MENTORING CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK

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Contents

MORE INFORMATION

- see the **mentor training for experienced school teachers** page on the Department of Education (the Department) public website

- see the **online induction portal for teachers** on the Department's website https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Pages/Home.aspx

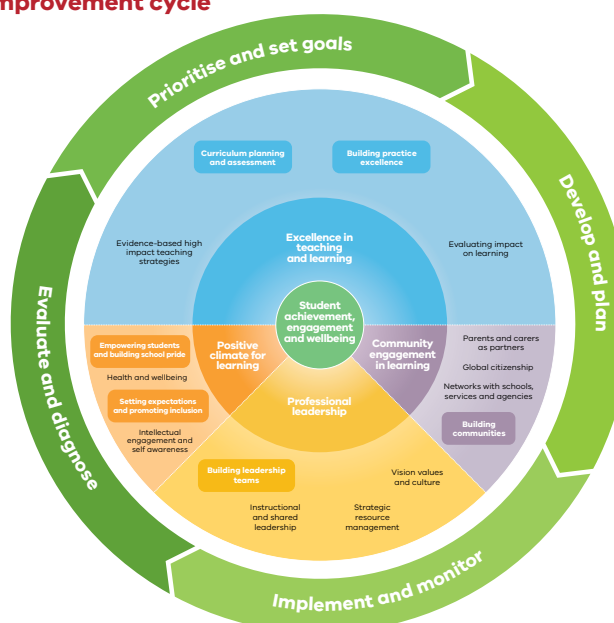- email: **professional.practice@edumail.vic.gov.au**

Introduction

The Mentoring Capability Framework (MCF) is designed to support the effective and ongoing mentoring of new teachers in Victorian schools and other educational settings. It is a key component of the Effective Mentoring Program (EMP), developed by the Department of Education (the Department) in partnership with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) to support the learning and development of provisionally registered teachers (PRTs).
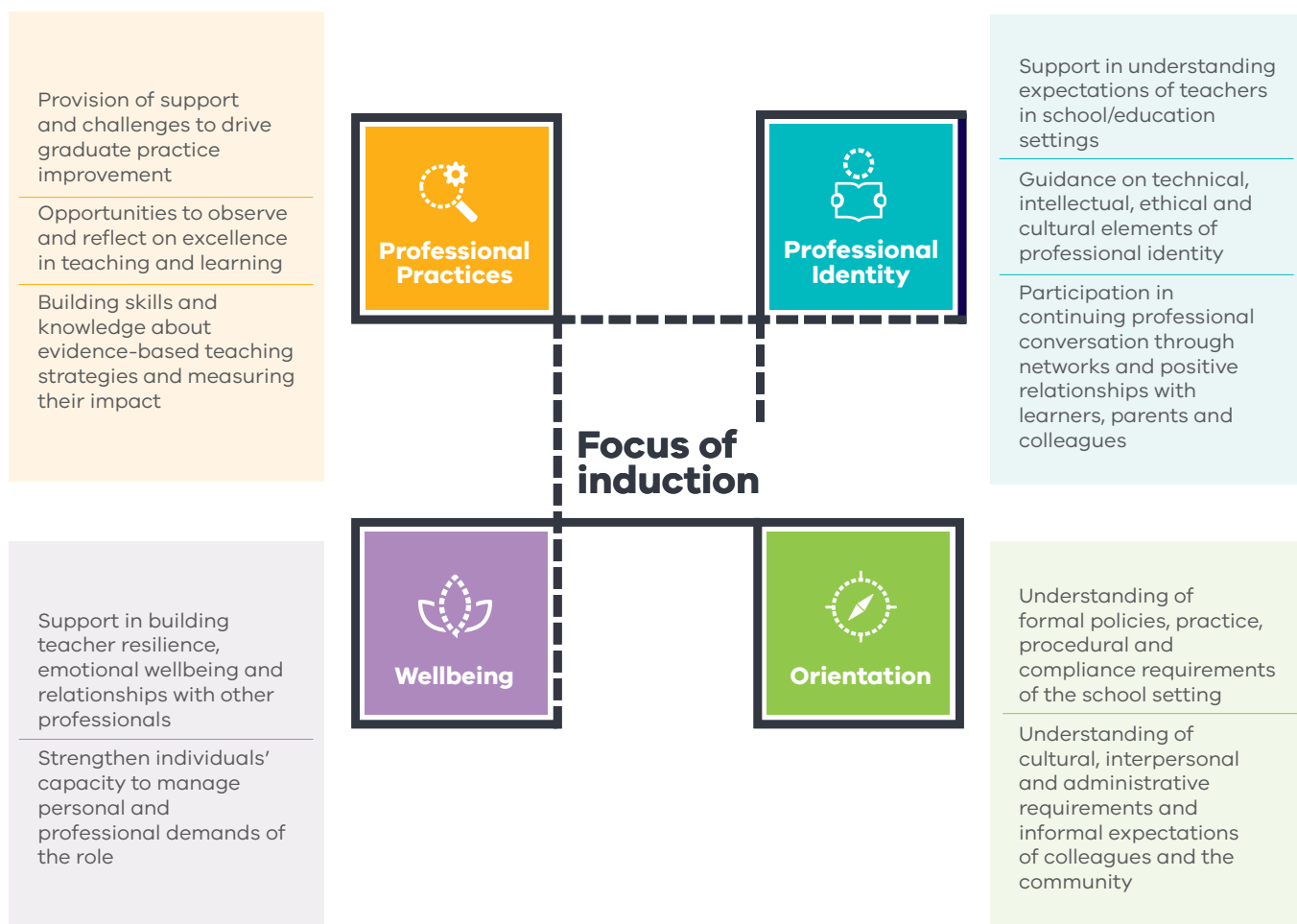
High quality teaching and effective school leadership play a critical role in the achievement of the targets outlined in the Department's Education State agenda and the enduring benefits they bring to children and young people in Victoria. As practising teachers and future leaders, PRTs play a prominent role in contributing to the achievement of these targets. The MCF recognises the importance of the strong foundations for professional growth as we know that new teachers become effective teachers when they can learn from experienced colleagues in a supportive and motivating educational setting. Like effective teaching, the effective mentoring of PRTs is explicit (not incidental), evidence-based (not anecdotal) and collaborative (not isolated), involving dedicated time for reflection and feedback.

