be invaluable. They can have a tremendous impact on individual pupils' lives, in many cases transforming low achieving and unfocused students with minimal self-esteem and a lack of commitment into more confident pupils with higher grades, improved motivation and a sense of direction. This leads to improved staff-pupil interactions, which in turn benefits other pupils, the wider staff and the whole school environment.



“Learning mentors make a valuable contribution, particularly in promoting pupils’ personal development.”

Crossley Hall Primary, January 2004



Learning mentors not only make a difference to pupils themselves; they can also have a considerable impact on families, teachers and schools and the way that they function. Outside agencies report being involved more effectively than before and support for teaching staff has improved. Schools have also found that if the learning mentor provides a safe haven in the playground at lunchtime for example, behavioural problems are reduced and potentially disruptive situations are defused.

Some examples of evaluative evidence include:

- An NFER report on the impact of EiC (2004) identified a clear link between learning mentor support and pupil achievement.
- Many area -based evaluations have found similar results, as well as evidence of improved levels of confidence, engagement, attendance and self esteem.
- Numerous Ofsted reports have cited the benefits of learning mentor involvement, for example at Windhill Church of England Primary School in Bradford, attendance increased after the learning mentors, in consultation with the education social worker, focused their attention on the small number of pupils with poor attendance.³

Some of the main areas of impact identified by the Forward Focus Group, based on their experience in the field, are outlined in the **Table 4**.

| TABLE 4: IMPACT OF THE LEARNING MENTOR ROLE - VIEWS FROM THE FIELD | | |
|--|--|---|
| Impact on pupils | Impact on families | Impact on schools |
| Improved self image, confidence and motivation | More positive attitude towards schools | Improved grades at all key stages by some pupils |
| Improved aspirations and attainment | Improved support and communication between school and home | Access to a range of additional qualifications for pupils |
| Better social skills | Ability to deal more positively with situations and conflict | Reduction in permanent and fixed term exclusions |
| Improved attitude and behaviour inside and out of school | Access to support and someone to talk to | Reduction in anti-social behaviour |
| Improved attendance and punctuality, fewer exclusions | Improved relations between family and school | Flexibility and support for teachers |
| Greater adaptability when faced with new or challenging situations | More effective communication between parents, carers | More effective communication between teachers, managers, governors and other agencies |
| Better organisational skills and ownership of problems | Better relationships between family and their child/young person | Improved information on pupils, giving teachers a better starting point |
| Pupils given greater knowledge and involvement in the community | Parents have a more positive attitude to school | Increase in extra curricular activities and alternative curriculum development |
| Pupils with greater range of skills and increased engagement in learning | | |

³ Ofsted, 2004. *Windhill Church of England Primary School Inspection Report*. London: Ofsted.

3.5 THE IMPACT OF LEARNING MENTOR CO-ORDINATORS

Learning mentor co-ordinators have driven the learning mentor programme from the pupil, school and local authority level. The general success of this role has led to many being asked to take on additional roles within the various initiatives and programmes that have emerged from the DfES and local priorities. Examples include working with learning support units, behaviour support teams, children services, behaviour improvement programmes and the new deal for communities.

The significant changes within the new Government agenda for education and children’s services will clearly affect the provision of learning mentors/co-ordinators and all those who work in this area. Taking steps now to plan and integrate learning mentor provision can help ensure that quality is maintained as children’s services are restructured. Learning mentors and those co-ordinating their activity have a valuable role to play within the future educational agenda. The rest of this document discusses the steps those responsible for learning mentors can take to maximise their contribution.

“ *Learning mentors are instrumental in the school’s partnership with parents.* ”
Horton Park Primary, September 2003



Learning mentor policy and practice

[www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learning mentors/](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learning%20mentors/)

Learning mentor functional mapping

www.paulo.org.uk/pages/nos/funct_map_Learn03/

National occupational standards

www.dfes.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/nos.shtml

Information on the national occupational standards and the qualification framework for those delivering learning, development and support for children, young people and those who care for them. Includes links to key documents.

