

Educative mentoring:
Exploring the articulation
and enactment of the
concept of educative
mentoring with mentors
and student teachers.

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with the requirements of Liverpool
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Doctor of Education.

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Contents

Contents.....	2
List of tables.....	7
List of figures.....	8
Glossary of terms and abbreviations.....	9
Abstract.....	10
Declaration.....	11
Dedication.....	12
Acknowledgments.....	12
Chapter One: Introduction	14
1. Rationale for the research.....	15
1.2 Professional context.....	17
1.3 Positionality.....	19
1.4 The nature of the research and research questions.....	23
Chapter Two: Literature Review	25
2.1 Introduction.....	25
2.2 Mentoring in schools.....	26
2.2.1 Introduction to mentors in schools.....	26
2.2.2 Is a definition possible?	27
2.2.3 The mentoring relationship.....	29
2.2.4 The role of mentors.....	31
2.2.5 The roles and responsibilities of other members of the school community for mentoring.....	33

2.2.6 Mentorability.....	35
2.2.7 Policy related to mentoring in schools.....	36
2.3 A spectrum of mentoring.....	40
2.3.1 Facilitative (stance) mentoring.....	41
2.3.2 Dialogic (stance) mentoring.....	42
2.3.3 Directive (stance) mentoring.....	43
2.4 Educative mentoring.....	45
2.4.1 Introduction.....	45
2.4.2 What constitutes educative mentoring?.....	46
2.4.3 What educative mentoring practices are seen in practice?.....	47
2.4.4 Where is the research exploring educative mentoring located?.....	48
2.4.5 What underpins educative mentoring?.....	49
2.4.6 What impacts the success or not of educative mentoring.....	52
Mentors.....	52
Student teachers.....	53
The school culture.....	53
2.4.7 How can educative mentoring be developed.....	55
2.4.8 Summary of educative mentoring.....	56
2.8 Summary of the literature review.....	57
Chapter Three: Methodology.....	58
3.1 Research design and methods employed.....	58
3.2 Selection of participants.....	59
3.3 Ethical considerations.....	63
3.4 Data collection.....	64

3.4.1. Method 1: The online semi structured interview.....	64
3.4.2. Method 2: Observation.....	66
Observation of the mentor meeting.....	68
Observation of a taught session.....	68
Observation of the lesson debrief.....	68
3.5 Data Analysis.....	69
3.5.1 Thematic Analysis (TA).....	70
3.5.2 Reflexivity.....	71
3.5.3 Why not other methods of data analysis?.....	72
3.5.4 Using Reflective thematic analysis.....	74
3.6 Summary.....	81
Chapter Four: Findings.....	82
4.1 Section One: Findings that were common across all participants.....	82
4.2 Section Two: The unique stories of how each mentor pair articulated and enacted educative mentoring.....	83
4.2.1 Mentor pair one: Catherine and Niamh.....	84
4.2.2 Mentor pair two: Kate and John.....	86
4.2.3 Mentor pair three: Maureen and Brenda.....	89
4.2.4 Mentor pair four: Angela and Mary.....	93
4.2.5 Mentor pair five: Agnes and Edwina.....	97
4.2.6 Mentor pair six: Gillian and Janet.....	100
4.2.7 Section two summary.....	105
4.3 Section Three: Findings related to the research questions.....	106
4.3.1 RQ1: What perceptions do mentors and student teachers have of mentoring and educative mentoring in particular?.....	106

4.3.2 RQ2: What educative mentoring practices are enacted during mentoring?.....	108
4.3.3 RQ3: What supports the mentor relationship to be conducive to educative mentoring?.....	109
4.3.4 Section Three summary	115
4.4 Summary of Findings.....	115
Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings.....	118
5.1 Introduction.....	118
5.2 Finding One.....	120
5.3 Finding Two.....	124
5.4 Finding Three.....	128
5.4.1 Belonging.....	131
5.4.2 Timing.....	134
5.4.3 Communication.....	138
5.5 Finding Four.....	145
5.5.1 Mentors experience of mentoring.....	145
5.5.2 Student teachers experience in the classroom.....	147
5.5.3 Mentor pairing and selection.....	150
5.5.4 Mentorability.....	154
5.6 Summary of discussion offindings.....	157
Chapter Six: Conclusions.....	159
6.1 Introduction.....	159
6.2 How the research questions were met.....	161
6.3 Contribution to existing literature.....	162
6.3.1 Theoretically.....	162

6.3.2 Methodically.....	163
6.4 Recommendations for future practice.....	164
6.5 Strengths of the study.....	166
6.6 Limitations of the study	167
6.7 Personal Professional Development.....	168
6.8 Recommendations for future research.....	169
6.9 Concluding statements.....	170
References	172
Appendices	193

List of tables

Table 1. Matching different approaches of mentoring to the National Standards for School Based Initial Teacher Training (ITT) mentors

Table 2. Examples of educative mentoring practices and their meaning

Table 3. Codes ascribed and potential theme generation

Table 4. How themes developed

Table 5. Colour codes used to highlight each theme

Table 6. Distribution of themes across the mentor pairs from the semi-structured interview data

Table 7. Mentor attributes that would be helpful to student teachers as cited by mentors and teachers

Table 8. Educative mentoring practices cited by mentors and student teachers

Table 9. Summary of the educative mentoring practices that were observed across mentor meetings or lesson debriefs

Table 10. How findings presented across chapter four have been consolidated into the four main findings

Table 11. The perceptions of mentoring expressed by mentors and student teachers that could be described as relational

Table 12. Summary of the teaching and mentoring experiences of mentors and the previous experiences of student teachers working with children

Table 13. Examples of mentor mind sets enacted by mentors in this present study

Table 14. A summary of how the findings match the research questions

List of figures

Figure 1. A continuum of learning conversations

Figure 2. Underpinning principles and characteristics of educative mentoring

Figure 3. An example of code generation

Figure 4. Initial theme generation after the first cycle of coding

Figure 5. The second cycle of coding

Figure 6. A suggestion as to a possible hierarchy to educative mentoring practices

Figure 7. How the relational aspects of the mentoring relationship contribute to the student teacher belonging to the school

Glossary of terms and abbreviations

CCF	Core Curriculum Framework
DA	Discourse Analysis
DfE	Department for Education
ECF	Early Career Framework
ECT	Early Career Teacher
GT	Grounded Theory
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
KMOFAP	Kent Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project
PAT	Personal Academic Tutor
PGCE	Post graduate Certificate in Education
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SAM	Student Academic Mentor
SCITT	School Centred Initial Teacher Training
SENDCo	Special Education Needs and Disability Coordinator
ST	Student Teacher
RTA	Reflective Thematic Analysis
TA	Thematic Analysis

Abstract

Effective mentoring is an essential cornerstone when supporting the progress and development of teachers right from the start of their careers. Despite an abundance of initiatives intended to support this, concern remains over teacher recruitment and retention. This case study explored six mentor pairs' (school mentor and student teacher) articulation and enactment of 'educative mentoring'. This is where the mentor and student teacher operate within a constructivist-oriented model of mentoring, developing a partnership where the mentor and student teacher engage in a joint enquiry into the pedagogy of what is going on in the classroom; practices such as co-planning, looking at children's work and encouraging the student teacher and mentor to justify their practice are employed. Three research questions were set:

1. What perceptions do mentors and student teachers have of mentoring and educative mentoring in particular?
2. What educative mentoring practices are enacted by mentors and student teachers during the mentoring relationship?
3. What supports the mentor relationship to be conducive to educative mentoring?

Data were collected by online semi structured interviews with each mentor and student teacher. This was then followed by, for each mentor pair, the observation of a mentor meeting, a lesson delivered by the student teacher and the lesson debrief. The data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2022) Reflexive Thematic Analysis. From this analysis the following four findings were discussed further:

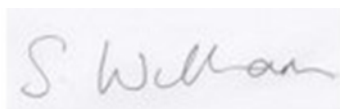
1. None of the participants recognised the term educative mentoring but when educative mentoring was explained to them, all the participants could give examples from practice of educative mentoring practices.
2. Educative mentoring practices that could be articulated by the participants during their interview, were observed in practice (mentor meeting or lesson debrief) as well as practices that had not been articulated.
3. The relational aspects of mentoring, dominated both the mentors' and student teachers' perceptions of mentoring but this element of mentoring appeared to be more important to student teachers than their mentors.
4. The characteristics and experiences of the mentor pairs and 'mentorability' of the student teacher, did appear to influence the enactment of educative mentoring practices.

The findings suggest that educative mentoring is one way mentoring can be strengthened by the establishment of collaborative reciprocity between the mentor and student teacher. The following facilitate this: adopting the student teacher into the school community, mentors that can justify their pedagogy and develop a pedagogical relationship with the student teacher and develop a bi-focal lens. A future longitudinal study working with mentors as they develop these and their enactment of educative mentoring is recommended.

Declaration

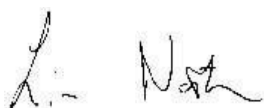
This thesis is all my own work and no part of it has been previously submitted in support of an award of a degree from this or any other university.

The content of the thesis is legally allowable under copyright legislation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "S. Williams", on a light-colored background.

Susan Williams

Countersigned

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lin Norton", on a light-colored background.

Professor Emerita Lin Norton (DOS)

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to four people who would have loved to see this thesis from its final submission, through the viva examination and finally to the conferral of the Doctorate.

Firstly, my beloved father, Desmond Byrne (1937-2024) whose love of learning and intellectual curiosity inspired me from an early age to study and who kept learning until a few weeks before his death.

Next, my much loved in laws Raymond Williams (1930-2025) and Ann Williams (1940-2025), who were married for 65 years and death could only part them for four months, who were great supporters and encouragers of my studies.

Finally, Professor Emerita Lin Norton my supervisor whose sudden and unexpected death prior to the viva examination will be forever remembered for her keen mind, astute observations, compassion, and wit!

I take solace in all their examples and precious encouragement.

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Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisors Professor Emerita Lin Norton and Dr Elizabeth Parr, for their insight, academic challenge, wisdom, and reassurance. You have kept me focussed on seeing this doctorate through to completion, encouraging me of its value throughout, giving me the confidence to keep going and believing in me! In addition, your empathy and support delivered so professionally has meant more than either of you will ever know, particularly through these past six months. Grateful thanks are also due to Professor Phil Bamber in his capacity initially as academic supervisor. This role expanded following the unexpected death of Professor Emerita Lin Norton, when you became primary supervisor for the preparation of the viva examination. Your sensitivity and outstanding support will be forever remembered.

It would be remiss of me not to mention two other members of the EdD team, Dr Babs Anderton; who introduced me to the complexities of emotional labour

and its impact on the teaching profession and Professor John Shortt; with whom I enjoyed many philosophical conversations the most notable being on the link between 'flow' and 'joy', he was such an encouragement. Their deaths have left a huge gap but their legacies live on, may they rest in peace.

I will be forever grateful to the Headteachers, mentors and student teachers who are at the heart of this thesis, that you were prepared to engage with my research whilst you were still navigating the realities of 'school' and Covid-19, will never cease to amaze me – but I am glad you did! Your willingness and openness at every stage of the research was humbling and the contents of this thesis are only a fraction of what I learned from you. Your school communities and the children in your care are lucky to have you!

To my mum Maureen and my sisters Angela and Catherine, thank you for your love, support, and encouragement. You have all inspired me in different ways to keep going, when completion seemed at times to be an impossible dream. We have been 'through the mill' as a family recently but we are coming through it and have shown that together we can remain standing!

To my husband John, my greatest cheerleader, thank you for your endless love, support, and encouragement, I really could not have done this without you!

And finally, I could not have completed this doctorate in my own strength, so 'Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.' Ephesians 3:20-21.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The beginning of any career is a very precarious place to be and none more so than that of teaching (Harmsen et al, 2018). Right from the start of that journey during Initial Teacher Education (ITE), it is possible to be placed in schools where colleagues have the time, skill, expertise, and inclination to offer a bespoke supportive system of mentoring and coaching that permeates through that school to impact the whole school community. Grounded in this culture, teachers at whatever stage of their career, flourish, positively influencing the culture of the school and the learning of the children (Johnson et al, 2015). However, that is not the experience of all student teachers, Early Career Teachers or experienced teachers (Hutchinson and Spalding, 2019). The effect of these inconsistencies on the mental health, wellbeing and of recruitment and retention of teachers is a concern. What happens right from when a person enters the teaching profession, can determine how long someone stays in the profession and how fulfilling the job is to them (Ingersoll and Strong, 2011). It is therefore the responsibility of every member of a school community to play their part, so that new teachers go through effective mentoring (Milton et al, 2022).

Effective mentoring is therefore an essential cornerstone when supporting the progress and development of teachers right from the start of their careers. Despite an abundance of initiatives intended to support this, concern remains over teacher recruitment and retention. Educative mentoring, a detailed explanation of which will follow, could be seen as just another such initiative. Educative mentoring is considered to be an approach to mentoring that would not only support student teachers at the start of their teaching career but give them a sense of belonging as their mentors work with them in a collaborative way that encourages true 'joint working' where both parties contribute and benefit. It is thought that it has the potential to contribute to the retention of teachers to the profession.

The aim of this research is to explore the articulation and enactment of the concept of educative mentoring with mentors and student teachers within the context of preparing for the implementation of the Early Career Framework (ECF).

Terminology

The term student teacher will be used throughout this study as opposed to trainee teacher. Initial Teacher Education (ITE) will be used rather than Initial Teacher Training (ITT). Trainees and ITT are terms used in government documentation but does not reflect the educative aspect of mentoring that is about acquiring knowledge as well as making progress (Evans, 2019). This has implications for the mentor, and the associated understanding regarding whether they are ‘teacher trainers’ or ‘teacher educators’ each necessitating distinctive remits and amounts of obligation (Willy, 2022). A linear approach to any form of teacher preparation is suggested when the word ‘training’ is used, Lofthouse contests this approach arguing that teacher preparation ‘cannot be boiled down to instruction, modelling, target setting and monitoring’ (2018, p.256) but is an educative process; it is about learning as well as development (Evans, 2019). It is this relational understanding of ‘*ITEducation*’ (Willy, 2022, p.19) rather than the more functional ‘training’ that is the focus of this research. A basic definition of mentoring would also seem appropriate at this point, such as the following dictionary definition ‘a person with experience in a job who supports and advises someone with less experience to help them develop in their work’ (Cambridge, 2025). How the teacher mentor ‘supports’ ‘advises’ and ‘helps’ the less-experienced ‘develop in their work’ is complex and will be discussed further in chapter two. Educative mentoring is also multifaceted and again this will be more fully discussed in chapter two.

1.1 Rationale for the research

Mentoring has become increasingly important since the publication of the government’s White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching* in 2010 (DfE, 2010) and the persistent government proposals to move ITE into schools. The launch of the Core Content Framework in 2019 which outlined ‘the minimum entitlement of all trainee teachers’ (DfE, 2019a, p.3), and the introduction of

the ECF in September 2021 which set out ‘what early career teachers should be entitled to learn about and how to do this’ (DfE, 2019b, p.5), happened with the backdrop of potential confusion regarding the different routes into teaching, these include, the presence of Teaching Schools. These schools were deemed to have the best teachers as outlined in the White Paper, ‘The Importance of Teaching’ (DfE, 2010) and work in partnership with other schools through developing their networks and School-Centred Initial Teacher training (SCITT). The Carter Review (DfE, 2015) was commissioned to assess ITE’s quality and effectiveness in an attempt to address any confusion about ITE. It is only then that the ‘importance of the role of mentors required greater recognition with their increased responsibilities, along with the need for more consistent support for them’ (Willy, 2022, p, 29). Formal mentoring standards were published, the ‘National Standards for school-based (ITT) mentors’ (DfE, 2016), but as these were non-statutory, it would appear that they had limited impact (Murtagh and Dawes, 2020).

The Department for Education’s (DfE) latest accreditation guidance came into effect in September 2024. Included were additional instructions concerning mentoring requirements that needed to be incorporated in ITE programmes. But then only a couple of months after this guidance came into effect, important changes were published. The significant change was the removal of the only recently-introduced prerequisite for all mentors to complete 20-hours of mentor training so that they could support student teachers. There are arguments both in support and against this decision, however as Caudwell writes, ‘perhaps there is now an opportunity to return our attention to where it should have been all along: how do we help and support our mentors to be brilliant at working alongside our trainees and student teachers?’ (2025, n.p.)

This cements my belief that underpins the rationale for this research that the support of mentors to be the best they can be ‘working alongside student teachers’ is not only a worthwhile but vital endeavour. It is as relevant today in 2025 as it was when data were gathered for this research.

1.2 Professional context

I have always relished collaboration with colleagues and have been fortunate enough to do this throughout my career as opportunities arose, whether this be formally or through research. Formal collaboration was expected and facilitated by the school I taught at in the early 1990s where all teachers worked in cross curricular teams and cooperative learning practices were the agreed pedagogy. This 'consistency between student and teacher cooperation' is essential according to Hargreaves and O' Connor (2018, p.60) and was a real strength of that school. This also fitted with my preference for teaching with the 'door open', something I introduced when I became Head of Science some years later, so that there was a culture of being critical friends. This open-door policy meant that good practice was shared informally and staff could be supportive during practical lessons, for example, if they were passing a laboratory and saw students behaving in an unsafe way, they could walk in and have a quiet word and resolve the issue, without undermining their colleague, as staff entering a laboratory when not teaching a class, was normal practice.

In 1998 I was selected to work with Kings College London on their Kent, Medway, Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project (KMOFAP) due to my being a science teacher that was 'willing to take on the risks and extra work involved' (Black et al, 2004, p.10). I collaborated with the research team and my peers as well as with the students who I piloted the formative practices with. More recently, I collaborated with my own undergraduate students, during the pilot study phase of my doctoral studies to develop the peer-critique processes that are accepted protocols within their degree programme.

It could be said that mentoring has been an evolving thread throughout my career; from mentoring GCSE borderline students, a Romanian languages support teacher (as part of my role as European Dimensions Coordinator), and coordinating Student Academic Mentors (SAMs) on the undergraduate degree programme I was course leader of (Pye, Williams, Dunne, 2016). I was also involved in mentoring student teachers for various providers and also early career secondary science teachers.

As a course leader, for an education-based degree in a Post-92 University, for nearly 10 years, my involvement with ITE was limited to teaching undergraduates who intend to complete teacher training through a post-graduate route and to my role as a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) to Primary Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) students and as a Visiting Tutor to Secondary Science undergraduate and PGCE students. However, through my leadership of Work Based Learning on the undergraduate degree programme, I have had direct contact with schools. I have worked with many school mentors and have had first-hand experience of witnessing how important this role is and how the quality of mentoring can result in a student being successful and entering the profession or making the decision not to do this.