The MCF focuses on guiding the development of mentoring relationships and aligns with two components of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) – the Excellence in Teaching and Learning priority, and the Strategic Resource Management dimension of the Professional Leadership priority. The intention of the MCF is to ensure that the development of effective mentoring relationships is a collective effort and that the access all new teachers have to effective mentoring is consistent and coherent. To support this collective responsibility, the MCF describes expectations and behaviours of mentors and mentees as well as the cultural and structural elements in schools and other educational settings that create an enabling context for the effective mentoring of new teachers.

From 2019, early childhood teachers will have access to a targeted version of the Mentoring Capability Framework. The companion document (Mentoring Capability Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care) will be essential to building knowledge about effective mentoring practices within early childhood settings.

For more information see:
https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/practice.aspx

Figure 1.1 Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Improvement cycle

The *AITSL Graduate to Proficient: Australian Guidelines for Teacher Induction into the Profession* (the Guidelines), were endorsed by all state ministers for education. Drawing from the Guidelines, the MCF addresses the four key focus areas which are critical for effective induction: professional practice, professional identity, orientation and wellbeing. The MCF highlights a range of supports and strategies, including a strong focus on practice-focused mentoring, which are particularly powerful in helping PRTs to transition into the teaching profession and move towards the proficient career stage.

Provision of support and challenges to drive graduate practice improvement

Opportunities to observe and reflect on excellence in teaching and learning

Building skills and knowledge about evidence-based teaching strategies and measuring their impact

Professional Practices

Professional Identity

Support in understanding expectations of teachers in school/education settings

Guidance on technical, intellectual, ethical and cultural elements of professional identity

Participation in continuing professional conversation through networks and positive relationships with learners, parents and colleagues

Focus of induction

Support in building teacher resilience, emotional wellbeing and relationships with other professionals

Strengthen individuals' capacity to manage personal and professional demands of the role

Wellbeing

Orientation

Understanding of formal policies, practice, procedural and compliance requirements of the school setting

Understanding of cultural, interpersonal and administrative requirements and informal expectations of colleagues and the community

*Adopted from *Graduate to Proficient: Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession* (the AITSL guidelines).