Children’s Workforce Development Council

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk



All of these materials can be viewed and downloaded at
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/sfp/csandschools/

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Evaluation report on learning mentor activities (Word doc). Bradford. |
| 2 | Summary report of quotes from Ofsted reports related to learning mentors (Word doc). Bradford |
| 3 | Case study: learning mentor ‘attendance attack’ (Word doc). St Helens. |
| 4 | Case studies: two examples from the DfES learning mentor website |
| 5 | <i>Ticket to the Future</i> . In-depth information and support in relation to the national occupational standards, their genesis and application, and the subsequent accredited training framework (Word doc). |

4

Introducing and developing learning mentor provision in a climate of change

The experience of EiC indicates that a successful learning mentor programme which has a real impact on the achievement of pupils and students is underpinned by a number of key factors. These include:

- A clear understanding of the learning mentor role by all involved – the things that make it different from other provision.
- Effective deployment as part of whole school/college approaches to pupil/student support and inclusion.
- The commitment and understanding of the school senior leadership team and the governing body.
- Strong, clear line management linked in to school planning and priorities.
- Effective impact assessment and evaluation, as part of the school self-assessment process, supported by central tracking and impact analysis carried out under the protocols of the 'new relationship with schools'.
- Well trained and supported staff (rolling programmes, opportunities for accreditation, inclusion in effective performance appraisal and continuous professional development programmes linked to national occupational standards).
- Practitioner networks and practice sharing opportunities.
- Clear linkage to the developing education and support agendas.
- Effective area based support or co-ordination, as this impacts at all levels and on all of the above.
- A recognition of the amount and pace of change, and a commitment to helping all those involved to manage change effectively.

This last point is even more pertinent in today's fast-moving and demanding policy climate. Change has come up as a recurring theme throughout this guide. A major change for learning mentor provision is the move from being a Government initiative to being part of mainstream school or college provision, as a result of a positive choice by the school to maintain or introduce dedicated learning mentor provision. The development of children's trusts, school workforce remodelling and the Youth Green Paper will also lead to significant changes.

In such an environment, it can be helpful for those leading service development to understand the importance of managing change, and to have the skills to make it a success.

There are a number of change models and theories. All have strengths and drawbacks, but they can provide a rough framework, a mind set, within which to consider what results are required, how they might be achieved and the possible consequences of any actions. Everyone in the organisation needs to act as a change agent; change is a developmental process in which growth and direction are the main issues.

Most change programmes encourage individuals and organisations to think about their expectations for the future. 'Where do we want to be' becomes a crucial issue, along with 'How do we get there?'

Change rarely happens suddenly and the effective management of change tends to be undertaken in small simple steps in a few areas rather than the whole organisation at once. Strategies need to be simple and open. Complexity is often inherent in change programmes and it can easily hide or cloud key factors for consideration.

A common language between professionals will help. Managers of change should not be afraid to ask, clarify and simplify – and should encourage others to do the same. It is also helpful to understand the individual contribution that all team members can make, for example through their skills, knowledge, experience and role preferences. Profiling tools can help in these instances and provide a useful audit for future professional development and the shaping of particular teams.

Within the changing educational agenda it is important that managers at all levels have or develop skills that will help them manage change more effectively. Some of the skills that have been identified as helpful for 'change agents' are:

- to be able to work independently, without power and sanction of the management hierarchy behind them
- to be an effective collaborator
- to be able to develop high trust relations
- to be able to work across the business functions and units
- to be willing to stake rewards on results and gain satisfaction from success
- to possess self confidence tempered with humility
- to respect the process as well as the substance of change.



School remodelling: tools and techniques

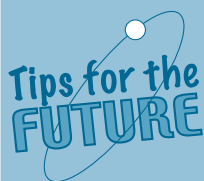
www.remodelling.org/remodelling/remodelling_tools.php

Information on the resources that have been developed to help school change team in the remodelling process.