As a result of the above professional background, I am very aware of the political and economic influences on education over the past thirty years as I have lived through them (Hulme and Sangster, 2013). I desire that our new teachers are supported to be able to meet all the demands placed on them and the needs of all the children in their care. They need to be confident in the theoretical underpinning of their pedagogy so that they can raise questions about policy that shapes the curriculum, expected standards, and any subsequent testing regime, to be risk takers and reflective practitioners (Campbell, 2013). I believe that this can be done effectively through practitioner research that 'introduces or reacquaints teachers with the importance of who they are as professionals, returning to teachers their voices as thinkers, curriculum creators, data analysts, and generators of knowledge about teaching' (ibid, p.2). The work of Mincu (2015) extends this by proposing that 'research-driven' knowledge is crucial to ensuring learning processes and whole school improvement thrive.

It is recognised that teachers are adults and, as such, need to be able to manage the pressure of their personal and professional lives. I consider effective mentoring to be the cornerstone of a mindset of self-efficacy in teachers that can mature throughout their careers. Collaboration is essential for this as Clement (2017) advocates, an open door and the cultivation of

professional relationships will reduce stress, which as discussed earlier can be detrimental to their wellbeing resulting in teachers leaving the profession.

The above outlines how my professional experience and involvement in practitioner research is a strong foundation with which to collaboratively work with mentors and student teachers as they prepare for the introduction of the ECF in September 2021 within an environment of what seems like constant change (which will be outlined below). I believe this experience equips me to carry out this particular research project on educative mentoring.

1.3. Positionality

Significant national and international deliberations have been had (Carr, 2000; Tooley, 2000; Pring 2004; Biesta, 2015), concerning the authenticity of educational research. This outcome has attempted to show that educational research is indeed reliable and stands up to scrutiny from politicians, policymakers and teachers who have the expectation that it meets the needs and addresses the difficulties encountered in education (Pring, 2004). However, critics suggest it uses 'technical, abstract and obscure language' and is perceived as being 'out of tune' with those closely involved with education (ibid, p.4).

The connections between the major educational research paradigms of choice, such as scientific, interpretive, and critical, and their ontology and epistemology, and how this influences the chosen methodology and methods also needs to be explored, so that the underlying assumptions that underpins them can be understood (Scotland, 2012). This is because, each distinctive paradigm has profoundly different ontological and epistemological views, derived from opposing philosophical assumptions of reality and knowledge. This makes it essential that their role in the choice and justification of a particular research approach, methodology and methods ought to be substantiated (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995; Scotland, 2012).

However, Saari (2016) conveys a noteworthy disquiet with scientific or positivist educational research, and suggests it is deficient in any social, historical and ethical context, not giving any credit or weight to the 'unique and

predictable social and cultural characteristics of human existence... and produces seemingly value free knowledge' (p. 590). This suggests an opinion that knowledge is not value free despite the claim by positivists that it is. In fact, Wellington, would go as far as to say that the objectivity within the positivists' 'methods, processes and codes of conduct at best are unclear and at worst lack the objectivity, certainty, logicity and predictability which are falsely ascribed to them' (2001, p.96).

However, the qualitative paradigm is not without criticism such as those described by Atkinson and Wallace as being,

‘...too subjective or too much based on feelings and personal responses. Feelings and personal responses are not accepted by such critics as being reliable data in the same sense that numbers or percentages or anything else measurable in figures are.’
(2012, p.20)

However, it is important that just because qualitative research is not conducted in laboratories, with control groups and associated measurements that we do not apologise for endorsing this paradigm but ensure that the qualities suggested by Lincoln and Guba of being ‘systematic, credible, verifiable, justifiable, useful, valuable and trustworthy’ (1985, p.27) instead are implemented.

Where research is concerned with dealings amongst and between human beings, it is very hard to eradicate values completely from influencing the conclusions. This would therefore make it problematic when making unequivocal claims about causative relationships to make clear the assumptions the researchers have made in relation to knowledge, truth, and values in each particular context of the educational research (Hammersley, 1997). There needs also to be an awareness of the strengths and limitations of any aspect of research and a ‘sensitivity of the role of the researcher as an interpretive being in the process of constructing knowledge and how all of this leads to particular kinds of understandings of the world’ (Swain, 2017, p.55), as well as the appraisal of the positionality of the researcher and the reader of the research (Pring, 2004).

Positionality relates to the recognition that a researcher's identity impacts on the research process (Hoskins, 2015). Deriving from the interpretive customs and practices of anthropology (Geertz, 1988), positionality is employed to mitigate bias (Milner, 2007). As Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) suggest it relies on disclosures of position that are enacted in the decision-making processes of social research. Tufford and Newman (2012) add to this debate by expressing that in their view, positionality in practice is achieved not only by an open and honest disclosure of one's biographical alignment, but also by subsequent self-reflection to ensure it is considered in the research design onwards. Banks also contends that, 'the biographical journeys of researchers greatly influence their values, their research questions, and the knowledge they construct' (1998, p4). Bearing this in mind, it is important that I declare my positionality from the outset.

I am a white British Christian woman who would be considered middle class based on profession. I am from a working class (skilled) background. I attended a grammar school, after passing the 11-plus, which was employed by my Local Education Committee to allocate secondary education places. I was the first in my family to attend Higher Education, studying Applied Biology in a Polytechnic, where my views on valid research were very much in the positivist quantitative paradigm. I trained to teach at a 'teacher training college' and worked for the next 20 years teaching science in 4 very different comprehensive schools (one faith and three state schools). I completed my Master's degree at a prestigious university, alongside working full time and it was then I was challenged to consider the merits of qualitative research as a valid and rigorous paradigm, something I initially struggled with. For the past 10 years, I have worked in various academic roles in the Faculty of Education in a Post -92 university and have been involved in some small-scale research projects and have written for publication all within the qualitative paradigm.

The above positionality has meant that I am aware of the status difference between sectors of UK Higher Education and the difference in status amongst academic fields and areas of study. I am aware from the work of Maher and Tetreault that my positionality and identity could be considered 'markers of

relational positions rather than essential qualities' (1993, p.188) and as such need to be accounted for when working with participants at every stage of the research and subsequent data analysis. The need to consider positionality is based on the assumption that social, cultural, and political subtleties exist between a researcher and participants (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). These subtleties are based on such influences as education, class, race, ethnicity, gender, and disability (Mickelson, 2003). Indeed Milner (2007) goes further suggesting that when researching in the field of education, disclosures of position can reduce bias flowing into either the research or teaching domains.

It is also necessary, in line with declaring my biographical positioning, that I declare my philosophical positioning. I take a non-positivist stance, and an interpretative paradigm, where I am not an objective outsider. These manifest themselves in my taking into account my own 'understandings and beliefs alongside those of the participants' (Lofthouse, 2019, p.37). Whilst I am not an insider in any of the settings where my research will take place, I would consider myself to be a 'researching professional' rather than a 'professional researcher' (Wellington and Sikes, 2006, p.725), but the settings and some of their personnel are known to me in a professional capacity. It is therefore important that I am able to step back 'in order to be able to take a clear and an unbiased non-partisan approach' (Sikes and Potts, 2008, p.7), recognising the associated challenges of my position as not an 'objective outsider' can be 'significant and complicated' (Atkinson and Wallace, 2012, p.54) and should not be underestimated.

1.4 The nature of the research and research questions

According to Swain, research questions will 'act as a frame of reference and set an agenda for your enquiry' (2017, p.35). He also suggests that it is important to keep looking back to the research questions throughout the whole process of the research, to ensure that a researcher does not go off at a tangent and lose focus (ibid; Punch and Onacea, 2014)

Aim of study

The aim of this research is to explore the articulation and enactment of the concept of educative mentoring with mentors and student teachers within the context of preparing for the implementation of the Early Career Framework. Educative mentoring was considered to be an approach to mentoring that would not only support student teachers at the start of their teaching career but give them a sense of belonging as their mentors work with them in a collaborative way that encourages true 'joint working' where both parties contribute and benefit. It was thought that it had the potential to contribute to the retention of teachers to the profession.

There are three research questions that would frame this exploration of educative mentoring with mentors and student teachers.

RQ1: What perceptions do mentors and student teachers have of mentoring and educative mentoring in particular?

RQ2: What educative mentoring practices are enacted during the mentoring relationship?

RQ3: What supports the mentor relationship to be conducive to educative mentoring?

The perceptions of mentors and student teachers of mentoring and educative mentoring, referred to in RQ1, was important as it crucially gave an opportunity to collect data that would form the base line of the research. It allowed a comparison to be made as to what mentors and STs perceived about mentoring and compare it to what was seen in their practice. I was interested in the perceptions of mentors and STs as opposed to other members of the

school community involved in mentoring such as say Headteacher or the training provider link tutor, as I was interested in the mentors and STs perceptions based on their lived experience day in day out. I intended the research to give a voice to those who must make sense of and enact government, training provider and school policy.

It is also important at this stage to begin to clarify my understanding of educative mentoring as opposed to traditional mentoring. According to Wexler there is 'scant research on how working with a mentor (who is providing support in enacting educative practices) during student teaching' (2020a, p.214) impacts the development of the autonomous construction of decisions related to lesson design and delivery of the student teacher that considers student teacher learning (Pylman, 2016).

Practically speaking, the work of Feiman-Nemser and Beasley (1997), Schwille (2008), and Pylman (2016), outline how in educative mentoring co-planning, the mentor unequivocally, makes their judgements and choices explicit, remaining focused on pupil requirements and aims and objectives for learning. Juxtapose this with traditional co-planning, the mentor may share how they organise their planning and critique the plans of their mentees (Schwille, 2008). As this concept is at the heart of this research there will be in depth discussion of this in the literature review that now follows in chapter two.

Chapter Two: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a thorough overview of the literature associated with mentoring and educative mentoring in education, particularly in schools. In this review the literature will focus on mentors in schools and where appropriate, Student Teachers (STs) and Early Career Teachers (ECTs), as both groups are just starting out on their new careers and there is overlap in their needs and response to mentoring. Each new cohort of STs and ECTs bring different life experiences and aspirations to their work, but all need specific and continuous guidance and support as they embark upon the challenge of learning to teach in a particular school context (Norman and Feiman-Nemser, 2005) to meet the learning needs of the pupils in their care.

Wiese, Hatlevik and Daza (2024) clearly state that schools and mentors play a fundamental role in providing STs with learning opportunities and mentoring that support the development of the multifaceted proficiencies involved in teaching in more and more diverse classrooms and in assisting them to understand the comprehensive features of their role as teachers. The importance of schools as ‘multi-generational communities, the role of teaching ‘elders’, in passing on the tacit knowledge that underpins the profession’ (Lofthouse, 2021, p.iii) supports this but opens up the discussion related to what is fundamental to the profession, and who decides what this tacit knowledge is.

This literature review will attempt to address these and other points. In order to understand educative mentoring and how this might look in the classroom, it is important to engage with some of the ideas around what comprises mentoring and the role of mentoring in the formation of new teachers. There are three distinct sections to this chapter:

- mentoring in schools and some theories associated with it
- a spectrum of mentoring practices
- educative mentoring and its place within this spectrum

2.2 Mentoring in schools

2.2.1 Introduction to mentoring in schools

Before discussing mentoring in general, some of the theoretical underpinnings of mentoring approaches will be explored. Burger suggests that ‘although transmission-oriented mentoring practices, rooted in a behaviourist learning theory, seem largely ineffective in supporting beginning teachers’ (2024, p.107) there does seem to be advantages ‘associated with a mentoring practice oriented toward constructivist principles of learning’ (ibid;), a viewpoint also held by others such as, Linninger, (2016); Richter et al., (2013). Lofthouse would agree with this as she has stated that she and her co-researchers champion ‘coaching practices that are transformative, enabling teachers to gain confidence as they develop practices, so that they can make unique and vital contributions to the profession’ (2022, n.p.). It is important to note that the approach to coaching and mentoring needs to be employed as intended by the designers, that is that those that initially ‘coined’ the phrases, and had in mind particular pedagogy and practices that rendered their approach as distinct from others. White and Mackintosh (2022, p.3) referred to this when comparing instructional coaching as designed by Knight (Knight 2018) in the USA and introduced by Knight and van Nieuwerburgh (2012) where ‘the mentor and ST work as a partnership’ similar to the ‘joint work ST and mentor engage in during educative mentoring’.

In addition, an important consideration is the conceptualisation of schools ‘as complex, multidimensional ecologies that are constituted by the relations that exist between school leaders, teachers, mentors and all members of the school community’ (Daly, Milton and Langdon, 2022, p.192), and the role each plays in mentoring. This will be discussed further in section 2.2.5. In this next section possible definitions of mentoring will be discussed.

2.2.2 Is a definition possible?

Mentoring, whether it occurs formally or informally, is commonly practiced to assist STs and ECTs to situate themselves within the school community and the requirements of this stage of their teaching career. However, there are different understandings about what mentoring is. Colley claims that mentoring is 'a practice which is ill defined, poorly conceptualized and weakly theorized' (2003, p.13).

Many researchers concur that a generic definition of mentoring does not exist and studies about mentoring are situated in specific individual settings (Fox et al, 2010; Leidenfrost et al, 2011). Others suggest that where definitions do exist they are equally varied (Terrion and Leonard, 2007; Darwin and Palmer, 2009) with Jacobi claiming that any definitions of mentoring only have in common a 'sincere desire to help students succeed' (1991, p. 505). This rather cynical view is disputed by Loots who suggests that the fact there is no 'meta-paradigm' (2009, p.214) into which mentoring fits and the fact such diversity of mentoring endeavours exist should be celebrated. Kemmis et al., contribute to this debate and state that mentoring is a 'contested practice' (2014a, p. 155), understood and enacted in different ways expounding this further to say that mentoring is 'a form of socially established cooperative human activity' (2014a, p. 154).

Since there are a variety of definitions surrounding mentoring, it is vital that any inconsistencies that do exist because of this are tackled, such as those related to the understanding of the role not just among mentor understandings, but also among STs and ECTs (Curtis et al., 2024).

For example, Malderez clearly articulates their definition of mentoring as being 'the support given by one teacher for the wellbeing and learning of another and for his or her integration into the cultures of the school and wider profession' (2024, p.7). If this was shared with an ST or ECT working alongside the mentor all would be clear about the purpose and limits of this mentoring, or at least a conversation surrounding these issues could be had.

It is also important to consider what underpins a particular definition of mentoring. Kemmis et al. (2014) worked with ECTs, but extrapolating this work it could be said that mentoring STs can be studied in terms of the theory of practice architectures. This theory

‘...offers insights into the cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political conditions that shape practices, throwing light on contemporary educational issues and suggesting ways forward for site-based education development.’ (Kemmis, et al., 2014, p154).

They go on to define a practice, in addition to that mentioned earlier, as a ‘socially established cooperative human activity’... which encompass ‘sayings, doings and relating’s’ (ibid). The implication is made that the specific practice of mentoring in any given school is shaped by the practice architectures that exist there, in the locality or the wider country. Schatzki (2003), concurs with this notion that practice architectures ‘prefigure’ but do not fully determine mentoring practices, but does recognise the complexity of mentoring.

The practice architectures that facilitate and restrict practices in general exist in three dimensions ‘of intersubjective space, that is the space in which human beings encounter one another’ (Kemmis et al., 2014a, p.156). When related to mentoring specifically these are:

Semantic space. The language used indicates what the speaker understands about mentoring. For example, the different labels given to STs, such as teacher trainees, trainees, preservice teachers, novice teachers or associate teachers reveal something about how STs are worked with and viewed in a particular setting, particularly when viewed in the previously mentioned ‘supervisory, supportive or collaborative’ ways.

Physical space-time. This is where the mentoring activity that takes place is dependent upon where the mentoring takes place. For example, in the mentor’s office, a quiet area in the staff room, a quiet area of the classroom, in a meeting room or away from the school in a café.

Social space. This is the ‘space constituted in the medium of power and solidarity’ (Kemmis et al., 2014a, p.156) For example, is the mentor the ST or

ECTs class teacher or a senior leader that does not interact with the ST or ECT daily. Maybe there are STs and ECTs in the same school, do they have opportunities to meet as 'co-mentors and 'co-mentees' (ibid) and work through issues they are encountering in their particular setting?

The above discussion does recognise some of the complexities and nuances that underlie mentoring. This next section looks at the mentoring relationship that occurs between the mentor and ST or ECT.

2.2.3 The mentoring relationship

The mentoring relationship can be at times a particularly solitary practice and as such potentially vulnerable to differences in opinions, values and beliefs between mentors and STs or ECTs (Burns, Jacobs and Yendel-Hoppey, 2016; Ulvik, Helleve and Smith, 2018). The role of the mentor can be seen as 'supervision, support and collaboration' (Kemmis et al, 2014a, p156). A 'supervisory' approach is where the mentor assists the ST or ECT to meet the requirements of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Hudson and Hudson (2018) identify this as being hierarchical (this can also be referred to as traditional or formal mentoring) and relying on the transmission of knowledge from the expert (mentor) to the ST or ECT and follows a set plan and can be regarded as a 'copy me' or do it 'my way' approach. 'Supportive' mentors although still operating in a unidirectional and hierarchical way are not as prescriptive as supervisory mentors and would respond in a personalised way to their ST or ECT. Finally, a 'collaborative' approach involves a two-way process of learning in which both mentor, ST or ECT learn, often within a wider community of practice and learning. The impact of such mentoring, where theory underpins practice is thought to be more long lasting for all parties (Peiser et al., 2018). Langdon describe this as 'a nuanced dance in which mentors and mentees are both learners' (2017, p. 541).

One must not be fooled by any simplification that the word 'collaboration' may suggest, regarding two people working together. As Hargreaves and O'Connor (2018), explain that the culture within a particular country does impact how collaboration takes place. This concept can be further developed to collaboration within schools in one country varying across age phases, subject

groups, job roles, and interest groups. They also found that, what they call 'professional collaboration' changes as the experience of the teachers increases, leading to collaboration becoming embedded in their everyday practice. An interesting point they made was that a key factor of effective collaboration is a 'peculiar combination of pride and humility' (Hargreaves and O'Connor, 2018, p. xv). Suggesting that having false humility as opposed to pride (recognising one's expertise and communicating it to others), does withhold 'precious insights from colleagues and all children they serve' (ibid)

In addition to being at times a solitary role the professional relationship between mentors and STs can also be a complex one (Burns, Jacobs and Yendol-Hoppey, 2016). This is often the result of the 'roles that each inhabit and the expectations these roles can engender' (Knight, 2023, p.58). For example, tensions may arise and advice misinterpreted when the mentor is helping or making suggestions if the ST or ECT perceives the mentor as an assessor, or gatekeeper making judgements, as opposed to a critical friend or the mentor working in a collaborative way.

The work of Mullen and Klimaitis (2021) found that mentors were not aware of the power relationship that the gatekeeper role engendered as they accepted this aspect of the role as 'part of the 'expert' ensemble of responsibilities' (p.1341) of a mentor. This lack of awareness of the power and influence at play with ECT's was extended to school leaders in the work of Engvik & Emstad (2017). It would therefore suggest that this lack of awareness of the power dynamic and imbalance could lead to tensions arising between the mentor and the ST or ECT in relation to building trust within an open and authentic relationship. This in turn could lead to the ST or ECT becoming anxious as they navigate the aspects of the relationship related to the mentor being a gatekeeper as opposed to collaborator and critical friend. Having an awareness of these complex aspects of the mentoring role would be beneficial to the mentor and ST or ECT relationship.

