



Mentoring the Mentor: Insights from school based educators

INVERELL HIGH SCHOOL



'Mentoring the Mentor' Seminar

INVERELL HIGH SCHOOL

JANITA FENTON
ELIZABETH RYAN

19 October 2016

School of Education
University of New England



SCHOOL CONTEXT – Student

- Rural comprehensive high school
- Current student population of approximately 600 students.
- Includes an extensive Support Unit – approximately 30 students. Caters for a diverse range of abilities – IM, IO, IS and MC classes. Many of these students are partially integrated into the mainstream student population.
- Established Clontarf Academy with over 60 Aboriginal boys participating in the program.

SCHOOL CONTEXT – Staff

- Teaching and Admin and support staff – 86
- Has had a stable teaching staff population up until the last five or so years.
- Many of the executive have changed and there has been several changes in Principal.
- Last two years there has been a large influx of ‘beginning’ Graduate teachers into the school.
- 2016 – mentoring program began in accordance with DoE policy.

Mentoring the Mentor



Why we became involved with MtM?

Originally it was an opportunity seen by experienced teachers to –

- Increase knowledge and understanding of the mentoring required by the DoE Policy to support graduate teachers through their beginning teaching period.
- Principal thought that as there were so many Graduate teachers starting at Inverell High in 2016 it would be a good idea for staff identified as Mentors to be involved in the initial meeting in 2015.



Personal

- Have always endeavoured to be a mentor for new staff to the school and especially within the faculty.
- Attrition rate of beginning teacher.
- Special Ed has unique stresses and situational context.



Enacting participatory action research (PAR)



Initially – there were more mentors involved with the process all developing the mentoring process individually.

Decision to brainstorm the collective activities to develop a booklet for future mentors to use when mentoring Graduate Teachers. Brainstormed all the ‘roles’, ‘responsibilities’ and ‘expectations’.

Came to realise that there was little information within the school/from DoE as to a define the role of a mentor.

Developed a framework of support for Graduate Teachers within the school.