Leading and managing change in a multi-agency context

www.ecm.gov.uk/multiagencyworking/toolkitforteammanagers/managingchange/models/

This area of the Every Child Matters website has information on some common change management models.



- Develop a model of organisational change that you find helpful – not one confined to the text books and management courses! Use this to help stimulate and clarify thinking about change and the consequences.
- Avoid putting trust in only one way of activating change.
- Give attention to the transition stage - not just the end goals.
- Consider some form of team profiling exercise, for example Belbin (www.belbin.com) to understand the role and contribution of all team members.
- Undertake a SWOT analysis to identify skills, strengths and areas for development.

Actions for those currently in learning mentor and co-ordinator posts

For those already in a learning mentor or co-ordinator role, it will be helpful to stay up to date with the new agenda and the initiatives and opportunities that arise from it. This will help you work out how you see your role developing (and that of learning mentor provision more broadly) and how to communicate this to others. Steps that can help might include the following:

- Collect clear, unambiguous monitoring, evaluation and tracking data to show the impact of learning mentors and how they meet best value requirements.
- Collate the findings from evaluations of the role, for example by Ofsted or by peers in other programmes.
- Share training, information and best practice with key staff in the local authority or children's trust, and other related organisations.
- Clearly articulate the impact and the breadth of the learning mentor role and the contribution that effective co-ordination can make.
- Collate examples of best practice in relation to the new Ofsted framework for schools, and examples of good self-evaluation forms which highlight the work of inclusion staff and learning mentors. Gather relevant case studies from local practice to exemplify the detail of the work and its impact on pupils, systems and provision.
- Be clear and transparent in communications with schools. Keep the governing body informed as well as line managers and senior staff in schools. Consider training or experience in shadowing learning mentors if necessary.
- Develop a clear understanding of the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, the information sharing index and other strategies and proposals to support integrated working in response to the Every Child Matter agenda.
- Provide schools and governing bodies with information about potential funding streams.
- Understand and describe your own skills and strengths, for example using a SWOT analysis. Develop skills in completing CVs and application forms.
- Find out as much as you can about the strategy in your local area, for example in relation to new structures and proposals for service and workforce development.



Four specially trained learning mentors, three of whom are bilingual, provide a structured programme of support for individuals with learning problems which is helping to raise self-esteem.
Westbourne Primary, February 2004



Actions for leaders and managers in schools and colleges

This section sets out actions for schools and colleges where the learning mentor role is being mainstreamed or introduced for the first time.

Clear vision for supporting pupils

The vision and commitment of the senior leadership team drive the ethos and culture of a school or college. As such, their understanding and expectations of learning mentor provision and how it fits into the broader system of support for pupils and students (as well as into the broader Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme) is crucial to the success of the work.

Where learning mentor provision has developed quickly and effectively, it has been supported by a clear vision of how learning mentors should work with others and how their work should contribute to the overall programme of raising standards and improving achievement.

Tasks for leaders with responsibilities in this area could include:

- Creating and promoting a shared vision for pupils' achievement, well-being and personal development in the context of Every Child Matters, and the role of learning mentors in attaining this.
- Increasing awareness of the contribution that learning mentors can make to whole school processes and goals, for example teaching and learning, raising standards, improving behaviour and attendance, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion. This might include ensuring access to and familiarity with the key literature on the role.
- Encouraging debate with the whole staff and governors about the strategy for learning mentors, and other related provision. The chart at **Table 1** can be used to inform the debate – it can be customised for your own setting, to use in strategic planning, presentations and training.
- Working through the implications of the learning mentor role for existing structures and policies. Identify a clear focus for the learning mentor role, linked to Every Child Matters and the school improvement plan.
- Involving governors, pupils, staff and parents/carers to gain consensus, ownership and authority for new directions and an understanding of everyone's part and contribution to the whole.
- Ensuring there is an appropriate staff development programme to support this work and identifying governor responsibility for learning mentors.
- Considering - in conjunction with local authorities and others involved in co-ordinating, planning or influencing pupil support provision – requirements in relation to area-based co-ordination and support. Practice suggests that learning mentor co-ordinators have a valuable role to play, both in strategic planning and decision-making and also in supporting operational issues such as line management. Both of these aspects are central to the effective implementation of the learning mentor role.