Within the mentor relationship there is a desirable potential aspect of the relationship, described as a pedagogical relationship. This can be described as 'the composite interactions of interpersonal relationships and the

relationships of the individuals with the subject matter of the class' (Girard, 2010, p.3). As mentees develop pedagogical relationships with their mentors, Ginwright, Cammarota, and Noguera (2005) suggest, they can relate more to the curriculum and what they are asked to engage with in the classroom. They argue it is the mentor's pedagogical choice to promote free and non-judgemental communication with their mentees building a learning environment where mentees feel they are recognised as individuals, where they are, and can contribute to the learning environment and curriculum. This is something very evident in educative mentoring and will be discussed further on in the chapter.

It can seem quite mysterious as to how such pedagogical relationships are initiated, developed and are maintained and what is more what mentees think of them (Grossman and McDonald, 2008). Girard mentions that there is very little empirical research literature on 'how teachers establish pedagogical relationships with students and how they use these relationships to engage students in learning' suggesting that 'any framework of teaching practice should encompass these relational aspects of practice and identify the components of building and maintaining productive relationships with students' (2010, p.4–5). Applying these above ideas, it could be suggested that pedagogical relationships are essential components of a successful mentoring relationship. This next section will begin to unravel the complex roles of mentors.

2.2.4 Roles of mentors

It will not come as a surprise at this point that given that a definition of mentoring in schools is difficult to articulate once and for all, and that the relationship between the mentors and STs is a complex one, the roles and responsibilities of mentors vary from setting to setting. Although, some of these roles are policy driven how these are enacted are most affected by the school culture and the demands of the ITE partnership or accreditor, and the personalities, experiences and engagement of mentors should not be overlooked.

A traditional (or formal) form of mentoring can be described as 'Top down' (Knight, 2023, n.p.), where less experienced mentees gain from the more experienced mentors' wisdom, knowledge and experience (Fritzberg and Alemayehu, 2004; Mullen and Klimaitis, 2019 and Trevethan, 2017) Associated with an emphasis on assessing and making judgements as gatekeepers to the profession (Stanilus, 1995; McIntyre and Byrd, 1998 Murtagh and Dawes. 2020), there can often be an overreliance on rubrics and the accompanying 'tick box' exercises.

It is therefore paramount, that the language used to describe mentoring is unambiguous and there is clarity between the mentor and mentee as to not only what roles the mentor is going to play but also what a mentor does and does not do. Observing a mentor from afar would reveal that the mentor is involved in a lot of conversations with the mentee, who is doing the most talking though this will be dependent on several factors such as the purpose of the conversation and the type of mentoring. What is being talked about (for example, pedagogy, advice on teaching material, tricky questions, assessments of teaching, logistics, pupil learning or emotional support) will vary as well but what is common across all these purposes and types of mentoring is that they require time and resourcing (Malderaz,2024; Milton et al, 2022; Daly et al, 2021; Asporfs and Franson, 2015).

Earlier in this section, some of the more difficult realities of mentoring have been touched upon, for example what happens if the mentor is 'set in their ways' and how do we ascertain if this is so? The work of Millwater and Yarrow (1997) in investigating the mentoring mindsets (of those they refer to as being in mentor/associate teacher partnerships from which professional development results), refer to a mentoring mindset as being 'the holistic structure of attitudes, values and beliefs about teaching and learning through which professional knowledge is filtered and from which action/practice issues' (p.15). They do acknowledge that this may be a different view of mindset as considered by such as Glaser (1984), who favoured the concept that professional knowledge is constituted by cognitive processes alone. The very accessible work of Dwek (2006; 2017) on growth mindset can be applied to the mindset of the ST's and how their mentors work with them. Her work aligns

with Millwater and Yarrow's (1997) work on mentoring mindsets, in that being aware of how mindset can support the fulfilling of potential. However, she is keen to point out that there are limitations to applying the concept of a growth mindset and where and why growth mindset interventions are not always successful (Yeager and Dweck, 2020).

The research substantiating whether growth mindset interventions dedicated to teachers, work or not are only starting to appear in the literature and so far reportedly suggest they have not worked (Foliano et al, 2019; Rienzo, Rolfe and Wilkinson, 2015), despite their careful construction. Yeager and Dweck (2020) in their work with teachers and school pupils, as opposed to ST's (although this could be extrapolated to include ST's), do suggest that the way forward with this is to consider the following

'(a) precisely how to address teachers' mindsets about themselves and their students, (b) which teacher practices feed into and maintain students' fixed and growth mindsets, (c) how to guide and alter the teachers' practices, and (d) how to do so in a way that affects students' perceptions and behaviours and that enhances students' outcomes'. (p.1281)

In addition to this, there is also the very real situation that occurs with STs when they are still focusing on competence and performance and educative mentoring may not be the most appropriate approach, no matter how much the mentor believes it to be so. This next section expands on these difficult realities by exploring the notion of 'mentorability'

2.2.5 The roles and responsibilities of other members of the school community for mentoring.

Within the 'complex, multidimensional ecologies' (Daly, Milton and Langdon, 2022, p.192), that exist within schools, the following people have roles and responsibilities associated with the mentoring process; Programme Providers, Link Tutors between the Programme Provider and schools, Headteachers, Mentors and STs. Each will now be discussed separately

- Programme providers: depending on the arrangement for training with the school the provider may have minimum input to the mentoring of the ST apart from liaising with the mentor regarding the final assessment and involvement in quality assurance of the training. However, they more often than not in order to quality assure the training in schools the provider will stipulate very specific bespoke training for mentors and regulate the mentoring activities and when they occur during the school experience.
- Link tutors: their role within mentoring is to work with the mentor in partnership with the school and programme provider. They, with the mentor will have ultimate responsibility for the final assessment of the ST. They endeavour to form positive supportive relationships with the mentor ST and school. It is desirable if the mentor, ST and school feel that they can approach the Link tutor for advice and support.
- Headteachers: their role is to allocate mentors to STs in accordance with the requirements set by the Programme provider. They have responsibility to ensure that the ST receives the appropriate support and training expected by the Training Provider. They should ringfence time for the mentor to work with the ST and also facilitate the mentor attending training themselves to develop their mentoring skills.
- Mentors: they may have volunteered for the role of mentor or had the role bestowed upon them by the Headteachers. They have numerous, often dichotomous interactions within their multifaceted school environments alongside maintaining their relationship with their Training Provider, Link tutor and ST (Murray et al., 2017; Vanassche et al, 2019). They have the responsibility of being a gatekeeper to the teaching profession and ultimately assess the ST against government standards (Stanilis, 1995; McIntyre and Byrd, 1998; Murtagh and Dawes, 2020; Mullen and Kilimaitis, 2021; Matsko et al., 2023)
- STs: their role within mentoring is to establish a working relationship with the school mentor, attend meetings once a week to review progress. They are to meet the expectations set by the mentor with regards lesson planning and teaching. They are allocated a Link tutor by the Training Provider who they can turn to for additional advice and support.

2.2.6 Mentorability

Reddick introduced the term 'mentorability' defining it as 'the ability to engage in mutually beneficial and rewarding developmental relationships' (2014, n.p.). Black et al, expand this by saying 'One's mentorability relates to the personal characteristics a student can bring to a reciprocal relationship to maximize the benefits of the partnership' (2019, p.1).

As this literature review can attest there is a wealth of research about the types of mentoring and how to mentor, however, mentoring programs lack a cohesive and consistent definition of what a mentoring relationship includes, often leading mentees into a blind partnership (Gershenfeld, 2014; Miller, 2004). There is a plethora of training programmes available for mentors but STs and ECTs do not receive the same amount of training about what it is to be mentored. They may have had previous experience of mentoring whilst at school or college prior to entering ITE, but this may not be the case. Black et al,'s (2019) work, although conducted in the US, could be applicable to the UK context. The students in the study viewed the following characteristics to be important for their own mentorability 'open-mindedness, flexibility, listening skills, and persistence' (p.140). They went further suggesting that although they could see the importance of these characteristics, they admitted they did not 'possess these qualities upon entering a mentoring relationship, [and] students may not be prepared to participate in a mentoring program and maximize its many benefits' (ibid).

The above findings from the literature, do suggest there is a gap in mentoring programmes where a greater focus could be on the ST or ECT's prior experience and disposition towards mentoring. If this is to happen then mentors need to be trained to be able to identify potentially problematic behaviours related to mentoring, the ST's and ECT's readiness for mentoring and address them with the ST or ECT (Black and Taylor, 2018; Reddick, 2014; Taylor & Black, 2018). Conversely, they also suggest that mentees should be exposed to mentees that demonstrate high levels of mentorability, as in other aspects of teaching and learning 'exemplars' are a useful tool in supporting the understanding of expectations. It is just as important that the STs and ECTs

are also given as much opportunity as possible to prepare themselves to get the most out of this valuable relationship if Henry, Bruland, and Sano-Franchini (2011) are to be heeded and the influence on the outcome of mentoring programmes that students' willingness has is recognised.

Whilst considering mentorability of mentees, the work of Kemmis et al (2014a) makes an important contribution, when they assert that when new teachers take part in different types of mentoring, this leads to different dispositions. If this is the case then 'it follows that the profession needs to consider closely what forms of mentoring are most appropriate, when, for whom, and under what circumstances. Whilst reading this next section where some of the educational policy that has impacted mentoring in schools is discussed, it may be worth considering how different dispositions of new teachers may have responded.

2.2.7 Policy related to mentoring in schools

The formalisation of ITE in England in relation to who works with STs, what content is covered in ITE, how long STs spend in school and how QTS could be assessed, can be traced back to the early 1990s (DfE 1992,1993; Darling-Hammond, 2017). The formality continued to develop as schools and universities negotiated their partnerships in line with the evolving policy. The government's White Paper, 'The Importance of Teaching' (DfE, 2010) was really the start of ITE becoming much more school-led (Hargreaves 2010, 2012), with further policy initiatives such as the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011) introduced to assess STs towards achieving QTS. It is not until 2016 that there was any government documentation related to mentors in schools working with STs with the publication of the non-statutory National Standards for School Based Initial Teacher Training (ITT) mentors (DfE, 2016). It would appear that up to that point there was a potential for inconsistencies of mentor training and, by virtue of this, the experience of mentoring for STs.

On reflection there seems to have been a number of 'drivers' for such policy change and that is to standardise school-based teacher training and mentors working with STs and ECTs to ensure the high quality of pupil learning and that teacher retention improves. This was further reinforced by the Department for

Education (DfE), publishing two documents relating to the work of ECTs; The 'Early Career Framework' (ECF) (DfE 2019b) and 'Reducing workload: supporting teachers in the early stages of their career' (DfE 2019c). It is worthy of note that the publication of these documents was 2019 at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. A testament to the resilience of the Teaching Profession is that they engaged with the framework, attempting to make sense of it for the STs who were entrusted to them. However, Ovenden-Hope (2025) reports that although school-based mentors were happy to make the ECF work and adapt, change and supplement resources to enhance the provision in their particular school, this has impacted on their wellbeing.

The development of the ECF was a component of the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy (Hinds, 2019) aiming to support ECTs. Through the ECF, ECTs were entitled to a structured 2-year package of professional development (funded by the government, thought to cost £130 million), that supported their development in five core areas, aligned to the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011).

- behaviour management,
- pedagogy,
- curriculum,
- assessment,
- professional behaviours.

Six training providers known as 'lead providers', were chosen for schools to obtain training for both mentors and ECTs from that was funded by the government. Interestingly, this funding was not available for those schools that chose to design and employ their own training. Whilst these initiatives are welcomed, given research suggests a lack of formalised mentoring programmes in schools, results in variable mentoring and support for STs and ECTs (Beutel et al., 2017, Lofthouse 2018, Murtagh and Dawes, 2020) it could be seen as another example of government control that has pervaded teaching since 2012, leading to an increased workload and more tick box exercises (Ovenden-Hope, 2025). It is important to remember though, that the perspectives of those at the centre of the ECF delivery and experience, should

from its inception be consulted for their reflections and evaluations (Ovenden-Hope, 2025).

Ironically or maybe troublingly, despite all the good intentions behind policy to support the recruitment of retention of teachers and the conscientious work done within schools by mentors and ECT's the recent National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) report 2025 states

Teacher leaving rates have remained persistently high since the pandemic. In 2022/23, 9.6 per cent of teachers left teaching in the state sector. This was slightly lower than the previous year but marginally higher than the year before the pandemic. The leaving rate for early-career teachers (ECTs) is higher than the average leaving rate for all teachers. The latest retention data and recent NFER evaluation evidence from the early roll-out suggest that the impact of the Early Career Framework (ECF) on retention may be, at best, modest. (McLean and Worth, 2025, p.5)

Taking this into consideration, Shanks et al, (2022), determined that the presence of a formalised national scheme is not as crucial as 'the infrastructure of support, training and education involved and how support is shared and communicated' (p.760). The following table (Table 1) shows how this can be exhibited by three different approaches to mentoring, matching them to the National Standards for Mentors for School Based Initial Teacher Training (ITT) mentors (DfE, 2016). This demonstrates that although these standards have the potential, having been condensed to four standards, to suggest mentoring is an unsophisticated activity that it is possible to assess (in the worst-case scenario, harshly) easily (Murtagh and Dawes (2020). By looking at the three examples of different types of mentoring, it can be seen that this increases opportunities for 'both mentor and mentee creating new knowledge and meaning together in a learning community focused on reciprocal learning relationships' (ibid, p.42)

Examples from the Literature to different approaches to mentoring	National Standards for school-based initial teacher training (ITT) mentors (DfE, 2016)			
	Standard 1 - Personal qualities Establish trusting relationships, modelling high standards of practice, and empathising with the challenges a trainee faces.	Standard 2 – Teaching Support trainees to develop their teaching practice in order to set high expectations and to meet the needs of all pupils.	Standard 3 – Professionalism Induct the trainee into professional norms and values, helping them to understand the importance of the role and responsibilities of teachers in society.	Standard 4 – Self-development and working in partnership Continue to develop their own professional knowledge, skills and understanding and invest time in developing a good working relationship within relevant ITT partnerships.
Roles of an effective mentor (Maldarez, 2024)	A support role- supporting the mentee as a person, through the emotional rollercoaster that learning teaching often entails.	The educator role- helping the mentee learn teaching and learn to learn teaching	A model role- modelling professionalism and a way of being and learning as a teacher	Acculturator role – helping the mentee adjust to, integrate into and contribute to the cultures of the school and the wider profession Sponsor role – using any knowledge or contacts you have to help your mentee.
Educative mentoring (as summarised by Mackintosh, 2019)	Mentoring as 'thinking aloud': articulation of the reasoning behind teaching:	Mentoring as a practice that foregrounds pupil learning:	Mentoring as a 'bi-focal' practice: addressing the long-term goals of novices as well as short-term concerns:	Mentoring as situated inquiry: Mentoring as joint work:
ONside mentoring (Hobson, 2016)	Off-line , it is different and separated from line management or supervision and in son hierarchical Supportive of mentees wellbeing and psychological needs Developmental and growth orientated, promoting mentees 'learnecy'	Individualised and tailored to the specific and changing needs (emotional and developmental of each mentee.		Non evaluative and non-judgemental, leaving the space for mentees to take their own informed judgements and decisions Empowering and enabling mentors to become autonomous.

Table 1. Matching different approaches to mentoring and the National Standards for School Based Initial teacher training (ITT) Mentors (2016)

This shows that whilst it is important to be aware of the implication of and act upon government policy, it is important that school leaders recognise (as

mentors recognise with STs and ECTs) where they are at and choose a way forward that best navigates their compliance, without losing their uniqueness.

The next section outlines a spectrum of mentoring practices that are employed in schools and discusses them? and some of the theories that underpin them.

2.3 A spectrum of mentoring

How effective learning to teach within a mentoring relationship is, depends upon the learning approach that the mentor takes (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Richter et al., 2013; Wang & Odell, 2002). However, Munro warns against being constrained to role titles concentrating on a 'more nuanced view of how we lead 'professional learning conversations' (2022a, p.3.). This view developed after he studied the many authors (Downey, 2003; van Nieuwerburgh, 2012; Hollweck, 2018; Knight, 2018; van Nieuwerburgh, Knight and Campbell, 2019) who utilised various continua of coaching and mentoring in order to adopt a range of standpoints as a coach or mentor 'as well as highlighting the need for all of them, for different people at different stages in their development' Munro (2020, p.37). As Munro's (2022a) continuum evolved over time he proposes using 'the terms 'conversation leader' and 'conversation partner' (p.3) to indicate that what matters is not whether you are 'doing' coaching or mentoring, but that you are effectively leading the conversation from your partner's point of need' shown below in Figure 1.

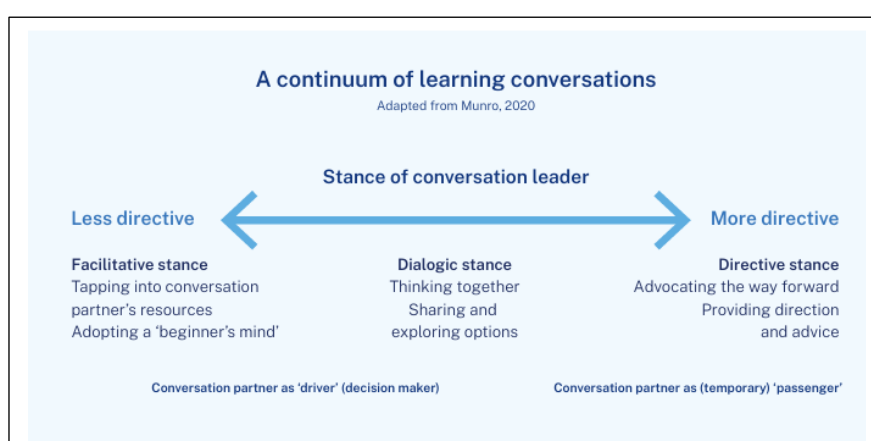


Fig. 1. continuum of learning Conversations (Munro, 2022a) © Growth Coaching International Pty Ltd. Reproduced with kind permission of the author, Chris Munro.

This continuum is useful to consider when having conversations that are different in purpose, and still hold on to not only, the distinctive identity of the school but the professionals and children within it.

Given the previous discussion about the importance of being clear about defining terms related to mentoring so there is clarity for all involved, it is encouraging to read that Munro (2022b) defines the term 'stance' as used above as

'a combination of how the conversation leader consciously "shows-up" – their way of being; and what they do in the conversation – how they use coaching techniques to support the thinking and progress of their partner' (p.30).

The following sections will discuss how each of the stances if employed by mentors could impact the mentoring that takes place between mentors and STs or ECT's. Although Munro's (2022b) work is aimed at leaders in schools, I have extrapolated it for the purposes of this literature review to include mentoring of STs. I am basing this decision on the fact Munro (2022b) refers to 'conversation partners' in his work and mentors and STs and ECT's could be classed as 'conversation partners' too.

