

Progress Mentor Deployment Policy

Amended: January 2021

Approved by Governors: March 2021

Review date: January 2022

Statement of purpose

In line with the expectations of the governing body, our young people and their families, we recognise the Teachers at Woodlands School are responsible for the meeting the learning needs and the progress of all in their class(es).

Our 'Progress Mentors' (more widely known as Teaching Assistants or Learning Support Assistants) have a different, but distinct, complementary role and contribution to make in relation to helping our young people become confident, competent, independent and successful learners. It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that Progress Mentors support the work of our Teachers and the school more broadly, and maintain the appropriate demarcation between the role and responsibilities of Teachers and the role and contribution of Progress Mentors. This policy specifies our vision for the role, purpose and contribution of Progress Mentors at Woodlands School. It sets out expectations in relation to Progress Mentors' work and conduct, and also the expectations Progress Mentors can have of Teachers and the Senior Leadership Team in terms of how they will support Progress Mentors to ensure they are equipped to make a meaningful contribution to teaching and learning.

This policy has been developed following extensive strategic work undertaken by our school on maximising the impact of our Progress Mentor staff. This policy has been informed by, and carefully designed to reflect, the latest research evidence on the most effective use and impact of Progress Mentors.

Expectations

Progress Mentors can expect the Senior Leadership Team to:

- Ensure each Progress Mentor is deployed in a role that reflects their skills and aptitudes.
- Define, clearly and properly, the tasks and duties each Progress Mentor can expect to be asked to perform in their role, and specify their contribution to teaching and learning at Woodlands School.
- Provide timely and appropriate training and preparation to ensure Progress Mentors are confident and ready to undertake the tasks they are given.
- Avoid deploying Progress Mentors in roles for which they are not specifically trained or that are more appropriately undertaken by a qualified teacher. (Some very exceptional circumstances may apply).
- Recognise and celebrate Progress Mentors' contribution to teaching and learning, and treat them as professionals in their own right.
- Provide induction and professional development opportunities, supervision and performance reviews commensurate with maintaining their professional identity.
- Ensure teaching staff are aware of their role and responsibility for ensuring Progress Mentors are deployed appropriately and are properly prepared for the tasks they give them.
- Train and support Teachers to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to deploy Progress Mentors appropriately and consistently.

Progress Mentors can expect Teachers to:

- Be aware of the school's expectations of how to deploy and prepare Progress Mentors, and ensure their contribution to teaching and learning is consistent with our whole school aims.
- Know the respective roles and skills of the Progress Mentors they work with most frequently and deploy them appropriately as outlined explicitly in lesson plans and schemes of work
- Communicate adequate information and instructions about lessons ahead of time, and clearly specify Progress Mentors' role in, and contribution, to each lesson.
- Provide opportunities for Progress Mentors to feed back after lessons and provide clear guidance on what information should be fed back.
- Respond in a positive and timely fashion to requests from Progress Mentors for information about lessons, our youngsters, curriculum content, instructional techniques, or any other information essential to ensuring their effective deployment in lessons and contribution to learning.
- Discharge responsibilities to Progress Mentors that, as the lead professional in the classroom, belong to them.
- Recognise and reinforce Progress Mentors' professional identity and their status within the school.
- Contribute to induction and training, supervision and performance reviews for Progress Mentors.
- Request training and guidance in order to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to meet their professional duties and responsibilities as a teacher, in relation to deploying Progress Mentors appropriately.

The Senior Leadership Team and Teachers expect Progress Mentors to:

- Act in a manner that upholds the professional identity of Progress Mentors at Woodlands School.
- Demonstrate adequate literacy and numeracy skills
- Have good timekeeping and attendance
- Establish good relationships with our youngsters, acting as a role model and being aware of and responding appropriately to individual needs
- Participate in the school's induction programme and performance review process.
- Make the most of training and professional development opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills and keep up to date with national and school-based initiatives
- Implementing and following whole school policies, e.g. safeguarding, health and safety
- Prompt Teachers for pre-lesson information and to ask for clarification where required.
- Perform and interact with pupils in ways that are consistent with what the school expects from Progress Mentors in terms of their contribution to teaching and learning.
- Contribute to lesson planning and feedback at Teachers' request.
- Support all in achieving the objectives of the lesson as outlined by the classroom teacher
- Make resources to aid learning as appropriate under the guidance of the classroom teacher
- Record pupil achievements under Teacher's direction
- Plan and deliver activities to Key Stage 3 youngsters as part of the Intervention programme
- Develop 1:1 mentoring arrangements with our youngsters as part of the Intervention programme