The domains of effective mentoring

Effective mentoring is a learning relationship that supports effective teaching and learning, and helps mentees to develop a strong professional identity.

The Mentoring Capability Framework (MCF) communicates the characteristics of effective mentoring experiences through six domains (**Figure 1.2**). Each domain identifies the key expectations and behaviours that mentors, mentees and schools should demonstrate to create highly effective mentoring experiences. These domains have been developed using contemporary Australian and international research into preparing confident and skilled teachers, and setting up a school culture conducive to effective mentoring. An evidence base is provided for each domain.

Figure 1.2 The domains of effective mentoring

Using the Mentoring Capability Framework

The Mentoring Capability Framework (MCF) directly supports the development and sustaining of an effective mentoring approach for new teachers. It provides a common language that schools can use to embed a consistent approach to mentoring in their community. The MCF can be used to inform the development of a school-wide mentoring program or to guide the ongoing improvement of an existing one.

Mentors can use the MCF to:

- improve their understanding of the expectations of a mentoring role
- identify priorities and relevant supports for developing their mentoring capability
- co-develop norms and protocols with mentees to guide each new mentoring relationship.

Provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) can use the MCF to:

- increase their understanding of mentoring and how it supports their teaching
- co-develop norms and protocols for mentoring with their mentor
- proactively influence the focus of mentoring conversations to maximise their learning.

School leaders can use the MCF to:

- develop criteria for selecting mentor teachers
- develop/refine shared school-wide norms and protocols for mentoring relationships
- identify areas for professional learning to increase mentoring capacity.

THE MENTORING CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK (MCF) DIRECTLY SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINING OF AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING APPROACH FOR NEW TEACHERS.

Domain 1
Teaching and Learning

Facilitating improvement in teaching and learning is the objective of an effective mentoring relationship. The mentor and mentee engage in ongoing reflective practice, including evaluating data, prioritising and setting goals, developing actions and plans, implementing strategies, monitoring progress and adjusting teaching to maximise the effectiveness of their learning.

Mentor Expectations and Behaviours

- Is a proficient teacher as classified by the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) or Range 2 or above as classified by the Victorian government schools career structure.

- Is open to learning from collaborative mentoring relationships that involve sharing student learning experiences with mentees, reflecting on their own teaching experiences and identifying sources of support for developing more effective teaching and learning practices.

- Maintains high expectations for teaching and learning for all students by demonstrating a deep understanding and effective use of current pedagogical and curriculum resources, including but not limited to the Victorian Curriculum F-10, Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and accompanying resources, Amplify, and the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model ((VTLM) including Practice Principles for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Pedagogical Model, and High Impact Teaching Strategies).

- Uses the Victorian Curriculum F-10 and information about students' individual learning needs to develop a progression of learning for students.

- Uses data to monitor student learning progress and actively engages with students and colleagues to improve teaching practice.

Mentee Expectations and Behaviours

- With the support of the mentor, implements and reflects on the effectiveness of curriculum planning, teaching, assessment and behaviour management strategies.

- With the support of the mentor, identifies strategies to establish a supportive and productive learning environment, and to build positive relationships with students.

- Informed by the Victorian Curriculum F-10, designs learning programs that reflect student learning needs and progress student learning.

- With the support of the mentor and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), uses the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Improvement Cycle or Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) inquiry approach to identify student learning needs, select appropriate teaching responses, evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies and identify further areas for professional development.

