



## ***Head Teacher Mentors*** ***A Joint initiative between ERSIP & Riding Forward***

### ***Headteacher Mentor Rationale and Role***

The rationale behind this role recognises that head teachers who are new to the Local Authority, new to headship or in an acting head teacher role may not have established a network of contacts within the county that will enable them to know who to turn to as situations arise that are new to them. This can lead to feelings of isolation, particularly in the first few terms of headship.

The aim of a head teacher mentor is to ensure that newly appointed head teachers receive support from an experienced head teacher colleague during their first year in post.

The mentor plays a crucial role in the early days of a head teacher arriving in post by making the initial phone call and welcoming them to the post, whether new to role, new to the authority or in an acting capacity.

The mentor will be able to share knowledge of the Authority and assist the ‘settling in’ process for the new colleague.

- Mentors will be required to perform their role, not as improvement partners, but as a ‘critical friend,’ offering unbiased and confidential support in an honest and professional manner.
- The mentor will use coaching and mentoring skills, to unlock potential in order to improve and maximise performance and therefore help the new head teacher realise their potential.
- Whilst there is no expectation on the mentor to ‘problem solve,’ the mentor may well signpost the new/acting head teacher towards appropriate CPD i.e. effective practice in the locality, training courses, conferences, Education Alliance or to a member of the School Improvement Learning Service who may be able to provide further advice and/or support.
- The mentor will use their professional judgement to best meet the needs of the new/acting head teacher.

### ***Benefits to the new head teacher:***

- Feels welcomed to the authority/role
- Has a named person to refer to during the early days/weeks of the appointment
- Has someone at the end of the phone/e-mail to answer even the most basic of [SEP] queries or to check procedures
- Support from an experienced practitioner who is able to offer practical advice and personal, confidential support
- Opportunities to observe and learn from another head teacher from another school and school context

### ***Benefits for the mentor:***

- Training in the skills of coaching and mentoring
- The opportunity to share experience and skills
- Own professional development and enhanced CV
- Funding for the mentor's school

### **Head Teachers wishing to be a Mentor need to meet the following criteria**

#### ***Professional knowledge and understanding***

- The ability to enthuse colleagues and governors with an appropriate vision of the whole school working together to ensure all children achieve well
- A secure knowledge of safeguarding practices
- A secure knowledge of what good teaching, and better, looks like and how to improve teaching that is less than good, swiftly
- Secure understanding of how to collect, analyse and use assessment information to identify ambitious targets for children and ensure good pupil progress
- Secure understanding of appropriate curriculum and assessment for the relevant age ranges
- Proven ability to analyse data and other information quickly to identify priorities (with timescales and success criteria) for improvement
- Secure understanding of school governance and financial management.

#### ***Personal qualities***

- Resilient in the face of difficulty
- Cheerful and optimistic
- Able to make positive relationships with pupils, staff, governors, families and the wider community
- Sympathetic to colleagues under pressure
- Not afraid to ask for help when necessary
- Able to lead by example.

#### ***Minimum Experience***

- Headteacher for a least 2 years
- Demonstrable "Leadership & Management" grade Good or better
- Experience of Ofsted as a Headteacher (desirable)

#### ***Applications***

- Application is by letter explaining how you meet these criteria with a named educational referee
- Matching of successful Mentor Headteachers to new Headteachers will be by mutual agreement
- There is an open time frame for application. There are no deadlines
- Application should be sent to Head Teacher Mentor Programme, Riding Forward, c/o Molescroft Primary School, St Leonards Road, Molescroft, Beverley, HU17 7HF
- Selection will be by members of ERSIP
- Riding Forward will arrange for the matching of Head Teachers with Mentors.