

Step by step guide to establishing mentoring in your school

Mentors are an integral part of the Language Futures approach. Mentors are volunteers from the local community who are expert linguists in the target languages that students are studying. They may be native speakers or people who are fluent due to an extended period of study, or time spent abroad.

Step 1:

Consider potential sources of mentors in your local community

- Community mentors, including parents, local companies and businesses – particularly those businesses with international links and with Corporate Social Responsibility budgets.
- Other teaching staff (non-MFL) and non-teaching staff.
- Other students: sixth formers, students with EAL etc.
- Local associations, social organisations and educational institutions e.g. Universities (student outreach/staff volunteer programmes), Universities of the Third Age, local churches, shops, social centres, library, sports centre, health centres and retirement clubs (bowling, bridge).
- National associations and cultural agencies e.g. The Classics Society, The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, The Japan Foundation, The Japan Society etc. that may be able to offer financial support through grants. *Please [contact](#) the Language Futures Project Manager if you would like our help with a grant application.*

Step 2:

Consider the essentials needed to establish mentoring

- SLT support (establishing the benefits of LF for your school). Consider how your mentoring programme might link with your school's strategic vision, development plans or school priorities. This will help secure whole school and long term support for the programme.
- Appointing a LF Coordinator/someone who can manage the mentoring process and, ideally, have appropriate allocated time and expertise.
- Seek the backing and support of the Languages department.
- Seek help with DBS checks e.g. with the HR lead in the school.
- Explore the mentoring timeline in appendix 1 of this document.

Step 3:

Consider how you will recruit mentors:

- Explore our Building Schools' Capacity resources section on the [ALL website](#) which contains a poster template that can be used to advertise for mentors in your locality.
- Reach out to other teaching and non- teaching staff who may be able to help with recruitment if they live locally.
- Consider approaching school governors - there may be a link governor who could support your work and recruitment of mentors in the local area.
- Explore ways of reaching parents and students within your school e.g. parent mail, newsletters, during parents' evenings etc.
- Consider contacting the local press for support.

Step 4:

Consider the potential barriers to establishing mentoring

- Geographical issues/constraints (potentially some schools in rural areas).
- Recruitment in some languages.
- Time needed to recruit, carry out DBS checks and chase up references.
- Time needed to train, and then maintain contact and support mentors – communication is key between teachers, mentors and LF coordinators.
- Continuity in mentor attendance.
- Lack of a budget to support mentor expenses.
- Challenges surrounding the non-specialist / non-native.
- Issues surrounding using the target language.
- Appropriate use of technology (e.g. avoiding over dependence on iPad).
- The transitory nature of volunteers e.g. moving on to paid employment.

Step 5:

Explore the potential solutions to any barriers

- Establish support from SLT – stress the value of the approach to the school and the community.
- Stress the importance of the LF Co-ordinator and someone with the time and skills to carry out the mentoring process to provide ongoing support, training and supervision.
- Consider setting up a school hub/network with other local schools to share mentor induction and training events and costs.
- Tap into staff expertise and responsibilities i.e. is there anyone else within school who could support elements of the process e.g. student support, librarian, admin, adult/community centre manager, HR manager for DBS checks.
- Explore the benefits of mentoring for sixth-form/EAL students – references for 6th Form or UCAS, Duke of Edinburgh volunteering award.
- Explore a 'Mentor Champion' scheme. Tap into other reward schemes e.g. Language Leaders.
- Explore the possibility of a mentor contract – 6th Formers have to attend a certain amount of sessions in order to receive references etc.
- Tap into local, regional and national support (charities, voluntary organisations) for support with recruitment e.g. Volunteers' Week.
- Tap into local, regional and national support for funding - explore grants looking at training for community mentors and for social cohesion rather than for languages.
- Consider building in lesson observation (during the summer term before launching if possible) as part of mentor recruitment and training so mentors have a greater understanding of how languages are taught in schools (use of target language, assessment, planning, 4 skills in particular listening and speaking etc.).
- Tap into any external associations/institutions which often carry out a lot of the logistics and preparation for volunteering e.g. a University volunteering and outreach department.
- Consider approaching local/large companies who have policies of community involvement and support - some companies have Corporate Social Responsibility budgets enabling them to release staff for volunteering.

Step 6:
Begin the mentoring process

Explore the resources available on the [ALL website](#) outlined in appendix 2 of this document.