- Builds knowledge of and ability to implement effective evidence-based teaching practices. Progressively improves understanding and refines implementation of the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model ((VTLM) that includes the Practice Principles for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Pedagogical Model and High Impact Teaching Strategies).
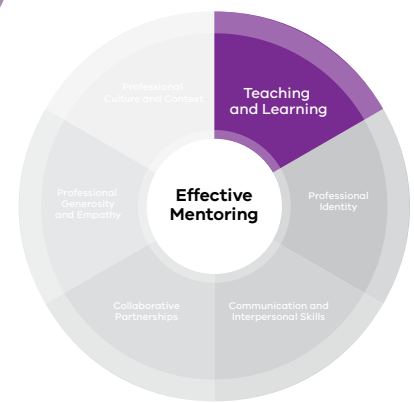
School Expectations and Behaviours

- School Strategic Plan (SSP), Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), school-wide curriculum plan and a professional learning plan focus on increasing the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the use of specific strategies and structures to achieve targeted improvement. These may be reflected in staff's individual Performance and Development Plans (PDP).

- Establishing a professional learning culture is a collective responsibility. Procedures are in place to support staff to collaboratively deepen their pedagogical knowledge and set specific goals to improve professional practice. Time is prioritised and processes are in place to facilitate the systematic evaluation of teaching practices and involve establishing protocols to support staff to collaborate with learning specialists, literacy leaders, Professional Learning Community (PLC) Instructional Leaders and other relevant specialists to focus on professional practice development.

- Teachers are supported to work in PLCs to analyse student data and feedback, engage in peer observations and support each other's teaching improvement. Goals and professional learning may be reflected in individual PDPs.

🔍 Evidence base

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Domain 2
Professional Identity

Professional identity describes how teachers see themselves in the profession and how they communicate that view of self to others. Professional identity encompasses knowledge, skills, dispositions and behaviours of a teacher. Mentors and school leaders support mentees to understand the expectations set out through professional standards, code of conducts, ethics and professional bodies. Mentors and school leaders support mentees to develop their professional identities through role modelling, explicit coaching, recognition and involvement in professional networks.

Mentor Expectations and Behaviours

- Articulates, models and supports the mentee to demonstrate the standards of professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement as set out by the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) and other relevant bodies.

- Raises the mentee's awareness of departmental and school values and supports the mentee to put these into practice.

- Supports the mentee to implement the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Improvement Cycle and/or VIT inquiry approach for professional development by co-designing professional goals, actions to achieve these goals and methods for collecting evidence.

- Uses the APST to guide the mentee's progress toward full registration.

- Observes the mentee's practice and provides timely and targeted feedback. Identifies resources to support the mentee's achievement of professional goals.

Mentee Expectations and Behaviours

- Is aware of and demonstrates the standards for professional practice set out by the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) and other relevant bodies.

- Proactively collaborates with the mentor and other school colleagues to design their professional learning.

- Uses the VIT, APST, school's Annual Improvement Plan (AIP) and School Strategic Plan (SSP) to identify professional learning priorities, set measurable goals and monitor progress.

- Achieves full registration with the VIT and is committed to ongoing improvement of their teaching practice.

School Expectations and Behaviours

- School leaders support a culture in which professional standards for behaviour are understood, modeled and reinforced. The culture is guided by the Codes of Conduct and Ethics, Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) and the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC).

- The school professional learning plan includes protocols for creating opportunities for new teachers to access support from learning specialists, literacy leaders and other relevant specialists to improve teaching practice.

- Protocols are implemented to support individual professional development and its alignment to career stages, the school's Annual Improvement Plan (AIP) and the School Strategic Plan (SSP).

- Principal ensures that all mentors are highly professional and ethical and have no pending or previous conduct, ethics or child safe-guarding infringements.

🔍 Evidence base

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- Victorian Institute of Teachers. (Feb 2016). Supporting Provisionally Registered Teachers. A guide to the evidence-based process for full registration

- Victorian Public Sector Commission. Employment Principles and Standards. **https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/ ethics-behaviours-culture/employment-principles-and-standards/**

Domain 3
Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Effective listening, questioning and feedback, underpinned by empathy and mutual respect, characterise professional learning conversations. Supported by a culture in which high expectations for teaching and learning are continually reinforced, the mentor and mentee co-construct opportunities for development and professional growth.

Mentor Expectations and Behaviours

- Uses their knowledge and understanding of the Mentoring Capability Framework (MCF) to focus discussions with their mentee.

- Encourages the mentee to share reflections and viewpoints by asking questions, listening effectively, building on ideas and observations, offering feedback and insights and helping the mentee to articulate connections to professional development goals.