2.3.1 Facilitative (stance) mentoring

This is where a mentor guides a ST or ECT from 'where they are to where they need to be' (Smith and Lewis, 2018, p. v). The ST or ECT is supported in their professional development not by being told what to do but by being able to discuss this, drawing upon their own knowledge and experience and that of their mentors (Smith and Lewis, 2018). This dialogue is described by Munro (2022b, p.30) as 'one of inquiry'... where 'the conversation leader consciously adopts a "beginner's mind," where they set aside their own expertise and thinking in order to be fully open to the possibilities coming from their partner and their context'.

The mentoring conversations may begin at the more directive end of the continuum but eventually through the help of the mentor the ST or ECT

develops their reflection and evaluation skills to such an extent as to be able then to choose teaching and learning activities for the children that meet their needs appropriately. It has been proposed, that if the mentor does work in this way they are acknowledging that there is the possibility of the ST or ECT making the necessary progress. It follows that an attribute of a mentor working in this way will be one of empathy where they 'listen without judgment and clarify how they [ST or ECT] seem to be feeling' (Munro 2022b, p31).

Educative mentoring could be just seen as another approach that some providers are 'promoting for mentors to use to support the professional learning of new teachers' (White and Mackintosh, 2022, p.1). However, whilst the next chapter discusses educative mentoring more fully, it would be pertinent at this point to position educative mentoring at the same place along the continuum of conversations mentioned above, that is in between coaching and mentoring in the facilitative and 'dialogic' section.

2.3.2 Dialogic (stance) mentoring

This is where the mentor and ST both contribute to a shared experience to build shared meaning through dialogic communication. Each speaker reflects the time and setting this exchange takes place in and brings to the interchange what Bakhtin refers to as 'thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance' (1981, p.282). To be successful, this approach to mentoring does rely on each participant being disposed to change the direction of their dialogue to reflect changes and development of their innermost thoughts through this collective activity (Talbot, Denny & Henderson, 2018). The understanding of this practice is extended by Munro (2022b) by drawing attention to how the mentor controls their own input in order that they do not 'create an unhelpful status difference. The two parties are thinking together.' Of the same opinion are Talbot, Denny and Henderson who go on to suggest that as this approach to mentoring develops it 'results in a 'mentor–mentee relationship that is fluid and flexible' (2018, p.51). It would therefore seem unfeasible that dialogic mentoring could be enacted as a didactic practice between the mentor and mentee.

Educative mentoring also meets the criteria for this approach to mentoring.

2.3.3 Directive (stance) Mentoring

Continuing to elaborate on the 'stances' discussed by Munro (2022b) the term 'directive stance' relates to that of 'advocacy' (p.30), that becomes necessary of the ST or ECT 'is genuinely stuck, is in new or novel circumstances, or simply does not have the experience or resources to find a way forward'. The mentor would offer specific suggestions from their own knowledge and experience. Understandably if this occurs then the ST or ECT is not making any of their own decisions at that point but is 'in the metaphorical passenger seat' (p. 30).

In the UK, over the last 30 years or so mentoring and coaching has moved through 'teacher coaching teacher', 'pedagogical mentoring', and the focus on 'metacognition' (Lofthouse in Knight et al., 2021, n.p.). However, the focus is now on Instructional Coaching, which is being used as a mentoring model to support the ECF. However, the cultural difference in understanding with the word 'Instructional' has to be addressed at the start of any discussion

'Firstly, there is a long tradition of 'instruction' being used to mean 'teaching and learning' in the USA. In the UK we tend to think of instruction as a command, or a direct communication of information.'
(Lofthouse, 2022, n.p.).

The cultural sensitivity of the word and therefore the associated practices must be acknowledged, if the positive aspects of Instructional Coaching (social justice and 'pedagogy as a repertoire') can be utilised (ibid) Depending on the ITE provider the instructional coaching can become 'formulaic or scripted, which do not deploy pedagogical and coaching expertise wisely' (ibid). This is not what Instructional coaching is meant to be, not being 'done to' or outside in' activities but facilitative practices that are 'inside out' (Knight et al. 2021, n.p.). These 'inside-out' practices are said to be 'an *understanding* – there are no strategies to learn, there is no curriculum to follow, but instead discussion-based interactions point towards how we work as human beings. Additional detail is gained from the work of Gardiner and Weisling (2017), who in relation to mentoring practices uses the term 'inside' and 'outside' in relation to the action of teaching. They explain that 'Inside' the action mentoring occurs when

teachers work with students, whereas 'outside' the action mentoring happens 'before or after instruction' (p.54)

Interestingly, Gardiner and Weisling (2017) do link some educative mentoring practices and 'inside and outside action of teaching'. Those that display 'inside' the action mentoring practices include 'stepping in, collaborative teaching and demonstration teaching'. These actions being based upon the principle that 'some learning is better supported in 'real' time via intentional scaffolding' (p.54). In contrast, the outside action mentoring practices demonstrating educative mentoring practices are such things as 'brief interactions, debriefing sessions, co-planning lessons, analyzing videotapes, journal writing, and demonstration teaching' (p.55). It can be seen that 'demonstration teaching appears to have the potential to be common to both 'inside and outside the action of teaching (p.55)

Even so, although Lofthouse can see the benefits of instructional coaching and that it does have a 'sound research basis' (2022, n.p.) she does warn against being swept along by the hype of instructional coaching

'Like other US imports into UK education there are those proponents who act as missionaries, seeding the new ideas into their own and other programmes. There is also a risk that instructional coaching becomes a buzzword leading to some superficial understandings and also potentially a fad – good for the current time, but likely be abandoned when not done well or another new craze comes along. Myths are created, people gain apparent guru status, and whole CPD programmes are rebranded to meet the new fashion. Indeed, instructional coaching also now features as an apprenticeship for school leaders – drawing on significant government funding to do so'. (Lofthouse, 2022, n.p.).

Although, educative mentoring, at the beginning of the mentoring relationship may be situated at the directive end of the spectrum, it can be seen from this

brief discussion how there can also be elements of educative mentoring present, particularly in relation to the 'inside-out' aspect of mentoring.

This chapter so far has considered a definition of mentoring, the mentoring relationship, a spectrum of mentoring, and the mentorability of the mentees. The next section will look in detail at educative mentoring

2.4 Educative mentoring

2.4.1 Introduction

The term 'Educative Mentoring' was thought to be coined by Feiman-Nemser in 1998 as 'mentoring that helps novices learn to teach and develop the skills and dispositions to continue learning in and from their practice' (p.66). This would suggest a longer term (beyond their initial training), consideration of goals contributing towards their development into effective teachers. Indeed, Bradbury (2010) suggests the hope that 'such practices will set the stage for long-term inclusion in their teaching routines' (2010, p.1055). Focusing on creating such growth producing experiences for STs is also supported by the work of Stanulis and Bell (2017) and Stanulis et al. (2019).

Feiman-Nemser (1998) distinguishes educative mentoring from traditional mentoring by suggesting it goes beyond offering emotional support and meeting the pressing instructional prerequisites of beginning student-teachers. This concept is expounded upon by a number of researchers who claim it is characterised by the ST being supported to 'use inquiry and to learn from practice; gather evidence through observations, feedback, and student work; understand the learning process of teachers; and maintain a focus on pupil learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2001a, 2001b; Kemmis et al, 2014b; Stanulis & Floden, 2009; Wexler, 2019).

2.4.2 What constitutes educative mentoring?

In practice, this means that an educative mentor assists the ST as they learn to operate in this way by jointly inquiring into teaching with them, engaging them in conversations as they co-plan, observe, debrief and analyse pupil work (Langdon, 2014; Wexler, 2020a). In 2012, Feiman-Nemser further conceptualised educative mentoring as mentors taking on ‘a role, a relationship and a process’ (p.241). She expands this by suggesting that the ‘role’ is an educational one, the ‘relationship’ is a pedagogical one and the ‘process’ is the engagement with the STs in educational activity (Langdon and Ward, 2015).

Stanulis and Brondyk (2013) build on this by suggesting that by engaging with STs in such a way, mentors would avoid continuing on without further thought, the learning practices of a particular school culture but instead contemplate a ‘push back against institutional norms, to focus on new possibilities for pupil (and [mentor and student] teacher) engagement and learning’ (p.31). As the educative mentor facilitates the development of alternative viewpoints (Florence and Day, 2006), this needs to be underpinned with a climate that considers problems, reflections, and questionings (Achinstein and Barrett, 2004), something that is supported when the mentor and ST relationship is more a collaborative partnership than that of an expert and an apprentice (Earl and Timperley, 2008).

To take these ideas to another level, educative mentoring aligns itself with the ‘inquiry as stance’ coined by Cochran-Smith and Lytle in the late 1990s, in 2009 after much debate, they more fully explained this term to be:

‘a way of knowing and being in the world of educational practice that carries across educational contexts and various points in one’s professional career that links individuals to larger groups and social movements intended to challenge the inequities perpetuated by the educational status quo’ (2009, p.viii).

Further to this, Schwille (2008) describes how educative mentors keep their mind on both the here and now and the future progress that the ST’s learning

needs to make. These mentors are said to have a bi-focal visualisation of learning to teach.

However, Palombo and Daly make a strong practice-based argument that educative mentoring is ‘a core professional practice, one that enables the beginning teacher and the mentor to benefit from sustained collaboration in which both parties learn’ (2022, p 208). It is the weighty term ‘core professional practice’ that does single this claim out from all the above research and raises it beyond a theoretical concept to a useful practice based on clear pedagogy. Curtis et al. (2025, p.1331) concurs with this by stating that educative mentoring has been ‘strongly reported in the literature to provide the ECT (and therefore STs) with a ‘highly reflective and participative mentoring experience for the purposes of pedagogical capability building’. As the great majority of a teacher’s pedagogical knowledge is tacit, then practices that illuminate them are priceless and educative mentoring practices have the potential to contribute to this discourse.

2.4.3 What educative mentoring practices are seen in practice?

In her reflections upon how educative mentoring as a way that STs and mentors could be supported, Mackintosh¹ (2019) suggests that educative mentoring could be manifested in the following the five educative practices as described in Table 2 below. Each of the educative mentoring practices described has been explained, so that mentors and STs will be able to recognise them and become familiar with the language used to describe educative mentoring.

¹ Mackintosh draws upon the work of Feiman-Nemser (1998, 2001); Feiman-Nemser and Beasley, (1997); Norman & Feiman-Nemser, (2005); a Bradbury, (2010); Schwille, (2008); Stanulis et al., (2018); Trevethan and Sandretto (2017); Trevethan (2017); Wexler, (2019) to summarise these educative mentoring practices

Educative practices	Explanation
Mentoring as situated inquiry	The classroom is seen as a site of inquiry, where mentors and ST's trial different approaches and discuss them in a methodical way.
Mentoring as joint work	ST's and mentors learn from each other (co-learners). They develop activities that would not have been developed if they had not collaborated
Mentoring as 'thinking aloud': articulation of the reasoning behind teaching:	'Mentors make visible and explicit what is usually invisible and implicit by articulating thoughts, questions and wonderings during co-planning and by making reflections on their own teaching visible'(p.2).
Mentoring as a practice that foregrounds pupil learning:	Pupils' learning is the focus of lesson planning observations and debriefs.
Mentoring as a 'bi-focal' practice: addressing the long-term goals of novices as well as short-term concerns:	Discussions move from the 'here and now' events in the classroom to wider ranging issues related to teaching and learning.

Table 2. Examples of educative mentoring practices and their meaning. Adapted from Mackintosh (2019, p.2)

2.4.4 Where has the research exploring educative mentoring been located?

As mentioned previously Feinman-Nemser's early work was based on the term 'educative mentoring', she was based at that point in Michigan State University, but the research was based on studies in USA, England and China. It is not surprising therefore that most of the research in this area has been centred on academics who have worked at Michigan State University such as, Pylman, (2016) and Stanulis and Bell (2017), or academics who have moved on from there such as Wexler (2019, 2020a and 2020b) who at the time of writing is now based in Illinois. Research on educative mentoring has been disseminated from other states in the USA such as Gardiner (2017) in Washington; Weisling and Gardiner (2018), in Wisconsin and Norman (2005) in Texas.

In 2005, Langdon and Ward, based in New Zealand published their work focussing on 'understanding the knowledge, attitudes and skills required by mentors to simultaneously focus on their own learning, new teachers' learning and pupil learning' (p.240). In 2011 these concepts were taken up by the New

Zealand Teacher's Council, (this became the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand in 2015) when in their research related to mentoring STs, defined educative mentoring and adopted it as the conceptual framework for mentoring (Trevethan, 2017).

In the UK, the term educative mentoring has been explored in practice, and Universities such as University of Hertfordshire, Leeds Beckett University and Caban Bangor², have all used (at one time or other) the term 'educative mentoring' in their approach to mentoring students in schools. In addition, different models of teacher collaborating such as lesson study and transformational practices, particularly related to ITE has more recently begun to suggest that working in an educative way is the way forward (Lofthouse, 2018). As mentioned in the above section Palombo and Daly (2022), based in Abingdon in the UK, having studied the principles that underpin educative mentoring, they devise and explore practical examples through an educative mentoring lens. Their ultimate goal is 'to suggest ways in which geography mentors can practise educative mentoring to develop collaborative planning, observation and post- lesson dialogue, and collaborative marking' (p.208). They desire that their work will impact the professional development of geography teachers across the whole of their careers.

2.4.5 What underpins educative mentoring?

Educative mentoring is grounded in social learning theories (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978; Wenger, 1998) in which 'learning is situated in context, the learner is an active constructor of knowledge, and learning is a scaffolded and collaborative experience' (Gardiner and Weisling, 2018, p.331). Vygotsky's requirement of timely and individualised scaffolding (Schwille, 2008) is also evident in educative mentoring.

The value of the learning community in which the participants are true members (Lave 1996; Putman and Borko, 2000) is important in educative mentoring. The ST should be encouraged to join and become accepted into

² CaBan is a partnership between schools, Bangor University, the Regional Consortium GwE and the research institute, Collaborative Institute for Education Research, Evidence and Impact (CIEREI)

the mentor's learning community so that their practice can be seen as valid and authentic by the community (Wexler, 2020b). It is suggested that there will then be much learning by the ST from and with their more experienced mentor (Lave and Wenger, 1991). However, as was discussed in the previous chapter the mentorability of the ST and ECT does have an impact on this.

In addition, Pearson and Gallagher's (1983) model of 'gradual release of responsibility' can be applied to educative mentoring. Similar to the processes at work when a teacher is supporting a pupil to read there is a 'shift slowly and purposefully from teacher-as-model, to joint responsibility, to independent practice and application by the learner' (Pylman, 2016, p.52). Through gradual release, the pupil becomes a competent and independent learner. It is crucial that in educative mentoring STs must become "students of teaching" not masters of technique lest technical skill be obtained at the cost of the power to go on growing', which is what Dewey (1938) argued in his essay on teacher education.

White and Mackintosh refer to this in relation to the dialogue between mentor and ST shifting 'from an apprenticeship model 'do it like this' to a critical examination of evidence derived from research and from practice' (2022, p.4). They suggest that this helps in accepting wider educational issues and risk-taking in resolving teaching struggles.

Dewey's (1938) theory of educative experience substantiates educative mentoring recognising that mentors arrange experiences for STs that provide them with opportunities to cultivate views, beliefs and knowledge about teaching and learning (Schwille, 2008).

Where the focus of a study on educative mentoring was on the interaction between the mentor and the ST, particularly co-planning, an aspect of activity theory was employed. Activity theory as a framework based on Engstrom's (1999) work can be described as

'an activity system includes the subject (who), objects (where the activity is directed), tools (items used to achieve desired outcome), communities (social systems one belongs to), rules (implicit and

explicit regulations one adheres to), and division of labour (shared responsibilities)' (Wexler, 2019, p.47).

This recognises the contextual complexity of teaching and learning and the thinking about and enacting of educative mentoring within it. This is something Postholm alludes to by saying 'Context is not reduced to something that just surrounds, but is interwoven in the actions, becoming a single process. The actions exist only in relation to the context' (2015, p.46).

Palombo and Daly (2022, p.209) present a model that summarise some of the above concepts in the Figure 2 below

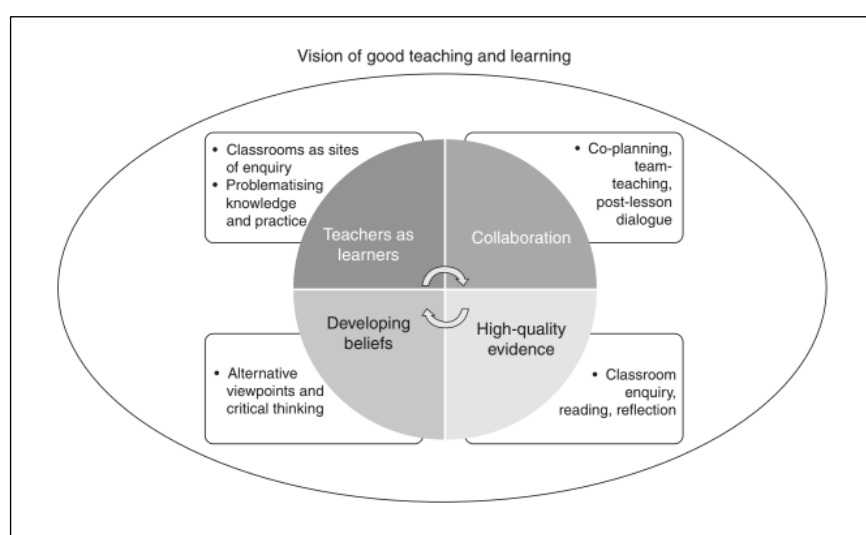


Fig.2. Underpinning principles and characteristics of educative mentoring. Palombo, M and Daly, C. (2022) In *Mentoring geography teachers in the secondary school: a practical guide*. Routledge: London. Reproduced with permission of The Licensor through PLSclear.

This model is important because it summarises how the mentor and mentee jointly develop educative principles and characteristics, by collaboration within the requirements of good teaching and learning, not instead of. At the heart of this model each of the four quadrants encompass key concepts and practices that build educative mentoring characteristics. Each of the four quadrants will now be discussed further

- *Teachers as learners*, key to this concept is both parties understanding of 'knowledge of practice' (Cochran-Smith and Lyle, 1999), which recognises teacher knowledge and practice as 'ongoing and continuously developing' Palombo and Daly (2022, p.210), whilst viewing the classroom as a 'site of enquiry' (Norman and Feiman-Nemser, 2005).
- *Developing beliefs*, this is based on say, the discussions that take place during 'post lesson ... and the ability of the mentor to articulate the thinking and reasoning behind pedagogical and curriculum decision' (Palombo and Daly, 2022, p.210). This is in line with what Mackintosh (2019, p.2) refers to as 'thinking out loud'.
- *Generating high quality evidence*, this is in relation to studying in detail pupil work which results from particular 'lesson activities and pedagogical activity' (Palombo and Daly, 2022, p.210). Case studies are suggested as a way of capturing this evidence from the planning stage right through to the post lesson reflection of the ST.
- *Collaboration*, this includes 'co-planning, team teaching and post lesson dialogue' (ibid) but it is the 'quality and focus' (ibid) of the conversations between the mentor and ST that is of the greatest significance.

