

## **Role of the Learning Mentor (Mrs Jeffers) at Hazeldene School**

The main aim of the Learning Mentor role is to support the pupils' social, emotional and behavioural development and assist them to cope with difficulties, which may be creating a barrier to their learning. Some evidence argues that developing these skills is as important for a child's future prospects as their academic attainment and can positively shape children's wellbeing.

Therefore, the Learning Mentor role at Hazeldene includes organising and delivering the following:

### **Regular support sessions**

At Hazeldene, pupils are referred to the Learning Mentor, either by school staff or at the request of parents. This support is usually offered once a week and consists of either, one-to-one sessions, paired sessions or small group sessions. These sessions take place in Sunflower Room, which offers a safe and comfortable environment.

The sessions are tailored to meet the varying needs of the pupils, which range from a lack of emotional literacy, low self-esteem and confidence levels, to difficulties with anger control, difficult family circumstances and child protection concerns. Therefore, the sessions are planned on a termly basis, but are then reviewed and adapted when necessary.

### **Drop-in / Catch-up sessions**

The pupils who access these sessions may be experiencing difficulties, such as friendship issues, bereavement, parental separation or other difficult family circumstances. On occasions, some pupils are experiencing mental health difficulties, which include anxiety, eating disorders and persistent low-mood.

These sessions are also used to catch-up with pupils who have previously attended regular sessions, in order to monitor their progress and their coping strategies.

### **Lunchtime Games Club**

Lunchtime Games Club is aimed at pupils who require support with their social development. This club takes place twice a week, to ensure a group of no more than twelve pupils attend at any one time. The club allows the pupils to play in a semi-structured environment, which enables them to practice their social skills and gives the Learning Mentor the opportunity to assess their social interactions and assist when necessary.

### **Afternoon tea**

Afternoon Tea takes place once a week and aims to reward the children who consistently 'make good choices' and follow the school's Golden Rules. This demonstrates that Hazeldene School celebrates good behaviour and gives the pupils an incentive to work hard and behave well.

The pupils who attend Afternoon Tea are selected by their teachers and presented with an invitation. The invitation includes the reason the pupils are chosen and this is read out and celebrated during the Afternoon Tea, and then again in the whole school celebration assembly. During Afternoon tea the pupils are given the opportunity to decorate and eat a cake, and then play a special game before returning to class.

### **School Council**

The School Council consists of ten elected members, from the year groups Two, Three, Four, Five and Six. The council members represent the views of all the pupils at Hazeldene, including the Nursery, Reception and Year One. Limiting the number to ten School Council members ensures that each class representative has an opportunity to express the students' views and ideas within the limited time frame of the meetings.

Each year the School Council organises a Macmillan Coffee Afternoon, works on stalls at both the Christmas and Summer Fayres. They have also hosted the Great Hazeldene Bake-Off and surveyed the whole school to decide on new playground equipment, brought with the money raised from the Great Hazeldene Bake-Off.

### **Forest School**

This intervention takes place in Hazeldene School's environmental area, once a week for the period of a six – eight week programme. The primary aim of Forest School is to build the pupils' confidence. Therefore, the selected pupils are usually either reluctant to try new experiences, shy or have low self-esteem.

During Forest School, the pupils are supervised by two members of staff who between them have training and experience of Forest School. The pupils are encouraged to interact with each other, whilst completing unfamiliar, but achievable tasks and to take risks, such as using loppers, bow saws and cooking on an open fire.

The Learning Mentor role also includes:

### **Safeguarding Officer**

Safeguarding the pupils is an integral part of the role of all Hazeldene staff. However, many of the pupils attending Learning Mentor support sessions have additional vulnerabilities associated with their lack of social and emotional development or have experience of difficult family circumstances. When necessary, the Learning Mentor will facilitate parents to complete an Early Help Assessment and also assist the Safeguarding Lead in issues relating to Child Protection. In addition, the regular safeguarding training enables the Learning Mentor to advise and support other members of Hazeldene staff.

### **Parental engagement/ Family work**

Parental engagement with parents/carers is a fundamental part of the Learning Mentor role, since the pupils' home-lives greatly impact on their social and emotional development, as well as the pupils' mental health and wellbeing. Working collaboratively with parents/carers, aims to ensure that the support and interventions offered to the pupils, is more effective and long-lasting.

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing Team member**

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Team are aiming for Hazeldene to adopt a whole school approach to positive mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience amongst children and staff, leading to children and staff feeling mentally healthy with a good sense of wellbeing.