- Is eager to develop their emotional intelligence, professional knowledge and professional practice to be able to support their mentees more effectively. Uses their knowledge and skills to adapt the mentoring process to address the mentee's needs.

- Is skilled at facilitating reflective and improvement-focused conversations. Supports mentees to collect evidence of teaching and student learning, including the records required for full registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

- Is skilled at implementing strategies for managing complex issues and difficult conversations.

Mentee Expectations and Behaviours

- Uses their knowledge of the Mentoring Capability Framework (MCF) to support their induction and focus discussions with their mentor.

- Utilises a range of verbal and written communication skills to gather evidence of student learning and reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching.

- Observes, critically reflects and proactively seeks new information to improve their knowledge and skills of working in different learning contexts.

- Reinforces a culture of respectful communication and builds their skills for communicating in complex situations.

- Actively seeks feedback from colleagues, students and parents/carers to inform planning and improve teaching practice.

- Demonstrates openness to learning by participating in reflective conversations with the mentor around their professional development.

School Expectations and Behaviours

- The school reinforces a culture of constructive communication and mutual respect that is evident in relationships between students, staff, parents/carers and the community.

- School leaders and staff communicate high expectations for teaching and learning and maintain a focus on these goals during professional learning conversations, including mentoring conversations.

- There is a whole-school approach to mentoring that is founded in shared understanding of continuous improvement and professional collaboration.

- The school builds trust and promotes commitment to continuous improvement. The school communicates clear protocols for mentoring relationships, including departmental guidelines for handling confidential and private information.

🔍 Evidence base

- European and Mentoring Coaching Council (September, 2015). EMCC Competence Framework. Version 2. Accessed 30.10.17

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- Young, R. W. and Cates, M. C. (2010). Listening, play, and social attraction in the mentoring of new teachers. Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 18(3): 215–231

Domain 4
Collaborative Partnerships

Effective mentoring requires a school-wide collective commitment. Ongoing professional growth of mentees can be supported through active sharing of time, expertise and resources on the part of mentors and the wider school teaching community. By supporting mentors to develop their mentoring capabilities, schools leverage mentors' existing teaching experience and facilitate professional growth of mentees.

Mentor Expectations and Behaviours

- Demonstrates an ongoing commitment to developing teaching practice through professional learning and collaboration with colleagues.

- Supports the mentee to build partnerships that promote professional development. Connects the mentee with other colleagues to achieve professional development goals (e.g. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), learning specialists, literacy/numeracy coordinator, mentees from other schools).

- Facilitates collaboration with the school's designated professional learning coordinator to identify professional development opportunities for the mentee that are aligned with the school's Annual Improvement Plan (AIP), School Strategic Plan (SSP) and professional learning plan.

- Encourages and supports the mentee to participate in and take opportunities to co-lead professional learning activities within the school and across the network.

Mentee Expectations and Behaviours

- Seeks out and engages in professional learning within the school and across the network to improve teaching practice.

- Actively learns from colleagues through formal and informal opportunities. Shares and compares experiences to develop own practice and support colleagues to develop theirs. Uses departmental resources to guide professional conversations (e.g. Victorian Curriculum F-10, the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO), the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model (VTLM)).

- Engages in professional partnerships including Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), graduate networks and learning area teaching teams.

- Participates in and takes opportunities to co-lead professional learning activities within the school and across the network.

School Expectations and Behaviours

- Supports mentors and mentees to participate in formal mentoring training (e.g. Effective Mentoring Program (EMP)).

- Provides resources to develop mentoring practice and secures opportunities for collaboration that supports staff to develop their practice in line with the School Strategic Plan (SSP) and Annual Improvement Plan (AIP).

- Ensures the whole-school professional learning plan is adequately resourced and supports participation in the EMP to build collective responsibility and accountability for school-wide improvement in student outcomes.

- Initiates and sustains partnerships and networks to reinforce a culture of collaboration. Extends mentoring and other professional development opportunities within the school and across networks.