Example of planning for framework

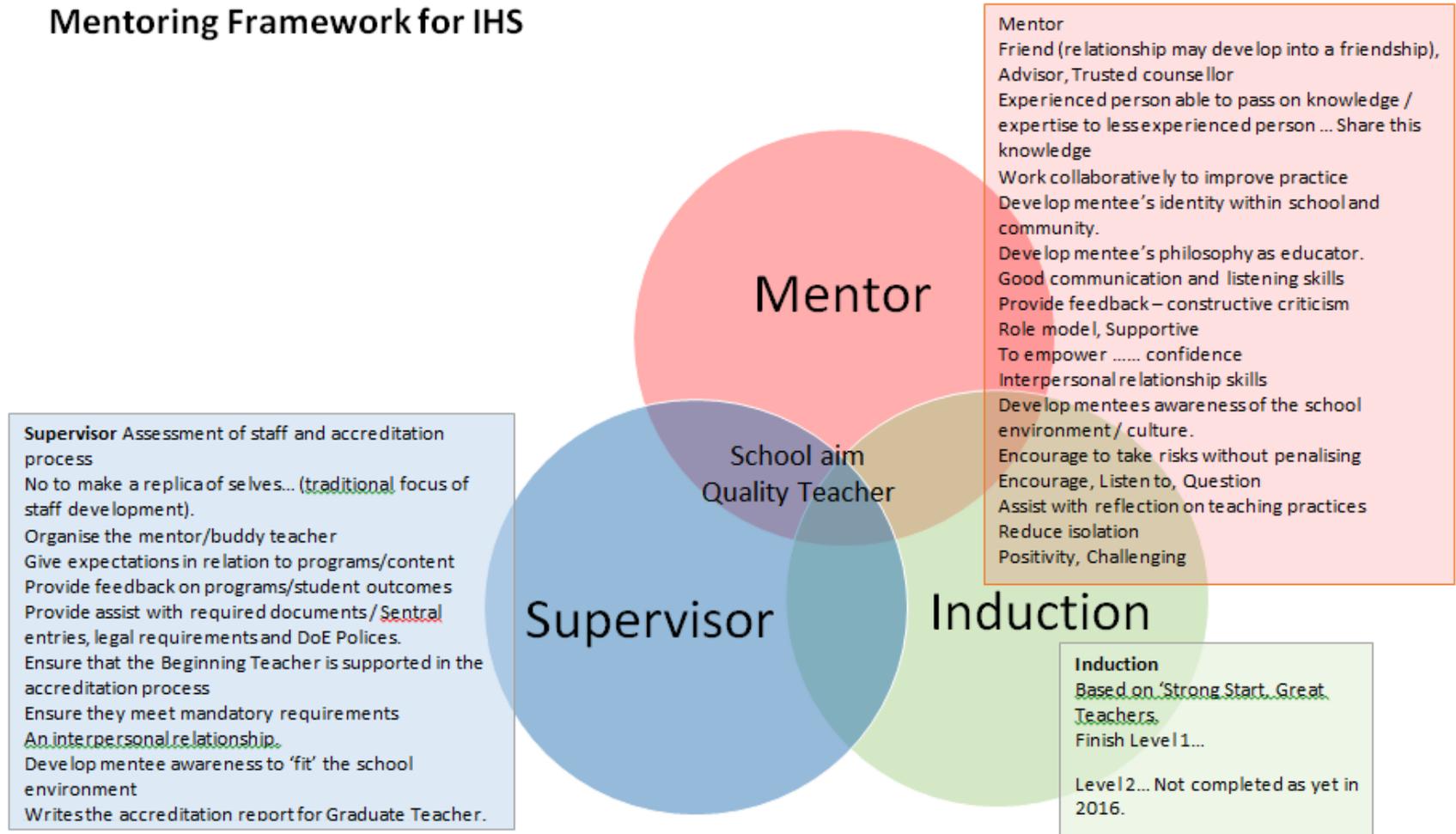


Mentor	Supervisor	Induction
<p>Layout of the school Faculty /staff rooms Toilets</p> <p>Introduction to people such as Student Support, Deputy, Principal, other teachers in faculty and school, counsellors, canteen, cleaners!</p> <p>Scanning Student Support Office show where is – sick bay, photo large amounts copying, first aid kits etc.?</p> <p><u>Sentral</u> Show basic functions such as marking rolls, welfare information, putting in positive and negatives, reports (of ?)</p> <p><u>Markbook</u></p> <p>First Aid – where available in school, faculty and <u>epipens</u> + medical info relating to students</p> <p>Teachers Professional Learning- How to apply for courses, where forms are, who needs to approve? When forms need to be submitted</p>	<p>Rolls</p> <p>Introduction to people such as Student Support, Deputy, Principal, other teachers in faculty and school, counsellors, canteen, cleaners!</p> <p>Photocopying - numbers Scanning</p> <p><u>Sentral</u> Show basic functions such as marking rolls, welfare information, putting in positive and negatives, reports (of ?)</p> <p><u>Markbook</u> Duties yard and 'duty of care' expectations Sport (<u>what needs sharing about sport eg organisation, rolls? Or do you mean the actual sport?</u>)</p> <p>Teachers Professional Learning- How to apply for courses, where forms are, who needs to approve? When forms need to be submitted</p> <p>Variation of Routine - how do apply for and the</p>	<p>Rolls Fire/ evacuation drills – emergency</p> <p><u>Sentral</u> Show basic functions such as marking rolls, welfare information, putting in positive and negatives, reports (of ?)</p> <p>Duties yard and 'duty of care' expectations Sport (what needs sharing about sport eg organisation, rolls? Or do you mean the actual sport?)</p>

Framework



Mentoring Framework for IHS

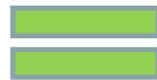


Enacting PAR



Continued to developed a large list of responsibilities (but not exhaustive) of collaborative information that occurs between the mentor and the mentee at Inverell High

