

Coaching and Mentoring Policy

To be read in conjunction with but not limited to:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Induction Policy

PURPOSE: To assist DePS teaching staff (coaches and mentees) at all levels to develop their professional competence, in all areas of school life especially teaching and learning, through peer or other mentoring and coaching programs as appropriate.

INTRODUCTION: Coaching and mentoring are very effective development methods to assist individuals to reflect, identify, and achieve their goals and support the transfer of their learning and competence to promote the best outcomes for DePS students.

The working relationships that develop through coaching and mentoring help support and develop their skills and knowledge for the benefit of the School and for their own development as teachers. Coaching and mentoring are intended to be positive methods of encouraging teaching staff to unlock their potential and maximise their own teaching and management skills.

The roles and responsibilities of the principal and other members of the senior leadership team with respect to staff development and performance management in no way diminish the application of this policy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to provide a common framework based on best practice principles, to support and inform the design and development of coaching and mentoring practice for DePS school.

The specific objectives of the policy are to:

- Emphasise that coaching and mentoring are voluntary relationships.
- Explicitly recognise coaching and mentoring as a valued element of the staff development framework.
- Ensure that coaching and mentoring, particularly in support of individual development and career advancement, is neither confused with nor substituted for the performance appraisal system.
- Establish that coaching and mentoring relationships in whatever form are governed by existing relevant DePS policies.
- Promote and encourage the growth of formal and informal coaching and mentoring programmes which are part of the strategic vision of DePS.

The Senior Leadership team as a whole, and the Middle Leaders will review the mentoring needs of their staff as part of their mid-plan and long-term planning process.

The specific aims of coaching and mentoring are to:

- Provide a timely and structured learning and development opportunity based on the specific needs of the teacher and delivered at their own pace or to meet the needs and targets of the school.
- Improve confidence and self-esteem and increase motivation to take positive action.
- Develop the individual's own understanding of the school's goals and aspirations
- Develop new insights and ways of working and provide an opportunity to receive constructive/and supportive feedback.
- Provide an opportunity for teachers to reflect on and plan their career development.

SCOPE

A programme of coaching and/or mentoring will be agreed upon under any one of the following circumstances:

- For teachers when agreed as part of the annual Appraisal process.
- For teachers when agreed as part of an informal programme of action for supporting a colleague who is underperforming
- Mentoring/Coaching is available to teachers new to Dubai or to the school and is available to all teachers upon request.

Difference between a mentor and a coach

The skills to be a mentor and a coach are very similar, such as listening, effective questioning, and supporting. The differences between the two are: Mentoring will be undertaken by someone who has in-depth knowledge of the area of need for the mentee and will provide support and advice. Mentoring also provides more general support to build confidence and capabilities to meet current and future developmental needs in the school. For this reason, mentoring will normally be a longer-term relationship than coaching which may last between 3 and 6 months.

Coaching could be undertaken by someone who is not necessarily an expert in the "coachee's" area of need, but the coach is skilled in helping people to self-reflect and to dig deeper to become a better version of themselves. Coaching may be a short-term intervention of a few sessions and aims to provide support to enhance performance for a particular task or objective. The coach may be continually called upon to support various unrelated tasks in a future relationship for the same person.

MENTORING: SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

The coaching and mentoring relationship. All participants will operate within an equal relationship with a focus on the person being coached or mentored. The responsibility for the success of mentoring sits with the mentee. The mentee would be expected to take a lead in initiating the initial meeting after the school has identified the coach or mentor. The teacher is allowed to request a different coach or mentor if they feel that there is going to be little or no chemistry in the coaching or mentoring relationship.

Responsibilities of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Senior Leadership Team, led by the Assistant Principal in Charge of teaching and Learning/CPD is expected to lead the coaching/mentoring programme by:

- Identifying and planning for staff, who act or will act as coaches/mentors, to participate in appropriate training and receive adequate support as and when required.
- Facilitating the commitment of individuals to continuously develop their own leadership skills and capabilities.
- Taking account of the workload implications when planning the contributions of individuals as mentors or coaches.
- Offering the opportunity for team members to explore coaching/mentoring and advise on ways in which this can be achieved.
- Supporting and encouraging the coaching/mentoring relationship by allowing time for meetings.
- Respecting the confidential nature of the coaching/mentoring relationship.
- Carrying along line managers and others whose responsibility is to ensure teachers' development
- Undertaking and organising any relevant training to develop the skills to become a coach/mentor
- Make sure that the records of coaching and Mentoring are kept, while also allowing for liberty for confidentiality in case the mentee does not want a record or confidential records of the meetings and deliberations.

Depending upon the context and purpose of any coaching/mentoring programme some variability in the coach/mentor role might be expected. However, fundamental principles include:

- A track record of effectively developing people.
- A genuine interest in seeing others advance.
- A wide range of current skills to pass on.

- A good understanding of the school's ethos and priorities.
- A combination of patience and good interpersonal skills.
- Sufficient time to devote to the coaching/mentoring relationship.

The roles and responsibilities of the coach/mentor might vary depending on the context and purpose of the mentoring program but will, in principle include:

- Taking the lead in supporting the coachee/mentee in an ongoing, one-to-one Mentoring/coaching relationship.
- Acting as a 'critical friend' and organising peer observations or team teaching as needed.
- Building the relationship and assisting with goal setting and action planning.
- Helping the mentee towards self-management of their own progression.

Key characteristics distinguishing the role of a coach/mentor from that of a Line manager are that:

- The coach/mentor has no supervisory responsibility or authority over the coachee/mentee.
- Coaches/mentors have no role in dealing with issues of non-compliance or underperformance.
- The coaching/mentoring relationship provides a confidential, non-judgemental, and non-directive environment:
- The parties to a coaching/mentoring relationship are equal within and share responsibility for the relationship.
- Mutual learning is an integral aspect of the mentoring/coaching relationship.
- The overall developmental needs of the coachee/mentee are the main focus within the coaching/mentoring relationship.

Line Managers have no direct role in the relationship and should not expect to receive information that is confidential to the relationship.

FORMAL COACHING/MENTORING ARRANGEMENTS

Formal coaching/mentoring programmes would review their strategy against the following principles:

- Ensure that information about the programme is equally available to all relevant staff including their line managers and the SLT within the school.
- Provide a clear statement of objectives for the coaching programme based on identified teachers, schools, or policy needs.

- Make adequate training and other support available for all participants, including the coordinator of the coaching/mentoring programme and the supervisors of mentees where appropriate.
- Design ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

SELECTION OF COACH

Criteria for coachee/mentee selection

- A commitment to continued professional development.
- Participation in training and ongoing development opportunities.
- A teacher who is struggling to meet the standard of teaching set by the school or a teacher who is doing well but wants to achieve a higher level of performance.
- Newly recruited teachers especially those new to Dubai.
- Teachers newly appointed to administrative positions
- Teacher selected to be developed as a mentor.

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