- Assist with the development and implementation of Learning Passports, One Plans, Annual Reviews and Personal Care plans and attend meetings with parents and external agencies as necessary
- Provide objective and accurate feedback and reports as required on pupil achievement, progress and other matters, ensuring the availability of appropriate evidence

Key principles for the effective use of Progress Mentors in lessons

- Progress Mentors should **not** be used as an informal teaching resource for our low-attaining youngsters
- Progress Mentors should **add value** to what Teachers do, **not replace them**
- Progress Mentors should be **fully prepared** for their role in the classroom prior to the lesson through effective communication with classroom Teachers
- Progress Mentors should have the opportunity to **feedback** regularly to classroom Teachers on the progress made by targeted pupils and the appropriateness of teaching and learning strategies employed.
- The roles and duties Progress Mentors are **not expected** to fall within the remit of Teachers' responsibilities.

Main forms of Progress Mentor deployment

- We will employ different levels of Progress Mentor and different numbers of Progress Mentors as school priorities and budgets dictate.
- Progress Mentors will mainly work under the direct instruction of the teaching staff, usually in the classroom, to support the learning of pupils.
- Their work will also involve planning, preparing and delivering learning interventions for individuals and groups.
- Progress Mentors are deployed to lessons following these principles:
 - Progress Mentors are the main academic support resource for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans; therefore they are deployed according to the needs of this cohort.
 - The core subjects of English, maths and science across both Key Stages will always be prioritised. Support will be allocated to the lower sets first, moving through the ability range as resources allow.
 - Pupils with EHCPs who have highly complex medical and physical needs and who cannot be independent will have their needs met across the curriculum.
 - Support will be allocated to Languages and Humanities subjects at Key Stage 4.
 - Non-core subjects at Key Stage 3 will be supported where there is more than 1 pupil in the class with an EHCP.

Deployment in the classroom

- The learning needs of all pupils should be met, first and foremost, through high quality teaching by the teacher.
- Progress Mentors work with a range of pupils within the class and should supplement and extend Teachers' work, rather than replace them.
- Support for specific individuals or groups should be structured so it helps them access general classroom teaching.

- Teachers and Progress Mentors should work effectively as a team, with a shared understanding of their respective roles in achieving lesson objectives.
- Teachers' moment-by-moment decisions regarding Progress Mentor deployment should be driven by pupils needs.

Progress Mentor interactions with pupils

- Progress Mentors should provide the right amount of support at the right time, and consistently give the least amount of help first.
- Progress Mentors should ensure pupils retain ownership over their learning and responsibility for their work.
- Progress Mentors should actively look for opportunities to allow pupils to attempt parts of tasks independently and to experience a healthy mix of success and challenge.
- Progress Mentors should be confident in their role and have good subject knowledge.
- Good questioning skills inform their interactions. Progress Mentors should allow sufficient 'wait time' for pupils to think and respond.

Teacher / Progress Mentor preparation

- Teachers should ideally meet with Progress Mentors prior to the lesson or at the start of a new programme of study to ensure Progress Mentors are fully equipped with the skills to support learning for pupils across the attainment range, consistent with Teachers' intentions. However, as a minimum expectation teaching staff are expected to complete a planning sheet with Progress Mentors to set targets for pupils in lessons and allow Progress Mentors to feedback on the progress made.
- Progress Mentors skills and particular specialisms should be understood and maximised by the teacher as part of this process.
- Progress Mentors should enter lessons with a clear understanding of the concepts and information being taught, skills to be learned/applied, intended learning outcomes and specific learning needs of pupils they work with. This information should be recorded by Teachers on lesson plans and/or schemes of work and shared with Progress Mentors prior to lessons / the start of new modules.
- Teachers and Progress Mentors should ideally allocate designated time to review lessons, and feedback on pupils' learning in and progress as a result of agreed structured interventions. However, as a minimum expectation, this should be completed through the Teacher/Progress Mentor planning sheet. This will inform future planning to improve outcomes for targeted pupils.