Developed in hierarchy



Guidelines for Mentoring at Inverell High

Guidelines for Mentoring



GUIDELINES FOR MENTORING AT INVERELL HIGH SCHOOL

Systems	Welfare	Classroom	Admin	Professional	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School layout • Location of staffrooms, toilets • CENTRAL - roll marking, +ve and -ve entries, wellbeing information. • Discuss preparation for APST. • Whole staff morning tea organisation • Raffles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty of Care - classroom, playground, sport • Introduction to school personnel - counsellor, canteen workers, cleaners, LASTs, IT Support, SSO, WH&S • management of stress levels and need for time out - talk to someone. • Recognise that sometimes "it's not your problem". • EAP access - where to find the info 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour management - general - discipline flow chart, Non-negotiables, Bullying, Accidents, Dept Code of Conduct • Classroom management techniques - "what" is NOT acceptable behaviour, seating arrangements, classroom rules, school rules. • Classroom environment - furniture, wheelchair access, collaborative learning groups, IWB, keeping room clean (especially if it is a home room for students/teacher). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photocopying, scanning at SSO • Sick Bay procedures • First Aid access - Epipens - student medical information • Smartboards - how to operate, access to IT assistance. • Assessment task procedures - notifications, signing sheets, copies of tasks for ROSA. • Report writing - procedures, Do's and Don'ts • VOR applications • How to apply for leave - EES • Maintenance - Contact and where to report a concern. • Purchase request forms and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson preparation - content • Effective use of time at school. • Daybook - importance • PDP development - aligning to professional development. • Professional learning applications and associated paperwork. • Avoid 'befriending' students • Problem solving - who to go to? Chain of Command. • Regularly reflect on teaching and practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local services - doctors/dentist/etc. • Teacher Housing • Other accommodation • Social groups • Sporting groups and options • Community Clubs

Enacting PAR



To assist future mentors a role statement was developed.

All three documents were given to the executive and will be part of the staff handbook from 2017.



Role of Mentoring



Mentoring Role at Inverell High School

A Mentor acts as a guide, a confidante and sounding board for mentees, someone who shows empathy, is approachable, nurturing and a positive role model for Graduate teachers.

A mentor will work collaboratively with the mentee to:

- Assist, provide constructive criticism, share ideas and resources which demonstrate knowledge of the school/ faculty / subjects and processes.
- Build positive channels of communication by listening and questioning (being reflective towards practice and challenging higher order thinking)
- Build interpersonal relationships through regular meetings and contact.

A mentor will develop trust through a shared purpose, showing vulnerability and use language that is connected, caring and non-judgemental.

A mentors aim is to develop the mentee's:

- Philosophy and Identity as a teacher, so that it aligns (provide a sense of belonging) to the school's culture, customs and practice.
- Reflective practice to develop confidence and competence by encouraging and challenging their teaching practice.
- Empower and identify their strengths to give a sense of individuality.

Through the collaborative mentoring process the mentor will experience ongoing growth and development as an educator and through the satisfaction of seeing others achieve.

PAR cycle with Mentee



Janita – Increasing the profile of the Support Unit and students with disabilities within the school. Improve the sense of belonging for the mentee.