Role definition

Having a clear definition of the learning mentor role is a key starting point. It ensures that learning mentors can take up their roles quickly and confidently and that other staff are aware of how the new role complements activities already underway in the school, college or local community.

In mapping the role against existing and planned provision for inclusion, it is useful to keep the Every Child Matters outcomes in mind and to define the role of the learning mentor around three areas:

1. There will be common roles and responsibilities undertaken by a range of professionals within inclusion. These are defined in the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce:

- effective communication and engagement with children and families
- understanding children and young people's development
- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child
- supporting transitions
- multi-agency working
- sharing information.

All practitioners working with children and young people also have a role in promote equality, diversity and rights.

2. Each role will have distinctive features which appertain only to that function. The learning mentor functional map (see section 3.1) provides the following definition of the role of the learning mentor:

- Learning mentors provide support and guidance to children, young people and those engaged with them, by removing barriers to learning in order to promote effective participation, enhance individual learning, raise aspirations and achieve full potential.

This definition is then broken down into three broad functional areas that together identify what makes the role of the learning mentor distinctive from other practitioners:

- Providing a complementary service that enhances existing provision in order to support learning, participation and encourage social inclusion.
- Developing and maintaining effective and supportive mentoring relationships with children, young people and those engaged with them.
- Working within an extended range of networks and partnerships to broker support and learning opportunities and improve the quality of services to children and young people.

3. Finally, there are complementary responsibilities that a learning mentor could undertake alongside other practitioners within the context of a whole school or whole child approach. These include the following:⁴

- Supporting attendance
 - working with others to develop and implement strategies to improve attendance.
- Supporting school systems
 - implementing referral procedures
 - promoting and maximising educational opportunities and achievements for individual children and young people
 - creating a climate that promotes learning
 - involving children and young people in the management and delivery of service provision
 - managing the exclusion and reintegration of children and young people
 - promoting the interests of children and young people in the community.

 *The role of the learning mentor in monitoring absences and lateness has ensured pupils who may have problems are quickly offered support and help.* 
Hill Top Primary, Bradford, September 2003

⁴ This list of complementary roles is adapted from the suite of 61 National Occupational Standards for Learning, Development and Support Services.

- Signposting to other services
 - assisting children and young people to gain access to other services
 - assessment and analysis
 - assessing the educational achievements and needs of children and young people.
- Relationships that support learning
 - enabling children and young people to understand and address their difficulties, including deciding on and planning a course of action
 - enabling young people to use their learning to enhance their future development
 - encouraging children and young people to develop and maintain a positive sense of self and identity
 - enabling children and young people to address issues which affect their health and well being
 - enabling young people to work effectively in groups to promote individual growth, development and independence
 - influence learning opportunities in relation to personal and social development
 - reviewing progress and evaluating opportunities with young people.
- Working with parents, carers and families
 - establishing, sustaining and disengaging from relationships with the families and carers of children and young people
 - working with others
 - developing and sustaining effective working relationships with staff in other agencies.
- Contributing to the development and effectiveness of work teams.

As schools start their remodelling programmes and the children's workforce strategy begins to develop it will be increasingly important to retain a clear sense of the learning mentor role and the contribution it can make. Helpful actions in developing work in this area are:

- Audit the roles of all those involved in supporting pupils – for example the inclusion team and outside agencies - using the 'common, complementary and distinctive' framework (see above).
- Look at how learning mentor provision can contribute to areas of integrated practice, for example the Common Assessment Framework, lead professional and information sharing.