Evidence base

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Domain 5
Professional Generosity and Empathy

Effective mentoring requires a school-wide collective commitment. Ongoing professional growth of mentees can be supported through active sharing of time, expertise and resources on the part of mentors and a wider school teaching community. By supporting mentors to develop their mentoring capabilities, schools leverage mentors' existing teaching experience and facilitate professional growth of mentees.

Mentor Expectations and Behaviours

- Is enthusiastic and committed to developing professional practice of mentees and maintaining effective mentoring relationships.

- Schedules regular times for both formal and informal mentoring.

- Ensures confidentiality and uses protocols consistent with the regulations outlined by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

- Shares expertise, resources and strategies for improving teaching practice while supporting health and wellbeing of mentees.

- Provides emotional and instructional support to enable mentees to manage existing and potential pressures around teaching.

- Empowering mentees by recognising improvements in their professional practice (e.g. teaching, collaboration with colleagues, professional learning).

Mentee Expectations and Behaviours

- Is open and committed to learning. Prioritises time and effort to schedule, prepare for and attend agreed mentoring sessions and classroom observations.

- Reflects on strengths and weaknesses and follows through on co-designed plans.

- Respectfully provides feedback to their mentor. Focuses on using mentoring conversations effectively (i.e. address issues around teaching and learning, collaboration with colleagues, health and wellbeing).

- Maintains confidentiality during and after the mentoring relationship as per agreed protocols.

- Exhibits trust-building behaviours, such as being open to new ideas, focusing on the positive, listening respectfully and acting authentically.

School Expectations and Behaviours

- School leaders advocate the benefits of and are committed to embedding effective mentoring in their schools.

- School leaders maintain a focus on supporting quality mentoring relationships and allocate available resources to sustain these relationships.

- A mentor selection procedure is transparent and highlights the importance of enthusiasm and empathy in mentoring relationships.

- Procedures are in place to recognise the work of mentors and integrate professional development goals around mentoring into the mentors' Performance and Development Plans (PDP).

- School leaders model trust, empathy and generosity in their everyday interactions with staff, students, parents/carers and the wider community.

🔍 Evidence base

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Domain 6
Professional Culture and Context

The school proactively supports mentoring by reinforcing an inclusive, improvement-focused culture. Ongoing evaluation of students' learning progress provide strategic direction for focusing professional development and to inform processes to support mentees' professional development.

Mentor Expectations and Behaviours

- Understands professional expectations, expressed through the Department's values and the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching (APST). Sustains a focus on continuous improvement and the wellbeing of staff and students.

- Demonstrates and shares knowledge and understanding of the school's processes, team structures and cultural norms (e.g. curriculum, assessment, behaviour management, pastoral care, collaborative professional learning).

- Ensures the mentee is inducted to the school's organisational system and feels supported within the school processes and structures.

- Demonstrates respect for staff, students and their families. Supports the mentee to understand students' cultural backgrounds to enhance learning relationships and improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

- Models a commitment to health, wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

Mentee Expectations and Behaviours

- Is aware of the school's professional expectations and implements the school's system of organisational processes, team structures and cultural norms.

- Demonstrates respect for staff, students and their families and embraces diversity. Uses understanding of students' backgrounds to enhance learning relationships and improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

- Guided by school policies and the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching (APST), demonstrates a commitment to health, wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

- Voluntarily commits to the mentoring relationship and builds trust by participating enthusiastically, asking questions, communicating openly, reflecting on observations of practice, seeking feedback and sharing learning.

School Expectations and Behaviours

- Communicates clear professional expectations, expressed by the values of the Department, the school and the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching (APST). Sustains a focus on continuous school improvement and the wellbeing of staff and students.

- Establishes and sustains a cohesive school system of organisational processes (including induction) and team structures. Articulated cultural norms that include an active commitment to student and staff voice, and the flexibility to adapt to the needs of new teachers and students.

- School leaders establish transparent and flexible processes to match mentors and mentees according to specialist teaching areas/year levels, personalities, mentor experience and teaching context. Encourages linking mentoring to current organisational plans, processes and structures (e.g. Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), School Strategic Plan (SSP), Performance and Development Plan (PDP), Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)).

- Integrates support for formal mentoring into professional learning, linked to the school's AIP.

Evidence base

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