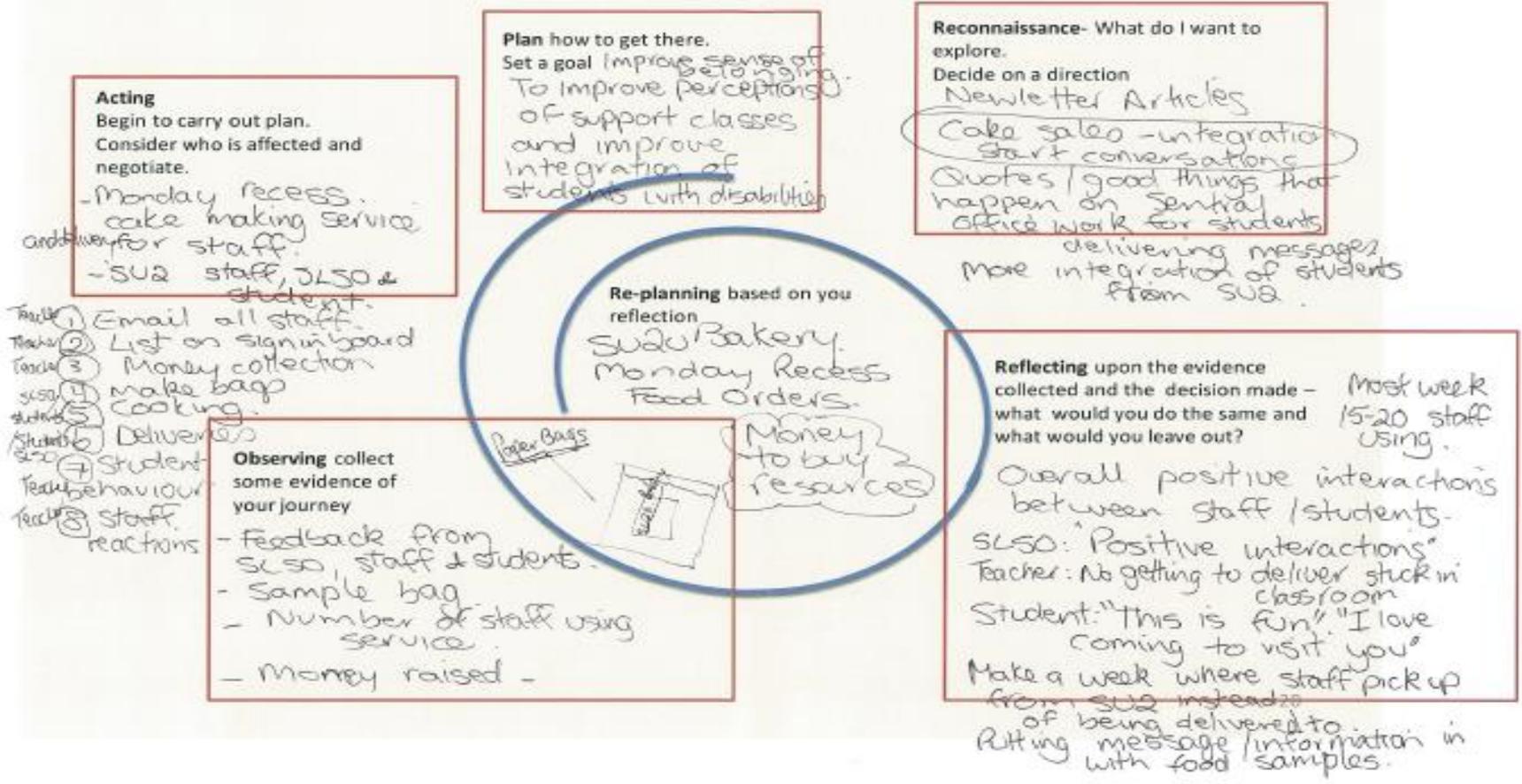
- Brainstormed ideas to lift profile and recognise mentee within the school.

- Decided on SU2U Bakery.



- Overall positive interactions and involvement in staff – 25 % regularly buy a cupcake.
- Interaction of students with disabilities within the process and increased integration.

Participatory Action Research



PAR cycle with mentee



Libby – improve classroom management so that more time is spent on teaching and learning than discipline/challenging behaviours.

- Brainstorm strategies that can be identified to assist in improving classroom management.
- Decide on focus of seating plans and reinforcement of school non-negotiables. No home room (challenge)
- Reflection of evidence = decrease in discipline issues within class, less Sentral entries relating to negative incidents, more effective time teaching and learning

Participatory Action Research - Mentee. T.3 2016.

Gave mentee Semester 1 reflection sheet.

Acting

Begin to carry out plan.

Consider who is affected and negotiate.

Classroom management to improve.

How - strategies

- rules
 - non negotiables
 - seating plans
 - central entries.
- all teacher based.

Students in class due to ↑ management & ↓ discipline issues = time spent in class dealing with challenging students.

Plan how to get there.

Set a goal

- Develop seating plans for each classroom that teacher. (4 different classrooms → all set up differently.)
- Make sure non-negotiable posters are in each room. Have poster a small A4 for students - work through initially and reinforce.

Reconnaissance- What do I want to explore.

Decide on a direction

Focus on improving student self regulation (behaviour) and improved classroom management & discipline in all classes.

Record tve for students on central Reinforce / recognise tve behaviour within the room.

Re-planning based on you reflection

Continue to reinforce → non negotiables / classroom rules / expectations.