There is a trend in some secondary schools to move away from the role of heads of year and to appoint pastoral support managers or advisers instead. This can be an effective use of pastoral support staff as they do not have any teaching responsibilities, and therefore have more flexibility to support pupils. A learning mentor may see such a role as a natural progression, and their skills and training would support them in carrying it out. If learning mentors progress in this way, schools may wish to consider replacing them with new staff so the specific contribution of the mentoring role is not lost to the school community.

Recruitment

It is helpful for schools and colleges to be aware of the workforce strategy in their local area as this will provide a useful starting point for engaging people from local communities in learning mentor activity.

To encourage more people to come into the role of learning mentor, schools and organisations may wish to consider encouraging volunteers to work in schools alongside learning mentors. A range of local courses are available which can enhance the skills of aspiring learning mentors. Learning mentor co-ordinators can advise on this.

Making people aware of the opportunities that exist to progress in the role can also help encourage more people into the role. Opportunities to develop leadership and management skills through continuing professional development can help learning mentors to progress within schools and in other multi-agency settings.

Effective line management arrangements

In addition to visionary leadership and clear planning, the successful introduction of the role requires effective and committed line management. Most day-to-day line managers of learning mentors are school-based, as most learning mentors are employed directly by schools. Where teams are centrally employed and deployed to schools/colleges, they can access central line management, but still require a clear point of contact and way of linking into school/college priorities and provision. This can often be provided effectively through dual line management arrangements, where there is a school based line manager who oversees the operation of the role, working with a central line manager who might focus on supervisory and professional development issues.

In areas where the role has been implemented effectively, it is clear to pupils and staff what is specific about the learning mentor role. Line management can facilitate integrated and complementary approaches to student support, so that the learning mentor is acting as part of a broader team, with their own specific remit and skills. The line manager can ensure that there are protocols and structures in place to ensure that each pupil receives a coherent service and that there is joint planning and information sharing in place.

Line managers are also responsible for ensuring that individual learning mentors receive appropriate support. This entails looking at the support needs of pupils and students, caseloads, staffing issues, timetabling of training, induction, initial training, post qualification support, management of time and priorities, appraisal, supervision, accountability and monitoring and evaluation. All of the above should reflect (and inform) the context set by, and expectations of, the senior leadership team.

Learning mentor co-ordinators can support school-based line managers in putting these structures in place. They can also provide advice in linking with and making a coherent, tailored programme out of the range of initiatives related to pupil support. This has been a significant element of the leadership and support structures that have helped learning mentor provision grow so successfully.

Some line managers of learning mentors also have broader responsibilities in relation to inclusion, for example:

- Co-ordination of initiatives such as behaviour improvement programmes, behaviour and education support teams and elements of the primary and secondary national strategies.
- Establishing a clear and transparent referral and decision-making structure.
- Having knowledge and understanding of how to meet best value requirements and show the impact of the range of resources on pupils' attainment and achievement.

Managing staff and programmes effectively demands a high level of skill, knowledge and communication. Overseeing issues such as recruitment, performance management and sickness absence can be significant in terms of the time required and need to build an appropriate strategic approach and supporting policies. When carried out successfully, they help ensure that programmes are implemented effectively and win the support of practitioners. This in turn has a clear impact on staff effectiveness and retention.

Senior leaders with responsibility for developing line management arrangements may wish to consider the following:

- Allow line managers sufficient time to carry out these responsibilities.
- Ensure that supporting structures and policies are in place.
- Help line managers access appropriate support and guidance, for example from learning mentor co-ordinators. This might include training for new managers, refresher courses, updates on national occupational standards, information on interviewing, performance management and appraisal, good practice examples of monitoring and evaluation, production of policies and action plans and support in developing school self-evaluation forms for Ofsted.