2.4.6. What impacts the success or not of educative mentoring?

The literature surrounding educative mentoring is on the whole supportive, in fact Trevethan goes as far as to say that 'educative mentoring is the model currently seen as 'best' mentoring practice' (2017, p.227). However, there do seem to be some limitations to the effectiveness of educative mentoring practices, related to the perceived attitude and skill of mentors and mentees.

Mentors

If the mentors are 'set in their ways' and not sufficiently 'engaged, challenged or unsettled to consider their role in new ways' (Trevethan, 2017, p.226) then it would seem that an additional task is required to work with these mentors to a point that they are liberated from the personal practices that they may have

created over their career (Jones and Straker, 2006) before they can engage with educative mentoring practices.

However, even if the mentor is open to developing skills to support educative mentoring, Pylman (2016) found, in her study of the use of video recording to aid reflection on practice, (with a view to them becoming established educative mentoring routines), that initially the mentors did not really know what they were looking for and did request coaching. Whilst this gave the mentor the vocabulary to articulate what was actually seen and then interpret it (Loughran, 2002) it became difficult to separate the coaching element from what had been acquired from the video reflection on practice alone. Once again this raised the issue of how effective would this process be with mentors that were less engaged and did not request coaching.

This would resonate with Gardiner and Weisling's (2018) suggestion that mentors require professional development to develop a strong visualisation of educative mentoring and to build a collection of practices that line up with the objectives of educative mentoring (Orland – Barak, 2005; Schwille, 2008).

Student teachers

It has been suggested that STs are too concerned with their own competence and performance to concern themselves with pupil thinking and learning (Fuller, 1969; Kagan, 1992), something that is required with educative mentoring. Little (2009) goes as far as to say that 'serious (educative) mentoring could make the early years of teaching harder rather than easier by holding out higher standards than beginning teachers are likely to work toward on their own' (cited in Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005, p.681). Finding that balance of support and aspiration seems to be a common challenge in educative mentoring.

The school culture

A school culture that encourages collaboration would be conducive to educative mentoring practices being developed. Although individual teachers and mentors may be predisposed to working collaboratively, the role leadership plays in influencing and maintaining the complex and powerful school cultures that exist has long been recognised, in particular how they

promote the enactment of national policy, especially those related to this topic of supporting the development of ECTs and STs (Langdon et.al 2012). Whilst Langdon et al (2019 p. 252), assert that the culture of the school influences not only ECTs' and STs' 'professional identity and their beliefs about learning and teaching... within the wider ecologies that influence school cultures', they concur that the school leader is crucial to this.

The work of school leadership that 'fosters a process orientation towards professional learning, for new entrants and experienced practitioners', is also recognised in the work of Daly, Milton and Langdon (2022, p198). Expanding the discussion beyond the individual teacher or leadership Taylor (2023, p.18) states that the 'contexts for professional growth are shaped by relationships, leadership, capacity, and ethos, nested within external conditions of policy, culture, society and values'. An example of this can be seen in professional networks that develop as a 'collaborative undertaking between teaching and learning and practice to carry out professional and personal development' (Bogart, Collicott and Hughes, 2025, p.52). They suggest that the knock-on effect is that if their 'home establishments' support this that this can 'give teachers agency to focus on their own interests' (ibid).

Continuing along with this same premise Milton et al (2022, p.880) advocate that 'from a related ecological perspective, schools need to become effective ecosystems for teacher learning'. They further explain that this would necessitate schools to ensure their professional development is incorporated into the culture of every day life and not seen as something extra (Rosas, 2015)

In their work with geography teachers, Palombo and Daly (2022), are more specific about what these cultural norms are in relation to educative mentoring such as 'open questioning, building curiosity about how pupils learn and encouraging risk taking as a joint endeavour among staff (p.211). They contend that these cultural norms indicate an 'expansive environment' is present in the school as described by 'Hodkinson's (2009) work adapted from Fuller and Unwin's (2003) study of work place learning' (ibid).

To summarise, whilst a culture of collaboration is conducive for the development of educative mentoring, it relies not only on the willingness for individual teachers to collaborate but school leadership must also be authentically supportive of this too.

2.4.7 How can educative mentoring be developed?

To make the practices of educative mentoring more visible and less theoretical, Wexler (2020b) suggests that maybe bringing the mentors and student researchers into the research process as co-researchers (by employing participatory action research) would benefit both them and the research field in the future.

Researching the use of video to support such research on educative mentoring is something suggested by Pylman (2016). The use of technology (which is particularly pertinent in this present Covid-19 world, where it can be difficult for mentors to get together for mutual support and professional development), is suggested as an area of further research by Gardiner and Weisling as it has been recognised that new mentors require 'situated, responsive ongoing support and there is a lack of research addressing these needs' (2018, p.329). They do go on to suggest further research that investigated whether virtual collaborative spaces could be set up and their usefulness evaluated in supporting the solving of problems of practice. Taking this further they suggest research that focusses on the analysis of video of mentoring and whether it could be productive; and if mentors can influence each other's practice when this analysis occurs in these virtual collaborative spaces.

However, in her seminal work, Feiman-Nemser is keen to highlight that good educative mentoring 'rests on a vision of good teaching' (1998, p.72). This in itself is a whole area of research that has not been greatly explored explicitly in the research related to educative mentoring (except for the work of Palombo and Daly with geography teachers). This is an area that could also be looked at from the viewpoint of 'who' decides what good teaching is and what it looks like in different contexts or whether this is this negotiated and developed through the educative mentoring process.

All the research examined for this thorough literature review, utilises an interpretative, qualitative research design incorporating a range of approaches such as exploratory case study and action research. The data collection methods used ranged from semi structured interviews, audio recordings, lesson plans, reflective journal analysis, observation of meetings, autobiographical interviews with mentors and STs and video recordings of teaching and learning interactions.

2.4.8 Summary of educative mentoring

To summarise, educative mentoring has the potential to develop ST's awareness of issues they may not notice by themselves, collecting and analysing data pertaining to teaching and student learning alongside their mentor, recognising and participating with them in shared inquiries into problems of practice (Norman and Feiman-Nemser, 2005; Gardiner and Weisling, 2016, 2018; Schwille, 2008). It must not be underestimated that engaging in some aspects of educative mentoring may be difficult for STs or ECTs who are used to working in a system where they are expected to meet criteria not challenge them. Ultimately educative mentoring helps STs and ECTs 'think like a teacher' (Feiman-Nemser, 1998), and develop their 'pedagogical capacity' (Curtis, 2024).

Finally, if the benefits of educative mentoring as a vehicle for improving teaching and learning are to be realised then Norman and Feiman-Menser argue that 'we need to base induction programs and policies on dependable ideas about new teachers as learners, the nature of educative mentoring, and the role of schools in new teacher induction' (2005, p.694), some twenty years later we are still grappling with these ideas.

Despite this, it is exciting that 'educative mentoring is necessarily unsettling of taken-for-granted ways of doing things. By disrupting traditional expert-novice mentoring relationships, it has the potential to offer transformative learning experiences for both you and the beginning teacher.' (Palombo and Daly 2022,

p 221), which could be a great contributor to mentees feeling part of the profession and encouraged to have a long career.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has set the present research, that has as its focus educative mentoring, within the context of the school system in the UK, where there are different models of mentoring employed. It is recognised that schools are also complex communities and the roles of mentors working alongside ST's reflect this. The literature has been explored surrounding the definition of mentors, the mentoring role and relationships between a mentor and ST and what may impact it.

Government policy that has impacted the work of ITE in relation to mentors and STs has been explored, alongside the place of coaching and instructional coaching within this. Educative mentoring was investigated in conjunction with the concept of a continuum of coaching conversations. A demonstration of how these could be combined was discussed in relation to the dialogic (stance) mentoring characteristic of educative mentoring.

Set within the above discussion the literature related to educative mentoring was studied and its role in being fundamental to STs being welcomed into the profession, when they experience working in partnership with their mentor and in so doing develop their own agency. If this continues into their ECT year and beyond then educative mentoring has the potential to contribute to the retention of teachers within the profession. However, with schools being complex entities these aspirations may be thwarted by the mentors, the ST or the school culture.

Chapter 3 Research Methods and Methodology

This thesis endeavours to explore with mentors and their STs (referred to in this thesis as 'mentor pairs') their understanding of mentoring, in particular educative mentoring and how they enacted this in practice. This qualitative study adopts a social constructivist approach as it allows credible meaning to be constructed from what is around us and in this specific case, make sense of the diverse and multifaceted settings, schools, classrooms and the activity of mentor pairs (Vygotsky, 1978; Crotty, 1998; Charmaz, 2011). Using an inductive approach, this study attempts to explore the perceptions of mentor pairs around mentoring and educative mentoring and whether these were enacted in their practice, assisting in making known the 'links between concrete experiences... and social practices' (Charmaz, 2011, p.362). The existence and preservation of the multiple realities of the mentor pairs and the researcher is extremely important and whilst being autonomous these realities must be protected. To delve into this further a case study design involving six mentor pairs working across three primary schools was employed. This chapter provides evidence of how I used a case study approach with the mentor pairs to explore this.

3.1 Research design and methods employed.

The use of a case study in qualitative research has been much debated and therefore led to many meanings evolving from the different situations and circumstances (Swain, 2017), particularly in educational research. It has been suggested by Yin (2014) and Pring (2000) that vital components of case study research are that they investigate a present case or occurrence in depth within a unique real-world context. However, it is accepted that the researcher engages in 'in-depth data collection over time using multiple sources of evidence' (Swain, 2017, p.174).

These multiple sources of evidence allow in-depth understanding of the case, and allows the researcher to access a range of viewpoints and voices (Tellis, 1997; Swain, 2017). In this study, these are those of the six mentor pairs. This research used multiple sources such as semi structured interviews, audio transcriptions of mentor meetings and lesson debriefs which allowed for triangulation. This in turn served to clarify meanings and identify different ways in which the observable facts are perceived, supporting the claim that a case study is a valid approach.

3.2 Selection of participants

Purposive sampling was employed for selecting the three schools to participate in this research. This method was used because it

‘provides a way of getting the best information by selecting people most likely to have the experience or expertise to provide quality information and valuable insights on the research topic’ (Denscombe, 2014, p.41).

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, although they are non-representative purposive sampling is ‘perfectly adequate where researchers do not seek to generalize their findings beyond the sample in question’ (2017, p.217) which was so in this study. However, Teddlie and Yu (2007) maintain such sampling, involves compromise, dichotomously achieve greater depth to the study and at the same can produce less breadth, which is something to be aware of when collecting and analysing the data.

All participants operated within the same university partnership and therefore the mentors would have all been through the same training. The three schools chosen, their names and those of the participants were anonymised; Mountain Primary School (MPS), Tyndale Primary School (TPS) and King Alfred Primary School (KAPS), were a similar size and the Headteachers were known to me through my work in Higher Education (HE) related to work-based learning placements in their school. I knew they accommodated STs across all the different phases from Early Years to Key Stage 2, throughout the academic year. Information about the research was sent to the Headteachers along with

the paperwork related to the university requirements for ethical approval. Further details about each school follows.

Mountain Primary School (MPS)

This is a Church of England Primary, Academy, which, until July 2021, was a Teaching School. The Headteacher was new to post in September 2021 having previously been the Deputy Headteacher at the school, with specific responsibility for the Teaching School, associated mentors, and student teachers. The staff are a mix of Early Career Teachers and those who have been qualified more than five years. They have the capacity to admit 30 children each year and at the time of data collection there were 191 children on roll. They also house Mountain Nursery on site, which is an Early Years setting for children between 1 and 5 years old. The two student teachers who participated in the research were the only student teachers at the school during the academic year 2021-2022.

Tyndale Primary School (TPS)

This is a Voluntary aided Church of England Primary school. The Headteacher is well established at the school having been in post for 15 years. The teaching staff were also experienced with all of them having been at the school for at least 10 years. They have the capacity to admit 30 children each year and at the time of data collection there were 236 children on roll. There is Tyndale Nursery on the site, which is an Early Years setting for children between 3 and 5 years old. Each class hosted student teachers across various phases of their training at some point during the whole academic year, as well as students from other education-based degrees from a local university.

King Alfred Primary School (KAPS)

This is a Community Primary school. The Headteacher is well established at the school having been in post for 15 years. The teaching staff vary in experience, with most having been qualified for less than 5 years and only two of them having been at the school between 5 and 10 years. They have the capacity to admit 30 children each year and at the time of data collection there were 172 children on roll. They also have King Alfred Nursery on site, which is an Early Years setting for children between 1 and 5 years old. Each class

hosted student teachers across various phases of their training at some point during the whole academic year, as well as students from other education-based degrees from a local university. They also were part of a SCITT Provider and School Direct programme. In June 2021 there was a catastrophic incident at the school and the whole school was relocated at a local university for the remainder of the summer term, returning to their original school in September 2021, with some temporary classrooms and a lot of building work going on.

The Headteachers selected the mentors who could be approached to take part in the research, they were then sent the same information as the Headteachers regarding the nature of the research and what this would entail. The mentors approached the student teachers to check their agreement and I made myself available to answer any questions. The information following is related to the makeup of the mentor pairs and which school they belonged. A summary of these characteristics can be found in Appendix 1.

Mentor pairs MPS

Mentor pair one consisted of Catherine the mentor and Niamh the ST who worked in the Reception Class. Catherine has been at the school for eight years, one of those being a ST. She has been a mentor for six years. She has been on the Senior Leadership team for the past four years, having previously taken on the role of Special Educational Needs Coordinator. For the past year she has also been Assistant Headteacher and Early Years Leader. Niamh is a third year Early Years undergraduate. She had a year away from education between completing her A levels before attending university, she is also a qualified dance teacher, she helps run a dance class once a week. The data was collected from March to May 2021, excluding holidays, between week six and ten of Niamh's final 12-week placement.

Mentor pair two consisted of Kate the mentor and John the ST who worked in the Year One Class. Kate works part-time and this is her fourth year at the school and she also trained here. She has been a mentor for three years. Kate has a degree in dance and a year's experience as a Teaching Assistant prior to starting teacher training and is now subject leader for PE. John is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS, specialising in maths and music. He

has come straight to university from college. The data was collected from November 2020 – February 2021, excluding holidays, between weeks seven and nine of John's 12-week placement. However, due to John contracting Covid in week 10 it was not possible to collect data from the lesson observation and debrief. John returned to the school to complete an Early Years observation and agreed to a post placement interview in week two of this placement as did Kate the week later.

Mentor pairs TPS

Mentor pair three consisted of Maureen the mentor and Brenda the ST who worked in the Reception class. Maureen has been teaching for twelve years and ten of them have been at Tyndale school. Brenda is a postgraduate Early Years student, having completed an undergraduate degree in Early Childhood studies. She had worked in retail in between college and university, she also has volunteered in schools. The data was collected from March and April 2021, excluding holidays, between week five and ten of Brenda's final 12-week placement.

Mentor pair four consisted of Angela the mentor and Mary the ST who worked in the Year One class. Angela has been working at the school for ten years, ever since qualifying and has been a mentor for six years. She took three years away from education prior to university when she travelled and worked in retail. She has responsibility for Personal Social Health Education and Physical Education. Mary is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS, specialising in English and Art. She has come straight through to university from college. The data was collected from January to February 2021, between week six and nine of Mary's final 12-week placement. However, due to sensitivities surrounding Mary requiring additional support from the school and university for her to complete the placement successfully, it was felt best that the lesson observation and debrief should not be observed to avoid any additional pressure on Mary. Angela suggested a post placement interview as an alternative, but no further contact was had with Mary.

Mentor pairs KAPS

Mentor pair five consisted of Agnes the mentor and Edwina the ST who worked in the Year Two class. Agnes has been qualified for 12 years, this is her fifth year at KAPS and she does not have any experience of mentoring. Edwina is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS, specialising in maths. She has come straight to university from college, but a close family member is a Headteacher so she has volunteered since college whenever she can in her relative's school. Agnes is the maths leader and Edwina is also specialising in maths. When KAPS were relocated to the local university doing the summer term, Edwina volunteered with them and became acquainted with the team and given their common specialism Agnes was looking forward to having Edwina in her class for Edwina's final placement. The data was collected from November and December 2020, Agnes was interviewed prior to the start of the placement and the rest of the data was collected during weeks two and five of this final 12-week placement.

Mentor pair six consisted of Gillian the mentor and Janet the ST who worked in the Year One class. Gillian has been qualified for five years and this is her fifth-year teaching at KAPS. Gillian carried out her undergraduate placements for an education-based degree here, subsequently completing her Postgraduate Certificate of Education through the School Centred Initial Teacher Training provision at KAPS. She has four years mentor experience and is the Physical Education specialist. Janet is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS. She had a three-year gap in between college and university, when she worked in retail. She is also a qualified gymnastic coach/teacher (for ages 3-18) and has continued doing this for five evenings a week whilst at university, including throughout her placements. The data was collected from November and December 2020, Gillian was interviewed prior to the start of the placement and the rest of the data was collected during weeks two and five of this final 12-week placement.

3.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was sought and granted from Liverpool Hope University's Ethics Committee. In line with the British Educational Research Association (BERA), confidentiality of participants was assured and it was made clear to

the participants that they would not be identified in any published documents arising from the research (as previously stated pseudonyms were used for all participants and settings). Informed consent was gained from the participants, (See Appendix 2) so that they knew what to expect from their involvement, particularly in relation to the time commitment required (Denscombe, 2017; Simons and Usher, 2000; Wax, 1982) and confidentiality.

Although the Headteachers did select the mentors to take part in the research, all participants were clear that their involvement was voluntary and they could withdraw at any point. This point was tested when the mentors from KAPS made contact to ask that no audio recordings were to take place during the mentor meeting, lesson observation or lesson debrief. Although this had already been agreed with themselves and the Headteacher, there had been an agreement between the staff and the Headteacher during lockdown that no recordings could be made of any of the teachers and the mentors felt that this agreement should apply to the audio recording. It was thought important to maintain the integrity of the research and remain open and honest with the participants that they stayed part of the research and their request was respected (Oliver 2003; Sikes, 2006).

Once ethical approval had been gained from the Headteacher and all participants, the data collection commenced.

3.4 Data collection

Online semi-structured interviews were conducted with all the mentors and STs. This was followed, usually within two weeks of the interview by observations of the mentor meeting. Usually within another two weeks a lesson taught by the ST was observed as was the lesson debrief that followed.

3.4.1 Method 1 The online semi structured interview

Online semi structured interviews were conducted individually with six mentors and six STs. The interview schedule can be found in Appendix 3. The semi structured interview took place via a synchronous online Zoom call, so audio could be recorded and the participants could be seen by the interviewer and

vice versa. Due to the requirement for schools to become proficient in using such platforms as Zoom to communicate with their children during Covid-19 lockdowns, all participants had access to the relevant equipment and internet access right from their classrooms. It was felt that the time and location of the semi structured interview therefore could be less problematic for the participants and could be chosen to suit them. However, a disadvantage was that it was not possible to know if there were any distractions off screen that may be occupying the participant's mind. Future participants could also have been listening to the questions and thus have had more time to reflect and consider their answers than other participants. However, there was no evidence that would suggest this happened. One mentor did move room part way through the interview to speak more candidly about their ST who was preparing lessons in the classroom. She assured the ST there was nothing negative to say (this turned out to be true) she just wanted to speak freely.