Step 7:
Future opportunities

Consider EAL pupils being mentored by community mentors fluent in their mother tongue and who have learnt English as an additional language. Not only have they experienced learning English as a foreign language, can offer moral support, guidance and encourage perseverance – they can also act as role models for younger students who may in turn become mentors later in their school life.

Step 8:
Consider other sources of funding and support

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO):

[Best Practice in Recruitment and Retention](#)

[NCVO Quick Guide Fantastic Funding](#)

[Volunteers Week Resource Pack](#)

[Courses on mentoring and befriending](#)

Big Volunteer Campaign:

[The campaign](#)

[Big Lottery Funding](#)

[Awards for All England](#)

[The UFA Volunteer Led Learning Toolkit](#) offers is a free downloadable guide and resources providing practical support for schools to help them effectively train and manage volunteer tutors.

[Do-It](#) National Website of UK Volunteer Opportunities where you can upload your mentoring opportunity. Also has helpful [guides](#) on how to manage volunteering

[vInspired](#) Provide young people with inspiring, high quality social action opportunities to gain new experiences and skills for life

[Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service](#) (CCVS) a support and network organisation to help community and voluntary groups in Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and Fenland. It can also advise on [funding](#).

Volunteer Centres: [Cambridge](#) and [Peterborough](#)

Step 9: Retaining mentors

- Maintain good communication through emails, texts and regular support.
- Consider holding semi-regular meetings which can be used to monitor progress and provide additional support where needed.
- Encourage pupils to make thank you cards at the end of the academic year for each mentor to show their appreciation.
- Consider arranging a mentor meal/get-together half way through the year at a local venue to share thoughts and ideas, and an end of year meal to celebrate.
- Celebrate your success e.g. at staff briefings, assemblies, newsletters and website.
- Consider contacting the local press to spread the word about the contribution mentors have made over the academic year.
- Display recruitment posters all year round and issue PR releases/news stories to local papers and village bulletins to raise awareness of mentoring in the community.
- If over-subscribed in a language, do not turn potential mentors away – always keep a backup list in case a mentor leaves half way through the year.
- Liaise between the teacher, the mentor and the pupils on an ongoing basis.

Step 10: Evaluation

Consider establishing an evaluation process, reflecting on your practice and sharing successes. This can help to:

- Provide evidence of the impact of mentoring and the difference it makes to student outcomes.
- Establish how mentoring meets a school's strategic vision, key policies and priorities which help secure whole school and long term support for the programme.
- Ensure your programme is valued by key stakeholders i.e. students, staff and governors.
- Understand what has worked well or what changes you may need to make.
- Provide feedback to mentors on the difference they make.

Explore our mentor and mentee questionnaires which have been created to help schools to gather evidence.

Appendix 1

Mentor Recruitment Timeline

1. Once pupils are recruited and languages decided, co-ordinator begins mentor recruitment. Ideally, this should be completed by the end of the spring term or beginning of the summer term allowing adequate time to prepare for mentoring before the autumn term.
2. Send applicant mentors the application form and information on the Language Futures approach. Create a file for each applicant and consider producing a record sheet where you log all activity/contact with the mentor.
3. Upon receiving the application form, seek two references and establish a date for interview. References must be received and kept on record. Always seek advice from your school HR lead during this process.
4. Applicants to be interviewed by both the Language Futures co-ordinator and another member of staff, ideally a member of staff trained in 'safer recruitment' – remember to seek advice from your school HR lead and remember to ensure that all DBS checks have been completed. Ask applicants about their availability for September.
5. Establish a date for mentor induction.
6. Consider arranging an introductory lunch for the pupils and mentors (provided by the pupils). Mentors can give a 5-minute presentation about their relevant countries in English with pupils asking questions.

Appendix 2

Mentor Resources available on the [ALL website](#)

Resources that have been developed to support schools developing the role of the mentor include:

- Role of the Mentor
- Role of the Mentor PowerPoint
- Checklist for Mentoring
- Best Practice Guidelines for Mentors
- Mentor Guidebook
- Mentor Application Form
- Mentor Interview Form
- Mentor Induction Process
- Behaviour Guidance
- Mentor Reference Request Form
- Mentor Reference Request
- Thank You Letter
- Mentor Advert
- Call for Parent Mentors Letter
- Mentor Induction PowerPoint
- Mentor Questionnaire
- Mentee Questionnaire