Induction and personal development

A comprehensive induction programme, based on the national occupational standards and reinforced by effective line management and supportive whole school policies and practices, can help embed the learning mentor role quickly. Line managers may find it helpful to think through the following in relation to the learning mentors they work with:

- The national occupational standards form a good basis for professional development, and have led to the construction of a national accreditation framework for this family of work. Staying on top of developments in this area, particularly in relation to the Children’s Workforce Development Council, can help ensure that staff feel supported and have opportunities to develop and progress.
- Learning mentors come from a range of backgrounds and therefore require individual packages to support their development. This will also be influenced by the particular needs of the school and how the role is being defined and carried out in that context.
- Identify what support is available through the local authority/children’s trust, for example in relation to training and peer networks.
- Contact local further and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) about current courses of relevance to learning mentors and to find out whether there are opportunities to develop others to meet specific training needs.
- Identify training opportunities for managers in schools and those working in other agencies, to introduce them to the learning mentor role.

Monitoring and evaluation

As part of the ‘new relationship with schools’, the Government has acknowledged that too often monitoring requirements and data collection from schools has been to suit the convenience of the agencies collecting the data. Under the terms of the new relationship, monitoring and evaluation activity should support a school’s own evaluation and be part of its cycle of development planning. Schools may find the following indicative monitoring and evaluation cycle for learning mentor programmes helpful. The cycle should be contiguous with the school-wide cycle of evaluation, planning and action.

| | |
|--|--|
| How well are we doing? | Complete learning mentor self-evaluation form |
| What more could we aim to achieve this year and what must we do to make it happen? | Complete learning mentor action plan |
| How will we know if we have been successful? | Performance indicators and success criteria clearly linked to qualitative and quantitative evidence: Data tracking at individual pupil level Case studies (of individual pupils and of programmes) Pupil views (interviews, questionnaires) Other types of evidence, for example information from other agencies, referral data etc. |
| When will we review? | Review learning mentor self-evaluation form |

For further information, see *Monitoring and Evaluation of the Learning Mentor Programme in the context of ECM and the New Relationship with Schools* (details on page 28).



General

Identify your local area co-ordinator by emailing learning.mentors@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Vision

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims/

Information on the Every Child Matters vision and key outcomes.

Role

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/
www.dfes.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/nos.shtml

Information on the national occupational standards and the qualification framework for those delivering learning, development and support for children, young people and those who care for them. Includes links to key documents.

Training and development

National Standards for School Improvement Professionals. Available at:

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/la/capacitybuilding/nssips/?version=1

Information on national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in learning development support services run by Edexcel or OCR can be accessed at:

www.edexcel.org.uk and www.ocr.org.uk

A foundation degree in working with young people and young people's services has been developed by Leeds Metropolitan University to meet national occupational standards. Phone 0113 2832600 Ext 4175. Many other HEIs are now developing foundation degrees in this area.

Liverpool John Moore's University is developing a BA (Hons) degree derived from the national occupational standards, to be launched in September 2005. Phone 0151 231 2121.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Learning Mentor Programme in the Context of ECM and the New Relationship with Schools (Learning Mentor Peer Support Team, 2005). Available at:

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/downloads/moneval.doc

Ofsted self evaluation forms. These new forms are available along with other information on the revised inspection framework at: www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/