The rest of this section deals with considerations when employing semi structured interviews in general as these points can also be applied to face to face or online interviews. The semi-structured interview style was chosen for this research as a conversation between two people (the researcher and the mentor or ST) was seen as being an adaptable method of gleaning information about the participants' views and feelings regarding mentoring and educative mentoring in particular. The manner of response, such as 'the tone of voice, facial expression, hesitation' (Bell, 2007 p.157) can deliver material that would not be gleaned from say a written method of data gathering. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2017) suggest, the questions are open-ended and the interviewer can change the order and include follow up questions to adapt to the different answers each person interviewed gives, again allowing for greater depth of clarification of an answer. Fowler (2009) does warn against bias creeping in if the interviewer prompts or probes too much. An advantage over other research methods is that it can allow for greater depth of response but on the flip side the researcher needs to be aware of their own 'subjectivity and potential bias' and that of the person being interviewed (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2017, p.508). A great disadvantage of the semi structured interview in relation to how time consuming it was. Each interview took between 30 and

45 minutes but as they were audio recorded and transcribed each took between four and six hours for this to be completed.

Using semi structured interviews in the research

The semi structured interviews were piloted prior to employing them in the research. This was in order to test out whether the questions employed could be understood by the participants and would not hinder the research, by being ambiguous or difficult to understand (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). The questions asked, the interview manner and length of time the interview took received positive feedback and therefore there was no change between the pilot and the actual semi structured interview structure. However, it is important that it is recognised that as the participants of the pilot interviews were known to the interviewer, they may have felt uncomfortable being too critical and the interviewer needed to reflect in tandem with the feedback from participants, whether any adaptations need to be made. What did change was that the participants were given two of the questions in advance. These questions asked the participants to give examples from their practice of a good mentoring experience and a mentoring experience that had not gone so well. The pilot participants fed back that maybe their answers would have been richer had they had time to think about them. The interview was divided into four sections: the introduction, that acted as an opportunity for rapport formation; the warm up, that gave the participants a chance to settle into the interview by talking about familiar topics surrounding themselves or their practice; The main body of the interview came next when the participants were asked questions relating to mentoring and educative mentoring; the final section was the 'cool down' or conclusion when the participants were given the opportunity to ask the interviewer anything, they were thanked for participating and informed as to what would happen next.

3.4.2 Method 2: Observation

Incidents and behaviours that occur within classrooms or between a mentor and ST, tend to be complex and multifaceted (Denscombe, 2014) and it would be a mistake to think every aspect of the interaction could be recorded. Non-participation observation was chosen as a method of data collection as observing what happened between the mentor and ST to explore whether

what each said in their interviews was or was not enacted when they worked together, was fundamental to answering the research questions. A blended approach of structured and unstructured methods of recording the observation were employed. A disadvantage of using observational data is that the observer is being 'selective over who, what, where and how was being observed' (Cohen Manion, Morrison, 2017, p544). However, how these factors were addressed has been covered in the earlier parts of this chapter relating to the selection of the participants and in what follows regarding each type of observation.

All except two of the observations took place in what could be classed as the natural setting of the participants (Denscombe, 2017); their own classroom or staffroom. The two observations of mentor meetings that took place in KAPS took place in the school assembly hall, that was well ventilated and all participants wore their outdoor clothes and masks. This was due to guidance that had been received by the Headteacher from the Government the previous day regarding the Omicron variation of Covid-19. This could have impacted the observation due to the acoustics and presence of the facemasks, made some of the speech difficult to hear. Also, as the meeting was not in the usual place such a meeting would take place it could have changed how the participants behaved.

It was important that the non-participant observations were as Papatheodorou, Luff and Gill, (2013,75) refers to as a 'fly- on- the- wall approach, by being unobtrusive and dissociated from the happenings, and attempting not to influence the situation at all' This in practice meant in this research the observer sat separately from the participants and endeavoured to listen and record what was being said and what the mentor and ST were doing. It is vital that for the purposes of validity and reliability, that any personal interpretation of what was happening, was made at the time of the observation. Field notes were kept of any contextual information that was deemed to be pertinent and these were written immediately after the observation. The influence the presence of the observer had on the participants has been alluded to already but it was considered at the data analysis stage too, when field notes would also be relied upon to remain aware of any aspects of subjectivity that may

have been introduced into the data. This was something I was acutely aware of, due to the fact I have conducted many lesson observations in relation to ITE, staff development, to contribute to issues related to teacher competency and collaborating with peers (such as, in peer review processes and lesson study). I had to ensure I did not become involved in this present research making judgements whilst making observations.

Observation of the mentor meeting

The mentor meetings of all mentor pairs were observed. Notes were taken using the proforma found in Appendix 4. The meetings were also audio recorded except for mentor pair five and six as mentioned previously in 'ethical considerations' above.

Observation of a taught lesson

A lesson was observed (using the proforma found in Appendix 5) that the interviewer would be present for the debrief of. The sole purpose of the lesson observation was that the interviewer would have some understanding of what had happened in the lesson being discussed in the debrief.

However, due to John (ST from mentor pair two) contracting Covid in week 10 it was not possible to collect data from the lesson observation and debrief. John returned to the school to complete an Early Years observation and agreed to a post placement interview in week two of this placement as did Kate (mentor from mentor pair two) the week later.

Also, due to sensitivities surrounding Mary (ST mentor pair four) requiring additional support from the school and university for her to complete the placement successfully, it was felt best that the lesson observation and debrief should not be observed to avoid any additional pressure on Mary. Angela (Mentor from mentor pair four) suggested a post placement interview as an alternative, but no further contact was had with Mary.

Observation of the lesson debrief

The lesson debriefs were observed (except for within mentor pair two and four as explained above). Notes were taken using the proforma found in Appendix 6. The lesson debriefs were also audio recorded except for mentor pair five and six as mentioned previously in 'ethical considerations' above.

The proformas had been trialled on sample lessons found on YouTube. They were useful tools to help focus the interviewer on data collection for the research being undertaken as the mentor meeting, lesson observation and lesson debrief were such rich experiences to observe, it would be possible to become easily overwhelmed as to what to focus on. The fact that the observations could be supplemented by the audio recordings that were available was also useful (but time consuming) when reflecting and analysing what had been observed. Proformas were used in order to be both systematic and objective, but it was important that the proforma did not limit the observations and unstructured observation notes were taken, where it was deemed appropriate.

3.5 Data Analysis

Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) has been chosen as the preferred method of data analysis. How this decision came about was not a linear and straightforward one. Initially TA was considered as this would potentially allow analysis from inductive to deductive and the analytical process in Braun and Clarke's most recent work was perceived to be 'open and iterative... with a development of codes to themes' requiring a 'qualitative mindset and researcher reflexivity' (2022, p.248). This was attractive and these attributes are felt to be a strength of the research design. However, some of the limitations of reflexive thematic analysis such as being 'too fragmented and particularised, presenting many themes and a complex thematic structure without depth of interpretation'... with an 'absence of interpretation simply descriptive summaries' (p.248), appeared to be more concerning and other methods of data analysis were considered, to complement thematic analysis or replace it as a method of data analysis. Braun and Clarke (2018) stress that there is no such thing as the 'hallowed method', that is, the one analytical approach that is ideally suited to a particular research project. They claim that instead there must be a thoughtful and deliberative practice in choosing and using analytic approaches. The following sections demonstrate how the

concerns mentioned above were thought through via deliberating Thematic Analysis, Reflexivity and then other data analysis methods.

3.5.1 Thematic Analysis (TA)

Prior to discussing RTA, it is important to consider Thematic Analysis (TA) from which RTA evolved. Fugard and Potts (2020) suggest that TA is not a singular method with one set of processes but a family of methods with some features in common. They recognise that there are also significant differences in fundamental research values, 'the conceptualisation of core constructs and analytic procedures' (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p.39) between them.

Braun and Clarke also suggest that 'typically TA approaches acknowledge the potential for

1. Inductive (data driven) and deductive (theory driven) orientation to coding
2. Capturing semantic (explicit or overt) and latent (implicit, underlying; not necessarily unconscious) meanings
3. Processes of coding and theme development
4. Flexibility around the theory that frames the research' (2021, p.39)

Each of the above potentials were considered bearing in mind the research that was to be carried out to think through whether TA was appropriate to use for the data analysis. However, a deeper consideration was given to points one and four.

1. Inductive (data driven) and deductive (theory driven) orientation to coding

Inductive TA can also be known as 'bottom up' or data driven. As such the themes are strongly linked to the data and it is anticipated that the themes identified bear little resemblance to the questions that participants are asked and therefore the process of coding is not trying to fit in with a pre-existing coding frame. These features were anticipated to be in common with my method of data analysis. However, there were aspects of my data analysis that I recognised would be more deductive or align with theoretical orientation. These were that the coding was guided by my theoretical and analytical interest in the area and that there may be more detailed analysis of some

aspects of the data. Whilst this may seem to be dichotomous it is not impossible and Bingham and Witkowsky suggest 'a data analysis process that draws on both deductive and inductive analysis supports a more organized, rigorous, and analytically sound qualitative study' (2022, p.1).

4.Flexibility around the theory that frames the research

It must be clarified that when discussing theoretical underpinnings, 'flexibility' that is, not tied to a particular framework, is not 'atheoretical' or devoid of analytic authority and 'sophistication' (Braun and Clarke, 2020, p.13). In fact, the process of justifying my theoretical standpoint has forced me to clarify that the epistemological standpoint taken in my research is a constructionist one, that by definition considers meaning and experience to be socially produced and reproduced. It seeks to theorise the sociocultural contexts and structural conditions that enable the individual accounts that are provided. It doesn't treat 'people's talk of experiences as a transparent window on their world' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.65)

3.5.2 Reflexivity

Trainor and Bundon claim that reflexivity is 'more than just one's positionality – it's the role of the researcher as an active agent in the production of knowledge' (2021, p.707). In qualitative research it is important that researchers recognise the assumptions they make throughout their research acknowledging that 'researchers bring their own histories, values, perspectives, politics and mannerisms into research' (ibid). Positionality is something I recognise within the research project I have carried out and am very aware that reflexivity in relation to this is important throughout all phases of the research, something I have endeavoured to employ thus far.

Braun and Clarke ascertain that reflexive approaches involve later theme development from codes (that themselves are intrinsically subjective, requiring an abundance of reflexivity and these are 'conceptualised as patterns of shared meaning underpinned by a central organising concept' (2021, p.39). They suggest that this method requires a 'hard slog' that involves 'a lot of

analytical and interpretative work' (ibid), that is not linear, something I could see to be possible and necessary within my research.

3.5.3 Why not other methods of data analysis?

There are 'conceptual and procedural differences and similarities between RTA and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), Grounded Theory (GT) and Discourse Analysis (DA)' as described by Braun and Clarke (2021, p.37), not from their desire to promote RTA but to enable researchers to make informed choices that they can justify when selecting what they consider to be the most appropriate method of data analysis for their research project.. Pivotal to this decision to choose RTA was Braun and Clarke's (2021) paper and I have selected the pertinent points from this and presented them below to show how I justified the decision that RTA is ultimately chosen for this present research.

RTA and QCA

The contention regarding whether a method is atheoretical or theoretically flexible is highlighted when comparing QCA and RTA. QCA is considered to be atheoretical, producing an 'unsophisticated descriptive analysis' (Cho & Lee, 2014, p.2; Vaismoradi, Turunan, Bondas, 2013, p.340). This coupled with QCA focussing on 'content (what you're working with) as opposed to themes (what you are aiming for)' (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p.40) which they suggest would lead to a tendency to adopt a 'truth is out there' approach to data analysis (ibid) are the reasoning behind RTA being chosen for my data analysis even though there are many similarities between these methods.

RTA and IPA

There are also commonalities between RTA and IPA such as, researcher subjectivity being a central consideration. However, Braun and Clarke (2020, p41) suggest subtle differences, that apply to the data analysis of my research project. The first is that

IPA features a dual analytic focus: both a thematic orientation—the identification of themes across cases (participants)—and an idiographic approach—interest in and focus on the particular and

unique details of each case. [The second], related in part to this idiographic focus IPA ... [involving] a detailed focus on the analysis of each case, before developing themes across cases.

With the RTA that I am using, the whole data set will be coded and then themes will develop from these codes and distinctive features of individual cases are not the main focus. These themes will be useful to be shared with the wider educational community. In line with the constructionist epistemology, it is also important that the personal experiences of participants are located within the wider socio-cultural situations, something that is not thoroughly experienced with IPA.

RTA and GTA

This comparison is the most complex of the four as there are so many variations of GT and their associated analysis. Braun and Clarke do suggest that a truncated form of GTA which they term as 'GT-lite' (2021, p.43) is in most part indistinguishable from RTA, and production of codes and theme generation across the variations of GTA can result in intense discussion whether it is RTA or GTA being employed. However, they do ultimately provide seven situations when they advise RTA should be used, five of which apply to my research project:

- When a researcher is beginning their qualitative research journey. RTA is more straightforward than GTA, the procedures are fewer and less complex, and there is a clearer pathway through them.
- The goal is to identify patterns in data, to describe and interpret those patterns, and/or to provide a theoretically informed interpretation of them.
- The researcher does not intend to develop a grounded theory from the data set and analysis.
- Data are collected independent from the analytic development (i.e. there is no intention to sample theoretically).
- The sample is relatively small and/or homogenous—as is often the case with samples of 'convenience' that are common in qualitative research (ibid).

RTA and DA

Braun and Clarke (2021) do suggest that RTA processes do not allow for a great detailed analysis of language usage that some discourse analytic approaches offer. However, they do concede that when employed within a constructionism framework it can offer roughly similar pattern-based approaches related to the spoken word (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Given that most of my data is the spoken word I can see that this aspect of RTA related to DA could be used, however, not in the depth for full DA. They also suggest that RTA could be chosen for purely pragmatic reasons, such as RTA offering more practical guidance, the researcher not committed to full DA and that the research questions are not solely oriented on the effects of language. I would suggest that these pragmatic reasons align with my reasons to rule out DA.

3.5.4 Using Reflective thematic analysis (RTA)

Following the above considerations RTA was chosen. Braun and Clarke (2021) ascertain that reflexive approaches involve later theme development from codes (that themselves are intrinsically subjective, requiring an abundance of reflexivity) and these are 'conceptualised as patterns of shared meaning underpinned by a central organising concept' (p.39). They suggest that this method requires a 'hard slog' that involves 'a lot of analytical and interpretative work' (*ibid*), that is not linear. This does describe the experience of using this approach to data analysis. The process of RTA incorporates six recursive processes, referred to as the six phases of TA by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013, 2021, 2022), they consist of:

1. Familiarisation with the data and identifying items of potential interest
2. Generating codes
3. Generating initial themes
4. Reviewing initial themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

It is important that the phases are not viewed as an 'escalator, more like a recipe for starting your adventure' (Braun and Clarke, 2018, np.), again suggesting that as the researcher moves between the phases, reflexivity will

be their guide. As can be seen below this is in fact what has been experienced in the process of data analysis, especially between phases two and four.

Familiarisation with the data and identifying items of potential interest

Three months were spent on this phase. The data associated with each mentor pair (audio recordings and transcripts) were examined, before moving on to the next mentor pair. A reflexive log has been kept for each mentor pair containing thoughts, considerations, and items of potential interest, post-it notes being used to highlight notable points to be considered later, technically this could be seen as what Layder (1998) would describe as pre-coding.

Generating codes

Codes were ascribed to portions of transcripts to 'symbolically assign a summative, salient, essence capturing and/ or evocative attribute' to them Saldana (2009, p.3). For example, in Figure 3 below the types of codes that were generated are shown. If the code is in inverted commas, then this is a direct quote and as such referred to as an *In Vivo* code.

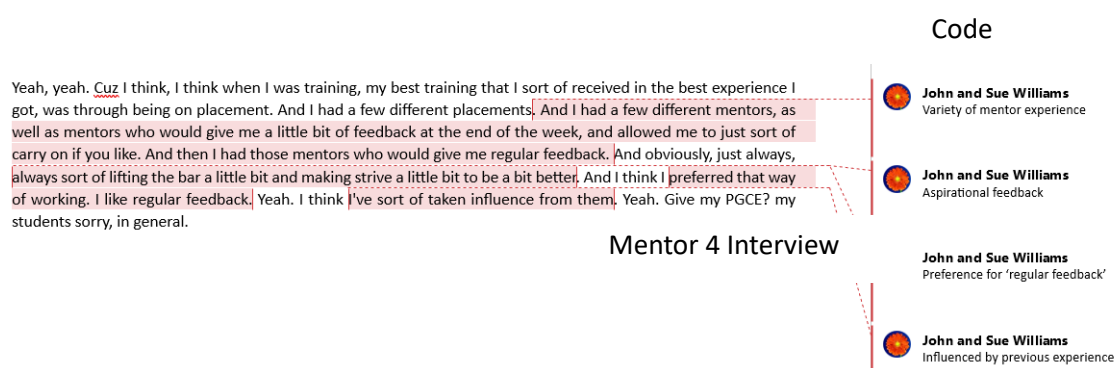


Fig. 3 An example of code generation

First cycle of coding

The data related to each mentor pair were coded on the transcript in pencil and then transferred to flip chart paper using different colours and symbols to indicate which mentor pair the code originated from and if this code was observed being enacted by the mentor pair.

