



Peer Mentoring

The Peer Mentor role is to act on behalf of the School to support students, many of whom will be new to Sydenham School. Peer Mentors are invaluable as they will have experienced the same issues and concerns and can offer support from a young person's perspective. The Mentor will act with the best interests of the young person in mind at all times and within the structures set down by the school.

We believe that the peer mentor training and support benefits both students who are mentors and those who are mentees, developing their confidence, resilience and active citizenship.

The mentors are trained to provide effective support for individuals and groups of students thereby increasing their confidence, knowledge and skills whilst developing their social awareness and communication skills. In turn this develops the mentors' employability skills.

The mentees are able to be supported by their peers who understand the challenges and opportunities presented to them without the overtones of adult authority. Our aim is to increase their sense of belonging and strengthen the social bonds and support networks within our school and community.

The peer mentors aim to offer support to those students who may have wide and complex needs these may include:

- Those who are new to Sydenham School to support settling in.
- Students whose classroom behaviour has been identified as challenging.
- Those who persistently have a negative attitude to work.
- The student that presents as 'vulnerable' (e.g. through bereavement, family issues)
- Poor attender (e.g. illness, long term absence, school refuser)
- Those students who are victims of bullying in any form.
- Those who need support with curriculum/work-related issues.
- Those who need help with 'self-esteem'.

What role can a peer mentor play?

- Peer mentors are there to listen but not to counsel.
- They are there to support and direct, but not to solve all the students' problems.
- They are there to be a guide but not to be a 'know all'
- They can be a form of support, but not the only support.
- But above all they can make the student feel safe and secure in the knowledge that there is always someone else available to give the student something to consider.

As a result of the training students will:

- Have built on their interpersonal skills to work together and help one another.
- Gain the skills to engage and support a group of mentees
- Develop leadership skills and confidence to lead and empower a group of students
- The ability to further the skills of their mentees