All of these materials can be viewed and downloaded at
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/sfp/csandschools/

| | |
|--------|---|
| 1 | <i>Learning Mentors Supporting School Improvement</i> . A guide to contributing to school self assessment. Produced in 2005 by the DfES Learning Mentor Strand Co-ordinator Peer Support Team. |
| 2 a-e | Learning mentor support materials (Word docs). St Helens. a) Advice to Mentors: handbook b) Form: school staff and roles c) Induction materials d) Learning mentor training record e) Learning mentor data collection sheet |
| 3 | Learning mentor induction pack (Word doc). Tameside. |
| 4 | The role of the learning mentor (Powerpoint). Tameside. |
| 5 | Audit of learning mentor knowledge, skills and experience: mapping experience against national occupational standards (Word doc). Doncaster. |
| 6 a-s | Monitoring and evaluation: series of proformas for learning mentors (Word docs). Bradford. |
| 7 a-h | Transition support materials (Word docs). St Helens. a) How to achieve effective transition from Year 6 to Year 7: Advice for secondary schools. b) Transition activities in addition to taster events and curriculum outreach c) Primary liaison curriculum outreach programme d) Primary liaison taster day programme e-h) <i>This is me!</i> Forms for pupils to complete |
| 8 | Learning mentor activities: primary and secondary. St Helens. |
| 9 | Learning mentor activity and the Ofsted self evaluation form (Word doc). Bradford. |
| 10 | The self evaluation form: a presentation (Powerpoint). Bradford. |
| 11 | Job description: pastoral support manager (Word doc). Longdendale Community Language College, Tameside. |
| 12 | Job descriptions: learning mentor (Word doc). Tameside. |
| 13 | EiC tracker database: self review criteria and information examples. |
| 14 a-l | Interviewing for learning mentors: a support pack for schools. St Helens. a) Cover sheet b) Job description: secondary c) Person specification: secondary d) Job description: primary e) Person specification: primary f) Suggested questions g) Case study scenarios: secondary h) Case study scenarios: primary i) Questions to help you decide j) Interview recording sheet k) Interview grid l) Protocol for pay and conditions |

Actions for governors

Governors have a key role in providing clear strategic direction for the school. As a result of the changes in funding from 2006, governors will have much closer involvement in decisions surrounding funding for pupil support. The roll-out of Every Child Matters and in particular the development of extended schools also has implications for governing bodies, and their decisions around the pupil support services that are required.

Useful actions for governors might include:

- Identify one governor with lead responsibility in relation to Every Child Matters.
- Find out what training and information is available at school or local authority level about Every Child Matters and the changing face of children's services.
- Ensure that the school has a clear vision for responding to these changes and improving outcomes for all pupils.
- Check that the school's plans for inclusion and pupil support are integral to the broader planning matrix for the whole school/college.
- Ensure that data is used on a regular basis to inform the planning mechanisms.
- Check that professional development opportunities are in place for all staff, including governors, and that this is tied into the whole process.
- Involve pupils/students/parents and the wider community and ensure their views embedded into the process.
- Check that there are effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability procedures in place.



Extended schools

www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools/

The DfES has recently published a series of 'practical know-how' leaflets for extended schools, including one for governors. This is available on the above web address.

School workforce remodelling

There is a dedicated page for governors on the National Remodelling Team website at: www.remodelling.org/programmes/es/wdimfm_governors.php

Resource Bank 4

All of these materials can be viewed and downloaded at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/sfp/csandschools/

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| 1 | Questions that governors might wish to ask of schools (Word doc). Leeds. |
| 2 | Examples of reports to governors by learning mentors (Word doc). Tameside. |
| 3 | An outline for the training of new school governors with responsibility for inclusion (Word doc). Anne Hayward Associates. |

Actions for strategic managers in local authorities and children's trusts

This section sets out actions for strategic managers at local authority/children's trust level, who have responsibility for planning and co-ordinating children's services.

Learning mentor provision has largely been a central Government funded initiative, but from April 2006, under the new school funding arrangements, it will become part of mainstream provision. Co-ordinators have gained and demonstrated a large number of skills, and have shown how central support can help staff and provision develop effectively. Local authorities and children's trusts, along with their partners in schools, colleges and other agencies involved in pupil support, will need to consider what central facilitation and support is needed in order to meet the needs of this workforce.