Generating initial themes

Once the first cycle of coding was completed, the codes were arranged together around themes (on flip charts) that had been generated because they

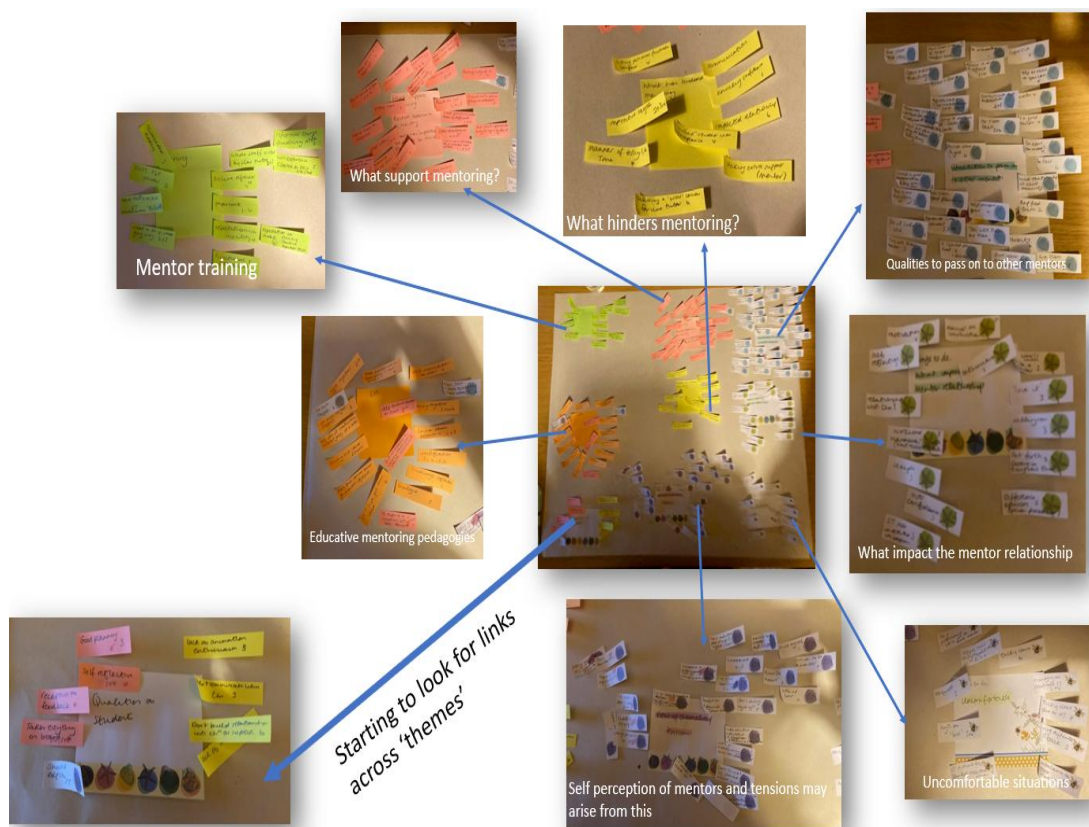


Fig. 5, The second cycle of coding

The codes produced from the second cycle of coding and the themes that have been generated from the mentor interviews were then built on by going then coding across the other data sets (observation of mentor meeting and lesson debrief).

Table 3 below outlines examples of some of the codes ascribed and the potential themes generated. As this is just for illustration purposes, two codes have been chosen for each theme, Further examples of themes generated from codes can be found in Appendix 7.

Examples of codes	Mentors where these codes can be found	Potential themes generated
1. Paperwork dominated 2. Functional and procedural (7 in total)	1. All 2. 2,4,5,6	A. Mentor training
1. Communication that's open/ direct / honest 2. Invest / protect time (13 in total)	1. 5,2,3 2. All	B. What supports mentoring (positive mentoring)
1. Attributes of the students 2. Experience of mentor (2 presently)	1. All 2. 4,2,3,1	C. What could impact the mentor relationship
1. Poor communication 2. Targets continually not met (5 in total)	1. 4,2,3 2. 4,2,3,1	D. What could hinder mentoring
1. Justification 2. Thinking out loud (14 in total)	1. 4,2,3,1 2. 4,2,1	E. Educative mentoring pedagogies recognised
1. Continually learning 2. Question their ability (9 in total)	1. All 2. 2,3	F. Mentors' perceptions of themselves and tensions that may arise due to these
1. Appreciate they are not the finished article 2. Mirror you (5 in total)	1. 4,2,3,1 2. 6,2	G. Qualities to pass on to other mentors
1. Imbalance of effort 2. 'tricky' conversations (4 in total)	1. 4,3 2. 6,2,3,1	H. Uncomfortable situations
1. Work ethic 2. 'self-reflective' (4 in total)	1. 4,1 2. 6,2	I. Qualities of students

Table 3. Examples of codes ascribed to mentor interviews and potential themes generated.

Reviewing initial themes and defining and naming themes

Avoiding the 'escalator' analogy when working within the six-stage process has been relatively easy, but time consuming and messy. Three to four months were spent working at funnelling the codes and themes so that what was included in the final iteration of the generated themes and associated codes reflects the data. Table 4 demonstrates how themes have developed throughout the stages of data analysis.

Themes developed from Mentor Interviews	Themes developed from Mentor and Student teacher interviews Some rewording of Themes (Bold)	Review of Themes after analysis of mentor meetings and lesson debriefs Further rewording of Themes (Bold)	Final Themes (numbers in brackets are the number of codes within the theme)
A. Mentor Training	A. Removed		
B. What supports mentoring	B. Attributes of a supportive mentor	Mentor behaviours leading to a positive mentoring relationship	Mentor behaviours leading to a positive mentoring relationship (28)
C. What could impact the mentor relationship	C. What could impact the mentor relationship	Distributed across B, D, F, H	
D. What could hinder the mentor relationship	D. Attributes and behaviours that could lead to tensions in the mentor relationship	Mentor and Student Teacher behaviours that could lead to tensions in the mentor relationship	Mentor and Student Teacher behaviours that could lead to tensions in the mentor relationship (22)
E. Educative mentoring pedagogies recognised	E. Educative mentoring pedagogies recognised	Educative mentoring pedagogies recognised or enacted	Educative mentoring pedagogies recognised or enacted (22)
F. Mentors perception of themselves and tensions that may arise due to these	F. Mentor's perceptions of themselves that may lead to tensions in the mentoring relationship	Combined with D	
G. Qualities to pass on to other mentors	G. Combined in B. Attributes of a supportive mentor		
H. Uncomfortable situations	H. Situations that may lead to tensions in the mentoring relationship	Situations that may lead to tensions in the mentoring relationship	Situations that may lead to tensions in the mentoring relationship (11)
I. Qualities of students	I. Qualities of students	Combines with K	
	J. Boundaries	Distributed across B or H	
	K. Adoption into the school community	Student teacher adopted into the school community as they are	Student teacher adopted into the school community as they are
	L. Emotional intelligence displayed	Combined with B	

Table 4 how themes have developed throughout the stages of data analysis.

The 'definition' of themes, was interpreted as reflecting the codes that made up that theme, as found in Appendix 7 Having considered the work of Braun and Clarke (2006-2022), the following advice is mentioned time after time and was something I referred to and reflected upon as I moved through the data analysis.

- Avoid single word codes (stage 2)
- Don't rush into themes (stages 3-5)
- Avoid not having a central organising concept, purely based on frequency, domain summary, summary of data collection questions (stages 3-5)
- Be prepared to let things go (stage 5)
- Too many themes (overly complicated thematic structure, overly fragmented analysis) (stage 5)
- Select vivid and compelling examples of data for each theme (stage 6)

The role of the reflective journal

Given that the analysis of the data took place over many months, a reflective journal was used throughout, to keep track of my thinking at the end of each data analysis session. This enabled me to start the next session being reminded as to where I was up to and what I had planned to do next. This was particularly useful and important when reviewing initial themes and being able to define and name the themes that were then carried forward. The following extract gives an example of this from the reflective journal

8.11.23 Should 'educative mentoring pedagogies recognised' during the semi structured interviews be separated from those that were enacted in the mentoring meetings or lesson debrief or brought together in one theme? If they are separated out then it may be that I would appear to be taking a more 'deductive' approach to analysis. If I do this, I may have to lose some of the rich data that has been collected in relation to the behaviours and perceptions of the mentors and STs.

Action: Decide on wording for Theme E and also decide where Theme I fits if anywhere. It'd be a shame to lose it as it may be crucial to how some mentors view STs from the start of their relationship successful mentoring.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has thoroughly looked at the methodology I selected to collect, analyse and communicate the data. A social constructivist approach was adopted alongside an interpretivist stance to examine mentors' and students' articulation and enactment of mentoring and in particular educative mentoring.

Six mentor pairs across three schools participated through an online semi-structured interview, which was followed up by observations of a mentor meeting, a lesson and a lesson debrief, wherever possible. If this wasn't the case a post placement semi structured interview was offered instead. All interviews and observations (except those of the lesson) were audio recorded and transcribed.

Reflective Thematic Analysis (RTA) was selected to analyse the wealth of data generated, both inductively and deductively and to generate themes across all the data sets. This robust application of RTA was seen to be a strength of the research.

A range of ethical issues were addressed so that the integrity of the research was protected as was the identity of the participants.

In the next chapter, the findings will be presented.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter will document the findings from the RTA of semi structured interviews and mentor meeting with all participants, and a lesson debrief where available. Where it was not possible to obtain the latter a post placement semi structured interview was offered.

There are three sections to this chapter. The first section consists of two points that participants agreed with. The second section outlines, across the mentor pairs, examples of the themes that were identified from the RTA. The third section summarises the findings in relation to the research questions.

4.1 Section one: Findings that were common across participants.

The following two points were found to be common in the first point across all participants and the second point across the mentors only. It was felt that they were worthy of inclusion in the findings as they are fundamental concepts that contribute to the exploration of educative mentoring with mentors and STs. They reflect the reality of the world the mentor pairs were operating in.

1. The term Educative Mentoring was not familiar to either any of the mentors or the STs. However, once the term was explained to them, they could describe examples of educative mentoring from practice. The language surrounding the term 'educative mentoring' appeared to be the stumbling block. Educative practices were observed in the mentor meetings and the lesson debriefs. Descriptions of these can be found in section two.
2. All mentors reported that any training they had received from their university partner was functional and limited to ensuring the paperwork

was completed correctly and what to do if the ST was not meeting the required standard.

3. All the STs preferred the mentor to be the class teacher.
4. There was no evidence from either the interviews or the observations of the mentor meetings or lesson debriefs that any of the mentors did learn anything from the STs.

4.2 Section two: The unique stories of how each mentor pair articulated and enacted educative mentoring

In any mentoring relationship, each mentor pairing is unique and this section aims to demonstrate how this is so and to show an understanding of this uniqueness. Appropriate exemplifications of the themes that were decided upon during the RTA process have been selected within and across each mentor pair, to give the reader rich examples of them. To aid the reader, colour codes have been used to highlight the coverage of the themes if appropriate, these are outlined in Table 5 below.

Theme	Colour Code
Mentor behaviour that can lead to a positive mentoring relationship.	
Mentor and student teacher behaviours that can lead to tensions.	
Educative mentoring practices.	
Situations that may lead to tensions.	
Student teacher adopted into the school community as they are	

Table 5 outlines the colour codes used to highlight each theme.

4.2.1 Mentor Pair one: Catherine and Niamh

As a reminder, mentor pair one consisted of Catherine the mentor and Niamh the ST who worked in the Reception Class. Catherine has been at the school for eight years, one of those being a ST. She has been a mentor for six years. Niamh is a third year Early Years undergraduate.

Findings from the online semi structured interviews

There was evidence throughout the data collected from Catherine and Niamh that illustration could be found for most of the Themes. However, during a discussion during Catherine's interview regarding a situation early in her career where she had to go outside the ST relationship, as the student was not making sufficient progress, the following extract illustrates the themes, 'The behaviours of mentors and STs' and 'situations' that may lead to tensions.

He (referring to a previous student teacher) was put in my class as, sort of a support. ((Yeah)). And at that, I found that tricky, in terms of it was earlier on in my career as well. So I hadn't had that experience of those difficult conversations I've just spoken about. ((Yeah)). And that was hard to manage in terms of expectation like marking books, the things that as a class teacher, you have full control over, and also the external pressure of people sort of book looking, not that there's that pressure now... So as the class teacher, you're still fully responsible. But then things aren't being done as you would do them or the expectation is, and even though you've articulated those expectations, I found that hard in a balancing a professional relationship where you understand that that this student needs support, and you want to guide them, but also managing my own stresses of 'things. have got to be good enough'

(Catherine Interview 10.36)

Catherine articulates very well, her perception of how this behaviour can lead to tensions between the mentor and ST. However, in doing so the complexity of this tension is also exemplified, in the following excerpt that Catherine considers if it results from her placing so much store on relationships and invests time in them

and I think I'm a relationship person... but that allows like the students to thrive because I really do invest my time in building that relationship. And I think that's a great foundation for a successful placement as well as the relationships not with just the mentor and the mentee, but the

other staff within school, I think them feeling part of the community gives you confidence to shine. Erm so that I felt like it was a conflict of sort of my natural sort of relationship, wanting to build them...

(Catherine Interview 13.26)

The value of relationships within the school community is also mentioned, this reflects 'we rely on our culture of togetherness', which can be found in the school vision. This extract becomes more significant when Niamh describes how she feels she is 'trusted like a teacher' she felt they (Catherine and the teaching assistant) made her feel this way when they asked her questions they'd ask a teacher. Niamh also cited being left in charge of the class with the teaching assistant, when interviews were being held in the school and Catherine was involved in them, as giving her that sense of belonging.

And like when they had job interviews, obviously, being left with the class was really lovely. They trusted me and the Headteacher went was really appreciative. And I was thinking, Well, no, 'I'm really appreciated'. It gives me that chance...and that they are supportive. Like, you're not such a scary thing to be the teacher because I know if I need the support... they are there and they will jump in and help me straight away. And they're not like, 'Oh, you're the teacher? I'm not doing that'.. It's been really nice to hear the fact that 'we trust you. You are the teacher'

(Niamh interview 16.58)

The significance of this extract is that this situation (as demonstrated by the colour coding) does have the potential to lead to tensions, if the student did not feel ready for this experience. This does also reflect where the mentor pair are at in the development of their collaborative relationship.

Practices that were observed being enacted within the mentor meeting and lesson debrief

The themes 'mentor behaviours that lead to a positive mentoring relationship' and 'educative mentoring' were enacted. Interestingly whilst nurturing, supportive, friendly, and reassuring, were mentioned by the STs in their interviews regarding the positive mentor behaviours they were not mentioned by any mentors. However, all of these were enacted by Catherine.

During the discussion about educative mentoring Catherine cited 'thinking out loud,' co-planning and using children's work to decide on next steps giving examples of them from her practice. Niamh also recognised 'thinking out loud' and justification as aspects of educative mentoring she recognised from her practice. Although neither Catherine nor Niamh cited 'questioning' as an educative mentoring practice, it was evident during the Physical Education lesson debrief that Catherine did use questioning to support Niamh's development and next steps. These were some of the questions she asked

Catherine: But then when they were running, they weren't quite getting where to run. **What could you do to...**

Catherine: So in terms of sort of the next session, **how could you progress that end of the game?** You know, the game that they do at the end? **How could you put a bit of progression in?**

Catherine: So you know, you got Peter at the end, come out and model it. **How could you utilise that for like a whole class assessment?** So you know, you asked him to sort of model what he's learned that lesson, which was overarm throw. **How could you know that all children knew that, that movement and had an understanding of it**

(PE lesson feedback 20.03)

These questions, although quite searching were delivered quite naturally in a conversational manner and Niamh answered quite quickly and knowledgeably, possibly suggesting a supportive, safe environment in which Niamh did not feel threatened by Catherine and that they had developed a collaborative relationship. Niamh was also given the opportunity to suggest her own areas of development and recognise strengths. The areas of development were linked to behaviour management because as the lesson was outside, there had been lots of loose twigs on the ground where the children were sitting at the beginning and the end of the lesson and this became quite a distraction to them. This had been something Niamh was keen to address

4.2.2 Mentor pair two: Kate and John

As a reminder, mentor pair two consisted of Kate the mentor and John the ST who worked in the Year One Class. Kate works part-time and this is her fourth year at the school and she also trained here. She has been a mentor for 3 years. John is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS, specialising in

maths and music. However, due to John contracting Covid it was not possible to collect data from the lesson observation and debrief. A post placement interview took place with John after the end of the Year One placement. John returned to the school to complete a 2-week Early years placement that was a compulsory part of his degree course. Kate also took part in a post placement interview.

Findings from the online semi structured interviews

There was evidence throughout the data collected from Kate and John that illustration could be found for most of the Themes. The following extract where Kate reflects on how she felt having to pass on to John after his first day that the Headteacher had asked in no uncertain terms that his handwriting be improved with immediate effect reflects the theme 'situations that may lead to tensions'. Kate also makes it clear that she does make sure that she updates the Headteacher as to the improvement in John's handwriting indicating the theme 'mentor behaviours' that lead to a positive mentor relationship'.

...it's [*the handwriting*] still not perfect, but he's really trying... And then I did actually go to the Headteacher, like, two weeks later, and I just said 'Just so you're aware John's writing, is you know, is developing and he's trying really hard with it, you know', that's right which was nice to pass that along.. Which is good. But yeah, as I was walking down the corridor [*initially to tell John of the Headteacher's assessment of his handwriting*], I was like how do I word this? you know, me stomach..., and there has been a few times, you know, when I've had to give a bit of feedback, where I felt a little bit uncomfortable saying Well, you haven't done this...but I feel like afterwards. No, it is beneficial.

(Kate interview 23.23)

Evidence for this theme is also duplicated when Kate discusses advice she would give future mentors, supporting STs.

...to basically just try and help as much as you can by being supportive and friendly, and kind. And not everybody's going to know everything...if you can help somebody grow and progress...then you're really making a difference...we're all we're all learning, aren't we? We're all developing all the time. And you were always at that point once ... Think about your mentoring experience and what made you a good teacher. Because you're going to then mirror that to somebody else.

(Kate interview 24.43)

In his interview, interestingly John does talk about a situation where Kate has had to speak to him about him 'letting things slide' (John 20.23) and his response to this.

It was only that last week...she had to step in...definitely that experience, obviously...it's uncomfortable because you feel like you're back in school and getting told off...Her being a teacher, it's sort of like, I know, but you just have to learn from it, that's the way it is I always approached it I thought, at the moment in time, you're like, I'm not that bad ...But yeah, then you take a couple of minutes.

And you think about it. You go 'Oh to be fair, I've not really been up to scratch with that'...so it's meant the critique is a positive mindset...For me at the end of the day.

(John interview 21.26)

In this excerpt John is alluding to the themes 'mentor behaviours that can lead to tensions' and 'ST adopted into the school community as they are'. This quote is pivotal, it would seem, in demonstrating a reflective mindset that could avoid tensions arising.

Practices that were observed being enacted within the mentor meeting

As John contracted Covid during the placement and the lesson observation was scheduled at this time, it was not possible to observe a lesson debrief, only the mentor meeting is referenced here. All themes except 'adoption into a school community' were enacted within the mentor meeting. The meeting itself was quite heavily loaded towards the mentor, in that Kate led the meeting in such a way that there was little input from John. Kate was very thorough with her feedback of John's progress against targets set and those that needed to be ongoing. She outlined very clearly why certain activities and resources serve the pupils and their conceptual development more appropriately. The following excerpt outlines how Kate manages the conversation regarding transitions during lessons.

And one thing, the behaviour on the carpet was great, you know, you're really on it, the one thing to work on is just that transition. Yeah, when some of them are finished. So that's still something that I struggled with sometimes is when you say, 'right, you're finished, go sit on the carpet', and then they linger around, and then they get a little bit silly on the carpet. So when you haven't gotten a TA, sometimes it's difficult, but you could quickly do is get, you know, there could be a good song about everyday materials, you know, the, there's always stuff on YouTube, like, you know,

that they could use that they could, you know, while the travelling back to the carpet, you know, the way I said to you sometimes when they're coming in from phonics, I'll like put months of the year on or you know, a song like that. So, think about how you could do something in that time. Because, you know, they come through in drips and drabs. And you know... that behaviour starts to get a little bit silly when you're still just quickly checking everyone and there's some children here, just you know, it's difficult if there's no TA

(Kate and John mentor meeting (part 2) 9.00)

Throughout the meeting Kate exemplified a lot of behaviours associated with educative mentoring, such as 'sharing knowledge' and 'foregrounding pupils' learning' but the above extract exemplifies 'justification' and 'explanation of practice'. Although the meeting was very much mentor led, John appeared to be engaged throughout and did make affirmation responses throughout, writing points on post it notes. However, John did mention in his interview how Kate would give him opportunity to justify the lesson activity or resources (which is an example of educative mentoring that he recognised) at his lesson debrief, unfortunately this was not seen in action.

