



Employee Mentor Scheme

Policy

Ashton Gate Out of School Care (AGOSC) believes that a workplace mentoring programme offers benefits all round. Mentoring is an important part of staff development and aims to facilitate co-operation between colleagues and the sharing of good practice and ideas. It is a mutual learning relationship. A mentor can help a new employee learn the ins and outs of a job or help an existing but less experienced worker gain confidence, while fostering a sense of community among the staff team. For employers, workplace mentoring can help boost morale, provide on-the-job training with minimum employer involvement and create employees with deep company knowledge. New staff are provided with a mentor when they join AGOSC to meet their need for practical help and advice and also general support and encouragement in their new role.

Benefits of mentoring

For the mentee:

- Using a more experienced person as a sounding board and for guidance aids induction into a new job.
- It helps in the process of understanding the formal and informal structures of the organization.
- It helps with developing skills, both professional and personal, in a structured way based on individual needs.
- It improves professional and personal networks.
- It provides an opportunity for a new member of staff to reflect on his/her own progress and resolve his/her own problems in a confidential environment with someone other than their line manager.

For the mentor:

- It broadens his/her own skills and knowledge and offers opportunities for exploring new ideas and ways of working.
- It may provide a different dimension to his/her current job role.
- It brings new insights into the organization.
- It enables him/her to demonstrate additional skills in developing other individuals.
- It consolidates and extends his/her professional and personal networks.
- It is a chance to reflect on one's own practice and experience.

For AGOSC:

- It breaks down hierarchical barriers.
- It improves communication across the setting.
- It helps to develop group identity.
- It improves the transfer of learning.
- It helps develop diverse employees and remove barriers that may hinder their success.
- It can improve staff retention.



Criteria and individual responsibilities for mentors and mentees are defined in the guidance documents.

Guidance on establishing, conducting and reviewing mentoring relationships

The Play Centre Manager will oversee the mentoring programme. They will match mentors with employees in need of mentoring, evaluate progress and provide coaching to the mentors. Matching criteria guidance is provided in the mentor guidelines.

Content of mentoring meetings

The content of meetings should be negotiated between the mentor and the mentee using the guidelines provided to them.

The mentor is responsible for minuting and recording all mentoring meetings that take place. Both mentor and mentee should retain copies of minutes.

Timing and frequency of mentoring meetings

The first meeting should either be arranged by the mentor or be incorporated by the Play Centre Manager into the mentee's induction programme.

Going forward mentors and mentees should decide the timing and frequency of meetings. Further details can be found in the guidelines.

Supporting mentors and mentees

Prior to meeting for the first time mentors and mentees are welcome to meet with the Play Centre Manager to discuss these guidelines and their role. The Play Centre Manager will also act as an ongoing contact and can be contacted by mentors and mentees at any time. The Staff Liaison Officer of the Management Committee will support the Play Centre Manager and can also be a point of contact for the mentors and mentees if needed.

Changing mentors

If at any stage the mentee wishes to change mentors they should request this without being required to give a reason.

Duration of mentoring relationships

The duration of the mentoring relationship is determined by the mentor and the mentee and it may well be that it comes to a natural conclusion. As a guide, it should run for a minimum of three months. It is important to note that the duration of the relationship is not necessarily related to the length of the induction or probation period.

Review

The programme will be regularly evaluated by the Play Centre Manager, mentors and mentees and areas of improvement will be discussed and implemented. The member of the Management Committee who is assigned Staff Liaison Officer will also be involved in the running and evaluation of the scheme. Those involved will testify as to whether the scheme, and the investment of time into it, is worthwhile.