As new structures begin to emerge, so will views on the degree and type of co-ordination required for different aspects of service provision across children's services. There will still be a need for the co-ordination of learning mentors, but this may take a variety of forms, for example:

- Schools might second or recruit their own co-ordinators, either focusing on learning mentors or taking on a broader role across other support functions.
- Local authorities, schools and partnerships may wish to use existing learning mentor co-ordinators in ensuring the future success and improvement of their support activities.
- Integrated training strategies as part of the development of local workforce strategies.

In addition, there will be opportunities for using the skills and experience of learning mentor co-ordinators in other areas of service development, for example:

- The Youth Green Paper outlines changes which would result in the reconfiguration of youth support services and present opportunities for schools, colleges, local authorities and other partners to contract directly with individuals and organisations for a range of services for young people. The skills, experience and knowledge of learning mentor co-ordinators would be useful in considering the proposed changes, and in constructing local responses to them.
- The new children's trusts will be focusing on integrated service delivery and a key area is likely to be mapping out the workforce across children's services and schools. Learning mentor co-ordinators would have a valuable knowledge base in this area.

The consultation for the Children's Workforce Strategy sets out a number of strategic challenges that may help guide decisions on the future co-ordination of learning mentor provision:

1. Recruitment, quality and retention

- local authorities will need agreed approaches to and support for workforce development. Many learning mentor co-ordinators have developed skills through participating in workforce remodelling processes. They bring valuable knowledge about both schools workforce and children's workforce issues and could contribute to developing more integrated ways of working. Joined-up thinking between different programmes, strategies and services at school and local authority level can help ensure that children and young people with additional needs receive coherent and co-ordinated support.

2. Integrated training and multi-agency working

- many learning mentor co-ordinators have a significant experience of training and professional development. They also bring valuable knowledge and understanding about developing multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approaches. Learning mentor provision should be mapped against the other services available for children and young people, and against the audit of need in each locality, to ensure that it makes a clear contribution and that all provision is complementary. The audit and development work taking place for the introduction of the Children and Young People's Plan from April 2006 provides a good opportunity to do this.

3. Leadership

- learning mentor co-ordinators who have had strategic and leadership roles within local authorities could utilise these skills to focus on the management of change and integrated working across different professions. They may also be deployed into leadership roles within clusters of schools or Education Improvement Partnerships.



Children's workforce strategy

www.ecm.gov.uk/deliveringservices/workforcereform/

Role and training of learning mentors

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/
www.dfes.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/nos.shtml

Information on the national occupational standards and the qualification framework for those delivering learning, development and support for children, young people and those who care for them. Includes links to key documents.

Education Improvement Partnerships

Prospectus - *Education Improvement Partnerships: local collaboration for school improvement and better service delivery* (DfES, 2005). Available at:

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/si/educationimprovementpartnerships/

Online guidance for Education Improvement Partnerships on improving behaviour and persistent truancy (DfES, 2005). See:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/collaboration/guidance/

Youth Green Paper

www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth/

Extended schools

www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools/



All of these materials can be viewed and downloaded at
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/learningmentors/sfp/csandschools/

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|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Ticket to the future.</i> In-depth information and support in relation to the national occupational standards, their genesis and application, and the subsequent accredited training framework (Word doc). |
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Conclusions

Learning mentor provision has made a valuable contribution to the raising of standards in our schools and colleges. It works – as the results of Ofsted inspections and national evaluation have shown. In some areas, schools and colleges who are not in receipt of EiC funding have chosen to introduce learning mentors, as they have been convinced of the benefits in raising pupil achievement and aspirations. More flexible school funding from April 2006 will allow any school in the country to go down this exciting route.

The next few years will be challenging both for schools and for fledgling children's trusts. There are many complex issues to work through, to ensure that all services for children are integrated, effective and producing better outcomes for children and young people.

We hope this guide provides useful background information on the roles, benefits and issues involved in learning mentor provision to enable informed debate about their role and resourcing in the new children's services arena.

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