



**On average, mentoring appears to have little or no positive impact on academic outcomes.**

Cost	Evidence strength	Impact (months)	Effect size
£££££		0	0.00

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## What is it?

Mentoring in education involves pairing young people with an older peer or volunteer, who acts as a positive role model. In general, mentoring aims to build confidence, develop resilience and character, or raise aspirations, rather than to develop specific academic skills or knowledge.

Mentors typically build relationships with young people by meeting with them one to one for about an hour a week over a sustained period, either during school, at the end of the school day, or at weekends.

Activities vary between different mentoring programmes. While some mentoring programmes include some direct academic support with homework or other school tasks, approaches focused primarily on direct academic support are not covered in this strand. See [One to one tuition](#) and [Peer tutoring](#).

Mentoring has increasingly been offered to young people who are deemed to be hard to reach or at risk of educational failure or exclusion.

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## How effective is it?

On average, mentoring appears to have little or no positive impact on academic outcomes. The impacts of individual programmes vary. Some studies have found positive impacts for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, and for non-academic outcomes such as attitudes to school, attendance and behaviour. However, there are risks associated with unsuccessful mentor pairings, which may have a detrimental effect on the mentee, and some studies report negative overall impacts.

School-based mentoring programmes appear to be less effective than community-based approaches, possibly because school-based mentoring can result in fewer opportunities for young people to develop more lasting and trusting relationships with adult role models.

Programmes which have a clear structure and expectations, provide training and support for mentors, and use mentors from a professional background, are associated with more successful outcomes.

The evidence of mentoring programs directed at pupils in schools in the Arab world is limited. The evidence that does exist mainly focuses on outcomes other than attainment and of older students attending university. Interviews with mentoring participants show that mentoring programs are regarded as supportive environments for students. Particularly, in the Arab world, female students found that being mentored by another female helped them overcome their learning challenges and increased their self-confidence.

Some programs in the Arab world have explored mentoring of teachers (the global evidence summarized in the Toolkit focuses on mentoring of pupils). Teachers in these studies reported that the programs helped them to self-reflect on their teaching strategies and develop their job effectiveness. Individuals engaged in the mentoring activity showed an improvement on their leadership skills. A survey of school Principals in Kuwait found that Principals reported that mentoring improved their leadership and management skills that were deemed necessary to overcome the day-to-day principalship issues. It also strengthened the relationships between students and their faculty and created a bridge between schools and universities.

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## *How secure is the evidence?*

The evidence is extensive. Five meta-analyses have been published in the last ten years, and estimates of average impact have been fairly consistent over the last decade. The quality of individual studies has improved in recent years with more experimental — rather than correlational — studies available for inclusion in reviews.

Most of the studies come from the USA and focus on secondary school pupils, with a few studies from the UK and other European countries such as Portugal. A recent rigorous study of mentoring for reading with eight-to-nine-year-olds in Northern Ireland found small improvements of about two months' progress in fluency, but not in reading comprehension. Further rigorous evaluation in the UK is needed to assess varying approaches to mentoring across different age groups.

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## *What are the costs?*

Overall, costs are estimated as moderate. They mainly cover mentor training and support, and the

organisation and administration of the programme. Community-based programmes tend to be more expensive than school-based programmes as schools tend to absorb some of the costs, such as space costs or general administration. Estimates in the USA are between 1,000.0 USD and 1,500.0 USD per student per year (about 777.2 GBP to 1,165.9 GBP, and about 709.9 JOD to 1,063.5 JOD).

*Costs originally calculated in USD; GBP and JOD calculated via oanda.com on 22/09/20.*

As yet there is no information about local costs.

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## *What should I consider?*

The impact of mentoring varies but, on average, it is likely to have very little impact on attainment.

Positive effects tend not to be sustained once the mentoring stops, so care must be taken to ensure that benefits are not lost.

Community-based approaches tend to be more successful than school-based approaches.

Mentor drop-out can have detrimental effects on mentees. What steps have you taken to assess the reliability of mentors?

What training and support have you provided for mentors?

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