Progress Mentors delivering targeted and structured interventions

- Progress Mentors should plan and deliver evidence-based and structured interventions, chosen to deliberately complement and extend class-based teaching and learning.
- Intervention sessions should be brief, regular and sustained, with clear objectives and expectations.
- Sessions should be well-paced, well-resourced and carefully timetabled to minimise time spent away from general class teaching.

- Sessions should have clear learning outcomes and measurable success criteria to allow Progress Mentors to assess the extent of pupil progress in the session and by the end of specific modules.
- Progress Mentors should be supported and guided by appropriate staff to deliver interventions and review impact.
- There should be regular opportunities for Progress Mentors to plan and review learning taking place in interventions, with regular assessments in place to guide this process.
- Teachers and Progress Mentors should work collaboratively to help pupils make connections between the learning in interventions and the wider curriculum.

Key roles of the Progress Mentors in lessons

Recognising the significant contribution that support staff can make in raising standards and increasing efficiency, we allocate the following principal functions to our Progress Mentors:

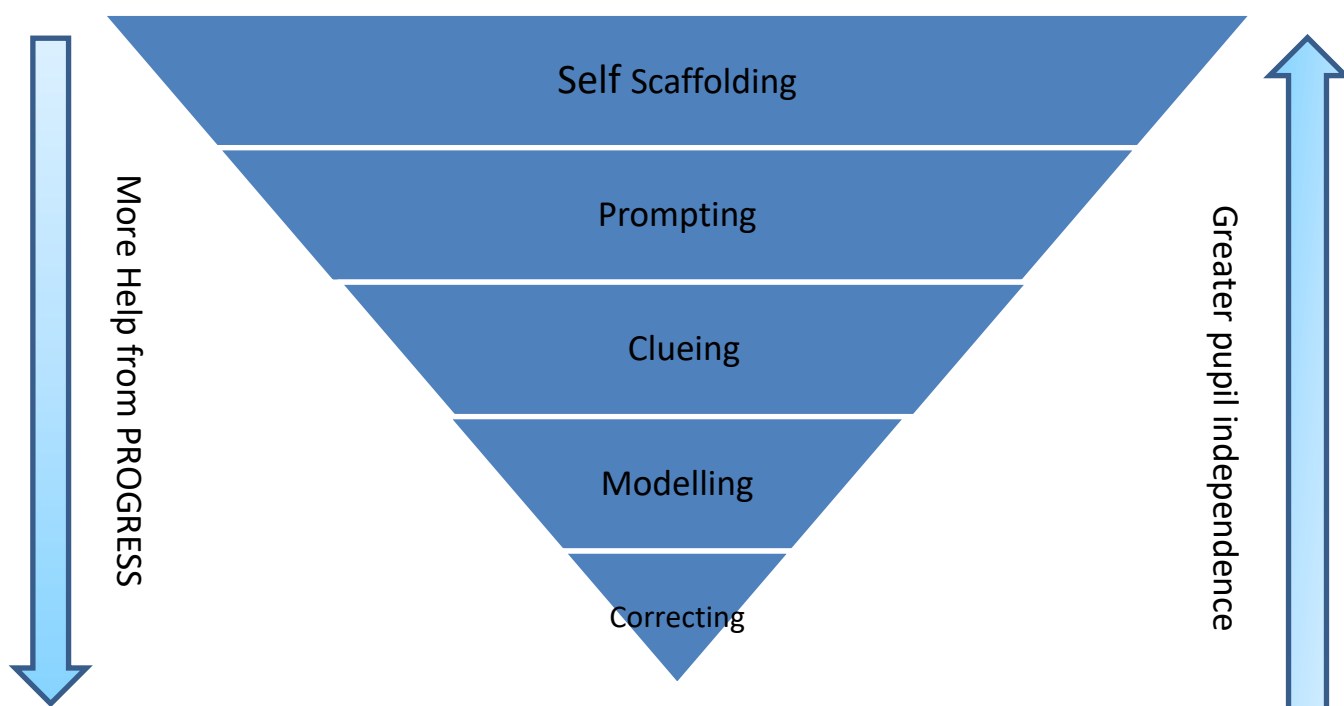
- Encourage our youngsters to interact with others and engage in activities led by the teacher.
- Encourage all to act independently as appropriate.
- Set challenging and demanding expectations that promote self-esteem and independence.
- Provide feedback to all in relation to progress and achievement under guidance of the teacher.
- Support all consistently whilst recognising and responding to their individual needs.
- Promote independence and employ strategies to recognise and reward achievement of self-reliance.
- Assess the needs of all and use detailed knowledge and specialist skills to support learning.
- Assist in ensuring that the length of time spent on tasks and activities is consistent with the individual needs.
- Be aware of our youngsters' problems/progress/achievements and report to the teacher as agreed.
- Provide detailed and regular feedback to Teachers on pupil achievement, progress, problems etc.
- Monitor and evaluate all responses to learning activities through observation and recording of achievement against pre-determined learning objectives and process success criteria.
- Help pupils follow the school rules and also work towards specific goals and expectations as prescribed by the class teacher including individual, group or class targets.

