

Curriculum Leadership Mentoring Initiative 2024 - 2025



Overview

Between September 2024 and July 2025, Christ Church Primary, Hampstead led a borough-wide initiative to mentor new and emerging curriculum leaders across Camden's primary schools. This school-led programme aimed to strengthen leadership, deepen subject expertise, and enhance curriculum delivery through tailored, peer-to-peer support.

Why This, Why Now?

Curriculum leaders are central to shaping high-quality learning experiences. They ensure coherence, progression, and contextual relevance in curriculum design and delivery. While Camden Learning's curriculum network fosters collaboration, a gap remains in personalised support for those new to the role. Following a successful inspection that highlighted the depth of curriculum leadership at Christ Church, the school recognised its capacity to offer school-to-school support. This initiative was timely, responding to both local needs and national priorities around leadership development and curriculum excellence.

Goals and Intentions

The initiative set out to:

- Build confidence, skills and subject knowledge in new and newish curriculum leaders.
- Provide individual mentoring focused on both leadership tasks and subject-specific development.
- Offer support that was practical, non-judgemental, and responsive to each school's priorities.
- Ultimately, improve pupil outcomes through stronger curriculum leadership.

"It was so nice to have the time to sit down and talk about music with someone who was interested and wanted to provide support."



What we did



Initial planning visits and collaborative action plans.



Targeted support on tasks such as lesson visits, feedback, CPD planning, and curriculum mapping.



Learning walks hosted at Christ Church to model monitoring and feedback.



Joint development of resources (e.g. vocabulary progression in maths, enquiry types in science).

Impact on Practice

Leadership Development

Curriculum leaders reported notable gains in subject expertise, confidence in monitoring and feedback, and the ability to lead professional development and drive change. This reflects recent UK research showing that mentoring enhances leadership capacity, supports retention, and fosters professional identity through reflective, peer-led relationships (National Institute of Teaching, 2025; UCL Centre for Educational Leadership, 2024).

Relational and Cultural Shifts

The initiative fostered a culture of trust and collaboration. The non-judgemental, peer-led nature of the support was repeatedly cited as a key strength. Relationships built across schools created informal networks of practice, echoing findings from the Sustainable School Leadership UK survey, which highlights collaboration and moral purpose as sustaining factors for leaders. [nottingham.ac.uk]

Curriculum Coherence and Subject Expertise

Mentoring led to tangible improvements in curriculum planning, including development of progression frameworks in maths and science, streamlining of science enquiries, and development to the music curriculum in schools worked with. These outcomes reflect the Department for Education's 2024 review of professional development, which found that curriculum-specific mentoring improves teaching quality and pupil progress when embedded in school priorities, ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)). More coherent and well-sequenced curricula was reported by participating schools as leading to improved pupil engagement and understanding, evidenced through monitoring and pupil feedback.

Conditions for Success

Recent studies on peer-to-peer professional development ([Cano García, 2024](#)) stress the importance of safe environments, shared goals, and institutional support. This initiative exemplified those conditions, enabling curriculum leaders to learn, reflect, and lead with confidence.

Key takeaways for effective implementation

- Embed peer-led mentoring into school culture to build leadership capacity, foster professional identity and a sense of moral purpose.
- Leverage school-to-school collaboration to share expertise and build subject specific leadership and plan early and tailor support to each school's context and curriculum priorities.
- Set clear, achievable goals for mentoring relationships to maintain focus and measure progress.
- Ensure flexibility in scheduling and funding to support sustained engagement and responsiveness.
- Use learning walks in other settings to develop monitoring and feedback skills in a low-stakes environment.
- Create safe environments for feedback to maximise impact.
- Align mentoring with wider professional development frameworks, such as NPQs and ECF, for coherence.

"Being guided by such an expert was incredibly helpful. We created an action plan and worked through it until I felt confident and had a portfolio of evidence. Her confidence, patience and knowledge were second to none."

*Christ Church Primary School worked in partnership with:
Gospel Oak Primary, Christchurch Primary School NW1 and Primrose Hill
Primary School, London Borough of Camden.*



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