

ECT Mentor session

Module 5: Fulfilling professional responsibilities

Week 5: Working effectively with colleagues

Session Elements



discuss with a
mentor



reflection



practical
exercise

Learning Intentions for this session

Your ECT will learn that:

8.6 SENCOs, pastoral leaders, careers advisors and other specialist colleagues also have valuable expertise and can ensure that appropriate support is in place for pupils.

Your ECT will learn how to:

Build effective working relationships, by:

- 8i.** Working closely with the SENCO and other professionals supporting pupils with additional needs, making explicit links between interventions delivered outside of lessons with classroom teaching.
- 8l.** Knowing who to contact with any safeguarding concerns.

Introduction

In the ECT online learning community for this module, participants explored approaches to building effective working relationships with parents, carers, families and colleagues. In this session, you will look more closely at the role of specialist colleagues in your school and ways to work effectively with them to ensure that

appropriate support is in place for pupils.

Research and Practice Summary

Specialist support

Julie teaches Year 2 and is really pleased with how her class has progressed since she joined the school at the beginning of the year. In particular, pupils' writing has got dramatically better. However, there are a small number of pupils who are struggling noticeably in comparison to expected progress.

Fortunately, Julie has the support of many other colleagues in her school, including specialist teachers, although she is unsure she is making the most of this support: systems here are different to her last school.

What should Julie consider to make the most of the additional support available to her?

In school, there are colleagues who have specialist knowledge and roles that can ensure all pupils get the support they need. The nature of these roles and specific systems for engaging support will vary from school to school. However, all teachers need to understand the support available at their school and how they can work alongside specialist colleagues effectively and efficiently.

Examples of specialist colleagues include: SENCOs, pastoral leaders, teaching assistants, careers advisors, attendance officers, counsellors and colleagues with specific safeguarding responsibilities.



To work effectively with these colleagues, it can help to:

- **understand roles and responsibilities** – it is important to know what these colleagues actually do and how this links to your own role
- **coordinate support** – it is important to coordinate your work with these colleagues using established processes, such as referring pupils for additional support. You should also feel confident approaching these colleagues to

simply ask for advice, such as asking a SENCO for advice about supporting specific pupils

- **make links** – making links between the work led by specialist colleagues and your own interactions with pupils can help to reinforce key messages and embed continuity for these pupils
- **communicate effectively** – each of these approaches requires effective, often two-way communication. Consider how to do this effectively and efficiently

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. No single person can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances.

Therefore, it is especially important to understand your school's processes to safeguard pupils and your role within these processes.



You should feel confident answering the following questions:

- who are the designated safeguarding leads in your school?
- how do you raise a safeguarding concern?
- what are the key safeguarding processes in your school?
- what are the key implications from the 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance?

Coordinated and differentiated roles

After reviewing the evidence about effective use of teaching assistants, Julie realised that she could do more to work effectively with her colleague Steve, a teaching assistant who sometimes supported her class.

Julie realised that although Steve routinely undertook targeted interventions with some of her pupils, she knew very little about what this actually involved. This was problematic, as it meant that Julie was unable to reinforce the learning that happened during Steve's targeted interventions.

To work more effectively together, Julie discussed with Steve what the interventions actually involved. Together, they worked out opportunities for making links between these interventions and in-class activities. This included, for example, using

consistent language to help pupils make connections between learning in class and in their interventions.

Julie also took the time to sit in on one of the interventions so that she could deepen her own understanding. Finally, Steve and Julie agreed how they would continue to communicate effectively, which included how they would identify pupils most likely to benefit from interventions in the future.

Mentor Meeting Activities

Throughout the session, try to refer explicitly to the learning intentions, and encourage your mentee to record key points in their learning log. Tailor your use of the theory to practice activities below in response to the review and plan sections of this session.

Review 5 mins

- (1) Start this session by briefly following up on the actions that the mentee set at the end of last week's session. Ask your mentee to summarise
 - a. what they did
 - b. the impact of this on pupil learning (including how they are evaluating this)
 - c. what they will do going forward to build on these actions
- (2) Clarify the learning intentions for this session with your mentee.

Plan 5 mins

At the start of this module, you looked at all of the *learn how to* statements for Standard 8 and conducted a module audit with your mentee: in some areas they will already be confident and skilled; in others they will want more practice and support from you and others. Look back at this audit now and use it to help decide how you and your mentee will make the most productive use of the suggested theory to practice activities below.

Theory to Practice 35 mins



1. Reflection

Ask your mentee to briefly summarise their learning from the ECT online learning community they attended this week.

You could ask:

- what key insights and actions did they take away from the session?
- what benefits are there to making time to discuss practice with teachers in other settings about issues that affect all teachers?



2. Discuss with mentor

Spend some time talking to your mentee about specialist colleagues in your school, including the SENCO, pastoral leaders, careers advisors, safeguarding lead and others as appropriate.

You could include in your discussion:

- the remit of each of these colleagues
- how to connect with these colleagues to learn more about their work
- how and when to refer pupils to these colleagues

It may be possible to arrange for one or more of these colleagues to speak directly to your mentee, in which case you should facilitate this. You could even organise a group session with other ECTs in your school, to reduce the burden placed on these specialist colleagues if there is more than one ECT in your school working through this programme.



3. Practical exercise

Work with your mentee to audit their class list(s) and identify pupils who are working with one or more specialist colleagues at present, or who may be appropriate for referral to one of these colleagues.

As part of this activity you should:

- ask your mentee to tell you about any pupils they know of who are engaged in interventions beyond their classroom (e.g., literacy support), what they know of the intervention and how they make explicit links to this in their classroom teaching
- highlight any pupils not mentioned by your mentee who you know are involved in interventions, and discuss how your mentee can find out more about this and make suitable connections to their classroom teaching
- review with your mentee any pupils who they think may benefit from a referral to a specialist colleague, exploring the evidence and reasoning that supports this and agreeing on next steps that your mentee should take (if any)

Next Steps 5 mins

Agree with your mentee how they will now put their learning from this week's session into practice in their teaching. Help your mentee to clarify:

1. the action(s) they will take and how these actions are expected to contribute to improving pupil learning
2. what success will 'look like' in relation to these actions
3. how they will evaluate their success in taking these actions

Note the date of your next mentor meeting, when you will check on your mentee's progress.