



Guidance for parents and guardians of mentees on mentoring by STEM Ambassadors

Why mentoring?

The benefits of mentoring for young people are well documented and include raised levels of self-esteem and confidence, broader and more ambitious career aspirations and clear plans of action to help young people achieve their career goals – mentoring changes lives!

You have an important role to play in encouraging your child to get involved and supporting them to gain maximum benefit from the experience. This guide provides information on the mentor programme to help you to do this.

STEM Ambassadors – who are we?

STEM Ambassadors are volunteers from a wide range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics occupations and have access to the latest information about careers in their sector and how to enter their occupation.

Mentoring is one of several voluntary activities which STEM Ambassadors offer to schools and young people from years 9-13 in schools (insert similar for Scottish, Welsh and NI) and STEM Ambassadors can offer specific mentoring in one or more of the following areas:

1. Subject specific support with STEM subjects
2. Employability skills
3. Careers in the STEM sector

All STEM Ambassadors will have an enhanced DBS check before undertaking any STEM Ambassador activity, including mentoring. STEM Ambassadors who are offering mentoring as an activity will have completed a one day mentor training programme provided by your local STEM Ambassador Hub.

Definition of mentoring

A helpful definition was provided by David Clutterbuck (2014):

‘A mentor is a more experienced individual willing to share knowledge with someone who is less experienced in a relationship of mutual trust’.

We would like to offer a sustained relationship between our STEM Ambassador volunteers and an individual young person, focusing on STEM subjects and personal and career development. By sustained we mean, more than one contact. See the section below on the recommended timeframe.

This mentoring opportunity offers valuable wisdom, guidance and support that can enhance your child’s personal development and career aspirations.

Why has my child been selected?

Your child has been identified as someone who will benefit from the programme. It has been designed to help assist your child achieve their potential. Mentoring is very common across many professions; it is seen as an opportunity and part of life-long learning and development in the world of work.

Mentoring may be beneficial where:

- A young person cannot decide what subject choices to make or what STEM options are available.
- A young person is underperforming in STEM subjects.
- A young person can't decide whether to study a STEM subject at university.
- A young person is asking about STEM careers.

How long should the mentoring last?

Our recommendation is that the same STEM Ambassador should meet the young person face to face for a minimum of 3 sessions lasting at least 30 minutes over a half term during the school day. It is then recommended that a review takes place and it is extended to another 3 sessions (6 sessions in all over one whole term) or more to suit the work established between the mentee and mentor.

Where should the mentoring take place?

On school premises within the school day.

Positive impact of mentoring

There is the potential for mentoring to increase young people's engagement with STEM subjects, to inspire and motivate them about STEM careers and provide them with meaningful encounters with the world of work. Outcomes could include:

- Helped a young person decide on their future STEM career.
- Advised a young person on STEM careers and where to find further careers information.
- A boost to their confidence and self-belief.
- Expanded a young person's knowledge of STEM careers.
- Inspired a young person to continue to study STEM subjects and prevention of disengagement from STEM subjects.
- Advised on and helped a young person to develop employability skills
- Increased science capital of a young person.
("Science capital refers to science-related qualifications, understanding, knowledge (about science and 'how it works', interest and social contacts e.g. knowing someone who works in a science-related job." - ASPIRES, 2013)

Matching process

Students who are interested in having a mentor need to complete the mentee application form (Appendix A). This document also includes guidance for students on mentoring. The school

will then liaise with the STEM Ambassador Hub to match your child with an appropriate mentor.

STEM Ambassadors have been asked to contact the teacher, just as they would before any STEM Ambassador activity, to find out what the needs of the young person are and to plan the mentoring.

A young person needs to be willing to talk to a STEM Ambassador, can commit the time to meeting the STEM Ambassador in school and to carrying out the actions agreed with the STEM Ambassador between meetings.

How you can help your child

- Help them complete the application form
- Encourage your child to talk about the session – what they learnt, what questions / thoughts did it raise? Any concerns/frustrations they may have etc.
- LISTEN to their response – show you're trying to understand by **summarising your understanding of what they are saying** - don't offer any opinions, no telling or suggesting whilst you're summarising!
- Show it's OK not to know the answers to everything they ask about science, and ask: "I don't know, let's see if we can find out" or "Perhaps this is an area to discuss with your mentor."
- Explore how a particular area of the STEM curriculum and/or outcomes of the mentor discussions are relevant to real life
- Challenge attitudes around stereotypical career choices for boys and girls and others who may not think STEM subjects 'are for them'.
- Provide opportunities for your child to explore STEM subjects/ideas at libraries, museums, galleries and science centres.

Who to contact if there are problems

Speak to your child's teacher at the school directly if you have any questions/issues regarding the mentoring.



Guidance for mentees on mentoring and application form

Your mentoring sessions will help you prepare for a successful future. You will have the opportunity to explore many topics with your mentor, such as: considering a variety of STEM career options and/or ways to access your ideal career, discussing further education after school, how to communicate professionally and becoming more independent.

Your mentor will support you during the sessions with resources and tips and listen to your ideas and aspirations to help you clarify your goals. To make the most of this exciting opportunity, you need to communicate well with your mentor, help arrange sessions and clarify how you want to use the sessions and what topics to discuss. You should be punctual prepare any materials and think about questions in advance. If you have a problem during the programme, speak with your school coordinator immediately.

What is mentoring?

Your mentor is a volunteer who has valuable experiences and professional skills to share with you. They are willing to build trust, share their knowledge with you, listen and support you.

Who are STEM Ambassadors and what kind of mentoring can they provide?

STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. STEM Ambassadors work in a wide variety of STEM occupations. Some might be mechanical engineers whilst others are scientists or work in Information Technology.

STEM Ambassadors volunteer to do practical activities in schools and out of school organisations to help inspire young people to go into STEM careers or to continue with STEM subjects in schools. Mentoring is just one of several activities which STEM Ambassadors can offer to schools and young people.

STEM Ambassadors can offer specific mentoring in one or more of the following areas:

1. Subject specific help with STEM subjects
2. Employability skills
3. Careers in the STEM sector

Why has your teacher suggested mentoring might be helpful?

Here are a few reasons but there may be others:

- you might be considering a career in a STEM related job and the STEM Ambassador could guide you



Mentoring Agreement between STEM Ambassador and young person

Mentor (STEM Ambassador)

I agree to:

- ✓ work with the young person to identify goals and actions needed to support their Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) education and career aims
- ✓ meet the young person face to face on a minimum of 3 occasions for at least 30 minutes each over a period of at least a month
- ✓ be supportive of the young person and agree clear and realistic goals
- ✓ not go beyond my capability and refer issues I can't deal with back to the teacher
- ✓ keep a record of each meeting and send a copy to the teacher

Mentee (young person)

I agree to:

- ✓ work with my mentor to identify goals and actions needed to support my Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) education and career aims
- ✓ carry out the actions I agree with my mentor
- ✓ attend the agreed meetings with my mentor face to face on a minimum of 3 occasions for at least 20 minutes each over a period of at least a month
- ✓ give the mentor as much notice as possible if I have to cancel a meeting
- ✓ refer any problems back to the teacher

We both understand and agree that:

- ✓ Social activities outside the mentoring relationship **must not** take place, including car lifts
- ✓ Borrowing or lending of money **should not** happen
- ✓ Meetings should take place in school

	Name	Signature	Date
Mentor			
Young person			