Modify seating plan → disband it? → "see what happens"

Where to - content delivery? → teaching strategies / activities

Observing collect some evidence of your journey

Feedback - via lesson observations

- teacher feeling within classroom. (time spent on discipline / amount of work that class gets through. ↓)
 - ↓ central entries
 - less contact with H.T
- relating to behaviour / discipline concerns in classes.

Reflecting upon the evidence collected and the decision made - what would you do the same and what would you leave out?

Do this process sooner - ? Decision on a course of action from beginning of Term 4. Ask for assistance from supervisor / mentor sooner. Have more classroom observations.

Seating plan has had tve's - ↓ student concerns (collectively & individually). Assisted by reinforcement of non negotiable & classroom expectations. Recognise that classroom management is essential for other elements to follow effectively.

Professional Learning and Reflection



Challenges

- Process was lengthy and seemed drawn out.
- Little interest shown by other staff within the school.

Strengths

- A collaborative experience.
- Shifted mindset from instructor to ask reflective questions for self and mentee to develop strategies to problem solve.
- Empowering self and others to reflect and grow as teachers no matter level of teaching experience.
- PAR flexible and evolving model which allowed for reflection through data collection. Needs specific structure to 'drive' meetings and process.

Inverell Public School



Professional Partners: Mentoring the Mentors project experience

Inverell Public School



Mission Statement

Inverell Public School students are optimistic, confident lifelong learners who will be responsible citizens in a rapidly changing 21st Century.

At Inverell Public School we engage students in **high quality teaching and learning** to inspire and challenge each individual to realise their full potential. Our students will be **literate and numerate** and they will become **creative, reflective, independent learners**.

All students will embrace a variety of educational opportunities to **pursue excellence and develop effective problem solving skills**.

Our school is a community of active learners who seek opportunities for growth and success through the application of positive **social and emotional learning**. This will facilitate **cohesive, interactive relationships and alliances** within the school and the community.

Inverell Public School



MERGING PBL VALUES WITH PITW LIFERAFT MESSAGES

<u>PBL VALUES</u>	<u>PITW LIFERAFT</u>	<u>Sample: Key Messages (Language to adapt)</u>
COOPERATE	Have reasons for the things you say and do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you don't know why you're doing something then don't do it because it's mostly likely wrong.
	It takes great strength to be sensible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do the right thing because it's the best thing to do. A strong person will stand and fight, whereas a stronger person will turn and walk away.
ACHIEVE	Pursue your personal best no matter who you work with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We don't come to school to be better than others. We come to school to be better than ourselves, by being able to work with others.
RESPECT	Treat others as you would like to be treated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not the broken rule "Treat others as they treat you". If someone is unlike you, seek to understand them.
EXCEL	Be brave – participate to progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School is about stepping bravely into the unknown. The unknown is often more uncomfortable. The braver you are, the more you learn.

Inverell Public School



Inverell Public School



- Continue to build a school culture focussed on effective mentoring and reflective practice for team capacity to help colleagues to do their best.
- To mentor our stage members and executive to facilitate successful implementation of Focus on Reading Stages 2 and 3.
- Mentoring and coaching our Practicum Students and High School Work Experience Students.
- The combined programs have a clearly articulated purpose, bringing different elements that the team has transferred to effective action.

IPS Directions



The Mentor the mentors project has supported the school to:

- distil a range of professional learning into action
- use the Action Research Project Cycle to practice mentoring – focusing on strengths
- build on previous work relating to EQ (Emotional Intelligence) – leveraging strengths of staff and students to facilitate success



Mentoring Practicum Students and Early Career Teachers



- Provision of support rather than expecting ‘evaluations’ – moving away from a supervisory model to a deeper level of connection and understanding.
- Genuine inclusion of practicum students to the school/team – awareness of the need for induction, initial modelling culture & explanation of school expectations.
- Using Higher Order Thinking ‘Blooms’ Questioning Strategies to encourage ‘Deeper Thinking and Reflection’.
- Flow on to Practicum Students – building confidence, becoming ‘Fearless’.