What should Progress Mentors not be used for in lessons?

- Progress Mentors should not be used by Teachers to control the behaviour of individual pupils in the room
- Progress Mentors should not be sent to complete administrative tasks (i.e.- photocopying) during lessons
- Progress Mentors should not be asked to prepare whole class resources that detract from their role of supporting our youngsters in the lesson (i.e.-cutting up resources)

Examples of effective Progress Mentor interventions in lessons

- Progress Mentors should support learning directly via instructional talk, and indirectly via talk that develops pupils 'soft skills' (e.g. independence, confidence, determination). For example, Progress Mentors may choose to develop forms of talk and questioning that help pupils to 'know what to do when they do not know what to do'.
- Progress Mentors talk should fit with the purpose and nature of Teachers' talk (e.g. in their whole-class delivery).
- Progress Mentors talk should fit with other pedagogical strategies, such as self-directed learning or group work.
- Progress Mentors should help our youngsters develop into independent learners through scaffolding.



Progress Mentor training and professional development opportunities

Woodlands School recognizes the value of professional development for Progress Mentors. Children learn most effectively when we invest properly in the professional development of all our staff, and we recognise that our Progress Mentors will bring to the job a variety of skills and areas of expertise.

Progress Mentors are entitled to professional development, and will receive specific training, as well as the general training provided by the school. Access to this training will be considered in relation to priorities in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Progress Mentors are required to complete the appropriate request of training pro-forma and pass to Assistant Head teacher (Teaching and Learning) with a clear summary of the nature and expected outcomes of the training. After undertaking the training Progress Mentors are expected to evaluate the impact on their day to day practice.

Line management and performance review

The line manager for Progress Mentors in our school is the Assistant Head teacher/SENDCO. Regular meetings for Progress Mentors will be convened by the SENDCO. Progress Mentors will be involved with all members of the Senior Leadership Team in the development of their role and their deployment. The annual performance management of Progress Mentors will be carried out by the SENDCO and Assistant SENDCO. As part of this process performance management targets will be formally negotiated and reviewed annually. An interim performance management review meeting will take place during the year to review the progress made against the negotiated targets and ascertain the nature of additional support the Progress Mentor may require to allow them to successfully meet the agreed targets. Access to appropriate CPD is an important part of this process. As part of the performance management cycle Progress Mentors are expected to collect evidence to show their performance against targets set. Progress made against these standards will be used as a basis to negotiate targets in annual performance management meetings.



Signed: _____

Head Teacher

Dated: 19th March 2021



Signed: _____

Chair of Governors

Dated: 19th March 2021