‘Welcome to the Unknown’

Mentoring Practicum Students and Early Career Teachers



Mentoring in our context, has allowed us to:

- Plan collaboratively and assess lessons consistently
- Provide assistance with programming
- Effectively give and receive feedback
- Develop a quality peer teaching structure
- Organise classroom resources for best effect
- Communicate more effectively
- Provide ongoing encouragement & recognise effort and practices
- Better understand the policy and procedures of Inverell Public School
- Engage in a high quality professional learning opportunity
- Be approachable and supportive (building relationships)
- Mentor staff through difficult situations with parents/carers
- Use collaborative assessment for report writing
- Build an inclusive and valued environment
- Improve team work for specific purpose

Mentoring Practicum Students and Early Career Teachers



GROWTH MODEL	CONTENT
Building the trust...	What's better since last time ... Scenario - Rate it on a scale of 1 to 10.
Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you need to achieve? How will that be of real value to you? When you achieve this goal, what will it look like/feel like? Is it realistic? What are the critical success factors to achieving this goal? Rate the scenario on a scale of 1 to 10. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to further develop classroom management strategies so that they day flows easily Need to keep students on task to listen I will be happy, less stressed and calm and in control My teaching will benefit
Reality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is happening now? Are there times when the problem doesn't occur? What other factors are relevant? What's within your area of control? What else do you have in place that's supporting you to achieve this goal? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finds it hard to regain student's attention when they are engaged in an activity or outside in lines There are parts of sessions when they do listen and Gabi feels like she can manage behaviours. It might be related to particular times of the day...
Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What could you do? What are the options for achieving this goal? What approaches have you used yourself, or seen others use, in similar circumstances? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change tone of voice Calming music with a specific time-frame "KG freeze" is what students currently respond to but Gabi will find an attention-grabber/class chant that she can comfortably use for her lessons. Use the Juno classroom microphone for hearing and auditory processing reasons. Gabi has been uncomfortable in using this previously

Mentee Action Research Cycle

Gabi

Action Research Cycle	Intentions & timeframes	Actions taken	Points to reflect/ journal on
Reconnaissance (initial observations, existing data, define the issue)	First 5 weeks of term.	Sat with Eleasha + completed the growth model.	How the strategies are adapted by students in first 2 weeks.
Planning (action/ intervention)	Roughly 4 days	Came up with interventions + strategies.	If interventions / strategies need altering.
Acting (taking action/ intervening)	5 weeks to perfect.	Dedicated time to source approaches.	Has the classroom management improved?
Observing (collecting data),	Together after 2 weeks to reevaluate.	Eleasha + classroom aid observing new approaches in action.	Students thoughts + Eleasha's.
Reflecting (analysing/ reflecting on action/ intervention)	Constantly speaking to Eleasha to monitor progression.	Reflect with Eleasha regularly.	Overall effectiveness of strategies + intervention.

What mentoring has meant to our Practicum students



Susannah (Intern teacher regarding mentoring by supervising teacher)

Julia supported, guided and saw potential in my teaching from the early stages. She had high expectations of me and gave me opportunities to extend and develop myself as an educator. Julia gave me the confidence to explore the unknown and understand that it is ok to take risks and make mistakes.

Greg (Intern teacher regarding mentoring by supervising teacher)

Jenny has guided my teaching in a direction that I never thought possible. I initially started using Jenny's teaching style as I was unsure of how to put it all together. Through her mentoring, I have been able to develop areas of need and identify my own teaching values. I know that I still have a lot to learn, but I have learnt so much from Jenny during this internship and will carry it all into my future career.

Tamsin (Assistant Principal regarding mentoring by fellow AP)

Georgia was able to capture, organise and distribute her knowledge, providing both long and short-term support for me and my fellow colleagues. She was able to share her expert knowledge and skills effectively in a rapid paced environment, in a manner that was both encouraging and inspiring.

Mentor the Mentors – Learning for Leaders@ IPS



- Defining the difference between mentoring and coaching
- Developing understanding of the Action Research Cycle
- Enhancing collegial discussions by recognising individuals' strengths & identifying areas for development
- Sharing of resources
- Increased leadership capacity across the team
- Putting key ideas and strategies into practise
- Facilitating a non-judgemental learning environment.
- Encouraging critical reflection
- Building professional 'critical friend' relationships and
- Appreciating the role that the Executive Team plays in the school environment