The other aspect I've experienced definitely is when we have our mentor meetings about my subject or my sorry, my lesson review. She will ask me what 'how do you think that went? Why do you think you done it that way?' ... I'd get...does give me that opportunity then to voice 'well, I did it that way, I'll say 'I done it like this way because I thought it would do this. Or I thought it would have this out...outcome... And I'm happy that it had that outcome. And I trust that you would see the same thing. If not, I'll try to explain how I've seen that outcome and that that would be my experience

(John interview 31.16)

4.2.3 Mentor pair three: Maureen and Brenda

As a reminder, mentor pair three consisted of Maureen the mentor and Brenda the ST who worked in the Reception class. Maureen has been teaching for twelve years and 10 of them have been at Tyndale school Brenda is a postgraduate Early Years student, having completed an undergraduate degree in Early Childhood studies.

Findings from the online semi structured interviews

There was evidence throughout the data collected from Maureen and Brenda that illustration could be found for most of the themes. The previous experience of mentors and STs was mentioned by some of the participants. During Maureen's interview she did allude to the impact of the previous experience of students that could possibly lead to uncomfortable situations arising in their present placement leading to tensions. These excerpts exemplify the themes 'situations that may lead to tensions', 'mentor and student behaviours that lead to tensions' and 'mentor behaviours that lead to a positive mentor relationship'

A difference of opinion, previous experiences in other schools. Because we're not all the same are we?. We all have different policies. But actually, the way in which we react and respond to everyday situations would be different to the way that our staff members might in other schools... we had a conversation about that today. Yes. Behaviours [*children's behaviour and the management of it*] that are shown and how we respond to those. You, know, do we put the emphasis on it? And are we quite strict with that? Or, do we go about it in a different way? Erm based on previous experiences that students can sort of use the way that they know the way that was encouraged, but it might not necessarily be successfully applied in our particular situation?

(Maureen interview 9.28)

She does explain though that, although some situations may be uncomfortable to deal with, (and lead to tensions), especially in relation to etiquette, these are important conversations to have so that the STs become integrated into the school community.

how very simple things down to how we dress, how we act, how we talk to people, you know, 'do we have our phones out at lunchtime? During our lunch break? No, because it gives off the wrong signals, you know, we've gotta be professional, we've got to make relationships and, and that's what this is about'...you know, at a habit, or more than two or three occasions, and actually, you're kind of it's not just about work, really, you're kind of opening that person's eyes to what seemed to be rude behaviour. So that could be a little awkward topic.

(Maureen interview 22.46)

However, she does refer back to her own personal previous experience of mentoring

And then I had those mentors who would give me regular feedback. And obviously, just always, always sort of lifting the bar a little bit and making strive a little bit to be a bit better. And I think I preferred that way of working. I like regular feedback. Yeah. I think I've sort of taken influence from them. Yeah. Give my PGCE? my students sorry, in general.

(Maureen interview 5.37)

The implication is that that she felt would take this experience into her present mentoring practice because she found it helpful, but it isn't guaranteed that every ST would.

Brenda on the other hand does refer to her previous experience in relation to how the mentor being the class teacher is the preferred arrangement (as did all the other STs).

Er it's better here than it was in my last placement on the last placement erm the mentor... she wasn't the class teacher, she was another class teacher. The way the school was set out is two buildings, one for infants one for the juniors, and...so I only saw her once a week for about half an hour... with my class teacher, it was very, like quick little, a couple of minutes here and there for like, a bit of support. And then that was it...Here it is better with erm my class teacher being my mentor as well. I know, I can talk at any point.

(Brenda interview 5.37)

It would seem, being able to talk to the mentor as and when situations arose was thought to be more beneficial than waiting for a weekly formal meeting, where that was the only interaction, the ST had with the mentor.

Practices that were observed being enacted within the mentor meeting and lesson debrief

As with previous mentor pairs, most of the themes were noted during their lesson debrief or mentor meeting. In relation to educative mentoring pedagogies, although Maureen recognised the pedagogies of 'justification of practice' and 'co-planning' and Brenda recognised 'talking out loud', 'justification' and debriefing' what was observed a couple of times was the

practice of bi-focal lens 'Addressing the long-term goals of novices as well as short-term concerns'

I think that would be really good. That'd be really good. And also they've, they've had that modelling [*Brenda had suggested a role play she'd considered using to recap the role of bees in pollination*] from their other peers haven't they?. So yeah, good thinking. And I've put I've also got another question. Can you think of the areas of learning that you're planning is linked to this week because I was just thinking this ties in with your topic. Our assessment and subject knowledge, I'm thinking about our framework((are you thinking about the EYFS)) just wondering if you know which areas of learning you are planning with?

(Brenda and Maureen Mentor meeting 13.34)

I've put here basically lots of skills involved. So broken it down. Er you add obviously the counting is an obvious one, number names number order. Let's not take that for granted (No). And particularly for some of our children, you had estimating in there, cardinality as well saying the amount that's in the set, counting to 20. Erm, Yeah, I thought it's a really successful lesson really good. And then in terms of like subject knowledge again. We know where we've come from. We know what the learning was like beforehand and how that's been built on in the lesson. But, in terms of perhaps the framework, the early learning goal Do you know where this objective sort of stands within that?

(Maureen Lesson debrief 14.09)

and following this question Maureen went on to explain why she was asking the question and how there was an application to the answer to this question.

Do you know why I'm asking you that? It's not to trip you up it's just because we are nearing the end of the year aren't we? And although like the early learning goal, isn't the goal in the sense that every child must get there, because we've got to think about the children as they are. And they all have different goals, don't they, you know, there's some children in there who perhaps won't reach that. However, you know, we've got in our heads where we want them to get them to so they've got the foundations when they go into year one. But it's still we still got to be mindful of that. Because of course, we're thinking about where they've come from, where they're going in as well with their learning. So I do think that you would benefit a lot from making sure that you have those erm goals in your head

(Lesson debrief, 15.17)

This was something I saw Maureen do when the opportunity arose.

4.2.4 Mentor pair four: Angela and Mary

As a reminder, mentor pair four consisted of Angela the mentor and Mary the ST who worked in the Year One class. Angela has been working at the school for ten years, ever since qualifying and has been a mentor for six years. Mary is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS, specialising in English and Art. The data was collected from January to February 2021, between week six and nine of Niamh's final 12-week placement. However, due to sensitivities surrounding Mary requiring additional support from the school and university for her to complete the placement successfully, it was felt best that the lesson observation and debrief should not be observed to avoid any additional pressure on Mary. Angela suggested a post placement interview as an alternative, but no further contact was had with Mary.

Findings from the online semi structured interviews

There was evidence across the data collected from Angela and Mary that illustration could be found for all the Themes. Angela was very clear that mentors should remember they were a student once and that they should allow STs to take risks (even if mistakes are made and things go horribly wrong) that they can learn in this supportive environment, which was something she herself had benefitted from when training. This reflected what other mentors had mentioned in interviews.

I always try and remember that I was a student. Yeah. Because, and that they are actually, you're their teacher in this sense, because they are learning and they'll only learn by. Well, if you don't let them they're never going to learn. So, I always try and I sort of push them into their...out of their comfort zone, you know, 'go take the register, while I do this job', because they need those experience. So, really I suppose, you know, just give them these opportunities. So... I may or might give something for my students to do, it might go horribly wrong. But hopefully she'll learn from it and move forward. Or she might fly with it. So, you won't know until you give them the opportunity.

(Angela interview 26.41)

I did see this in the mentor meeting, and Angela had a wealth of ideas that she shared and sometimes modelled with Mary in a very enthusiastic and

animated way. However, Angela was clear than not all teachers she had met at meetings felt this way. Angela described how important open communication between the ST, university tutor and the Headteacher was throughout the placement, but especially should things go wrong. She was also certain that clear targets should be set and this also helped to intervene sooner rather than later.

Mary gave examples of how it is important that mentors recognise that a ST may be upset by feedback or the tone they've used and what to do if this happens

I got a bit upset because she was getting a bit annoyed at me about my planning. She wasn't like, having a go at me. She was just getting more annoyed. And I just got upset thinking, I'm not doing her justice... it might have just been more of a tone. It's just, it wasn't her fault. It was just the way it made me feel. But I hadn't done her, yeah, like justice and I've let her down and that's how that made me feel. But then afterwards, she realised and then she came to me, and then we talked it out.

(Mary interview 11.40)

This is quite astute as Mary seems to be able to distinguish between the fact that the criticism was fair but how it made her feel was what had upset her. Going on from this It was interesting that Mary, when describing what she felt the attributes of mentors were described characteristics that she had given earlier in the interview about how she'd been treated by mentors previously

just support your students as much as you can. I would say just, if they are struggling, and they're getting very upset about it's cos they care because they don't want to let you as the mentor down because I know that's how I get I feel. I feel like I'm letting Angela down. And I'm doing it all wrong. And I think sometimes you've just got to, as the mentor, reassure someone, 'maybe if you continue with the like, you're doing fine. We're all like this. It's fine'.

(Mary interview 15.34)

She also described the way she ended up working with a mentor in a heavily supported and directed manner and in doing so had been less independent, hence struggling to meet the standards required to complete that placement successfully. However, she did then go on to describe attributes that she felt

would be supportive that did reflect this heavily supported and less independent manner.

And just basically just help them along. Just do step by step. Don't just give it em all at once. Don't just be like, 'Hey, do this, this this.' No, just maybe just say 'maybe tonight, you could do this. And tomorrow night. We can do this together'. I think it's just supporting people. And just really just helping genuinely not overloading the student.

(Mary interview 16.37)

Practices that were observed being enacted within the mentor meeting

Whilst Angela cited co-planning and thinking out loud as educative mentoring practices that she recognised. However, she described in the first interview what she described as the 'dialogue' of co-planning and the following explains this

I feel like at the minute that is, that's very much like erm, you know, we plan together. I've got all my plans, which I would share. She gets all my plans anyway. But planning together and say, right, so this is what I did. This is how I plan. So let's, let's plan this one together. So we do one together and then she would have a go, and then we'd come back. Right, talk me through what are you going to do? Like, how did you find that?

(Angela interview 30.09)

This was concurred by Mary who gave the following example of planning for writing in an English lesson

So we've done that for the writing at the moment. So I've, never taught writing, I've writing different to obviously teaching English in Year 4 Yes, yeah. But what we did last week, was we looked I was leading on from what she's already started. So we looked at what she'd taught, we sat down and then we wrote for two weeks worth of work. What I can do every day, so we have done that as well. Well, yeah, we sat there and written like, right, Monday, we can do this for them, choose it, and then I'll go off and actually plan it.

(Mary interview 21.56)

Unfortunately, however, by the time Angela was interviewed again after the placement had ended, she admitted that co-planning was a case of Angela sharing what she would do without any input from Mary, not that Angela wasn't open to this it was just not forthcoming. Hence the description of a

‘dialogue’ of co-planning but not co-planning in the educative mentoring sense

When describing ‘thinking out loud, Angela described a lot of examples of this but one example was in relation to her tone of voice and gestures used when talking to the class.

In the last week's meeting, I was trying to try to have a little bit of a tricky conversation about being a bit more animated, and interested in the children, but without saying 'pay more attention'!! So I said, I said, 'you know, they're excited by everything'. So I modelled I'm modelled just giving, I have these assessment books, that's just a regular book. I make it sound really exciting to the children, they love writing in them. So I modelled this to her in our meeting. I said, So on Monday, I'm going to introduce them. So I gave a bit of an example. I'm going to introduce them. So did loads of [exciting voices and gestures about these books]

(Angela Interview, 31.04)

In the mentoring meeting it was interesting to see Angela model lots of examples of what Mary might do to meet her targets or plans for the week ahead. Angela naturally shared her practice as examples of what Mary may like to do and she was indeed very enthusiastic and engaging. However, during the post placement interview Angela revealed that Mary never really managed to translate her modelling into her own practice, not really engaging the pupils or appearing to be interested in them.

Mary did recognise Angela had used thinking out loud at the start of the practice

definitely at the start, when I didn't know the children, she'd be like, Oh, I'm working. I'm putting these children here. Because they need more support and that definitely happened, especially when I was getting to know the children, and then that because obviously, that then helps me.

(Mary interview 23.35)

During the mentor meeting ‘thinking out loud’ and ‘exemplifying practice’ was clearly a strength of Angela’s mentoring and there were a lot of examples of this and Mary was given opportunities to set her own targets.

4.2.5 Mentor pair five: Agnes and Edwina

As a reminder, mentor pair five consisted of Agnes the mentor and Edwina the ST who worked in the Year Two class. Agnes has been qualified for 12 years, this is her fifth year at KAPS and she does not have any experience of mentoring. Edwina is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS, specialising in maths. Agnes was interviewed prior to the start of the placement and the rest of the data was collected during weeks 2-5 of this final 12-week placement.

Findings from the online semi structured interviews

There was evidence throughout the data collected from Agnes and Edwina that illustration could be found for all the Themes. This excerpt from Agnes' interview illustrates how she articulates that from previous experience, she has benefitted from her mentor's manner not knocking her confidence and how she would try and do the same

I suppose being told to do something in a negative way, probably would, would put me off and knock your confidence. So as a mentor, I would avoid doing that. And if somebody is not doing something, the way that I feel that they should I'd try and help them to realise that on their own and do it as a way of going about things isn't there and not moving in confidence.

(Agnes interview 6.37)

It's interesting that Agnes uses the phrase 'not doing something the way that I feel they should' suggesting that her way is the only way. Additionally, from this comment it is difficult to decide whether 'I'd try and help them to realise this on their own' implies that somehow the ST would be encouraged to come round to her way of doing things. It also raises the question about any difference there may be between modelling and mimicking.

It was noteworthy what Edwina did **not** say when discussing attributes of a mentor and the use of the word '**especially**' below could be quite revealing. She did not say much about her present school, which may not have been an issue because she had not long started in that placement, however, she had

volunteered in the previous summer term. This is fascinating as it shows how previous experience in a placement although adopting the student into the school community, can lead to tensions in another school if this practice is not evident.

I mean being quite friendly. Especially in my last school, like they had like a very close-knit team of year 6 teachers, because I was in year six, and from right from the get go, the class teacher made an effort to include me and the other students in that group. And we joined in with a lot of things that like they went on out for lunch on a Friday to Subway, and we were invited in the first week.

(Edwina Interview 7.05)

Later in the interview she returned to this theme of friendliness, expanding on the aspect of belonging that this engendered

because especially in my last placement, my class teacher is very good at going, you're a teacher now, talk to the people in the staff[room], say hello to people in the morning, you are a teacher, you're one of us. She still was my superior, she still was my mentor, but like, made an effort to kind of include us in the staff life.

(Edwina interview 20.56)

Practices that were observed being enacted within the mentor meeting and lesson debrief

Curiously, at the start of the lesson debrief, Agnes was sat on one side of the table with Edwina on the other side directly opposite. Edwina half stood and suggested that it may be better if she came round and sat next to Agnes and Agnes replied quite sternly 'No, you just stay where you are.' Edwina sat back down and looked embarrassed and deflated. This very short interaction was quite the opposite of what Agnes had said in the interview about how she would make a ST feel. The majority of the meeting was very much filled with a lot of examples of the mentor telling the student what to do and the ST said very little. She did in fact ask Edwina 'How do you think the lesson went?' and when Edwina initially replied 'They didn't get it, they weren't really listening to each other in pairs' (Lesson observation feedback) she moved straight on to ask her 'Would you change anything' without making any comment about what Edwina had said.

This practice is probably leaning towards the antithesis of educative mentoring, where there is a nurturing collaborative relationship developing. This lack of collaboration had been seen during the lesson observation in that Agnes sat to the front at one side of the class and did not move very much from behind her computer screen until it was clear that the lesson was over running (it was the end of the day), when without any interaction with Edwina she stood up and addressed the class saying

If you have finished, put your books in the box by the bin and go and collect everything you need for going home

(Agnes during Lesson observation)

From then on Agnes took over the ending of the lesson and dismissing the class, something she referred to in the lesson observation feedback

Your timing, that was a target it was good, but you did over run which is why I intervened or we wouldn't have been ready for them to go home

(Agnes Lesson debrief 10.06)

Under normal conditions, over running at the end of the day is not ideal, but wouldn't necessarily require an intervention. However, during this stage of the pandemic classes and parents had strict routines of how and when the children were to exit their classes and meet their parents to avoid unnecessary mixing of 'bubbles', this could therefore explain Agnes' quick intervention.

However, Agnes did turn this into a positive comment, exemplifying what she had said in her interview about not detrimentally impacting confidence when mentoring, this thread continued through into praising Edwina's interaction with the children

You over ran because of the insecure readers you chose. However, it was good that once you realised, they were not confident, you didn't shatter their confidence but encouraged and corrected as necessary.

(Agnes lesson debrief 11.01)

However, she had mentioned the 'reader selection' earlier in the feedback

What I like about this class is that whether they are confident readers or not they all volunteer. So, the ones you chose were not massively secure readers so maybe check with me so you can ask the more confident ones or fix it if they all put their hands up to choose the more confident ones.

(Agnes Lesson debrief 15.17)

Whilst this is good advice, but demonstrates a more traditional mentor role this could have been 'teased' out of Edwina, had a more collaborative, educative mentoring and less didactic approach been used. This contradicted Agnes' suggestion in the interview of how she would approach a mentee not doing something the ways she thought they should be done. This could be also explained by Agnes' not having any previous experience as a mentor and it would be churlish to expect her to enact everything she described as good practice in her interview.

4.2.6 Mentor pair six: Gillian and Janet

As a reminder, mentor pair six consisted of Gillian the mentor and Janet the ST who worked in the Year One class. Gillian has been qualified for five years and this is her fifth-year teaching at KAPS. She has four years mentor experience. Janet is a third-year undergraduate in Primary with QTS. The data was collected from November and December 2020, Gillian was interviewed prior to the start of the placement and the rest of the data was collected during weeks 2-5 of this final 12-week placement.

Findings from the online semi structured interviews

There was evidence across all Gillian and Janet's data sets that illustration could be found for all the Themes except 'Adoption into the school community.'

The following selection from Gillian's interview does express how uncomfortable that some mentors feel in relation to having a ST 'take over' their class leading to tensions.

...it's the sometimes it's the, the letting go, isn't it. So it's like your class, your responsibility. And then when you are handing it to somebody, and you... its trying to teach them that they need to be doing it the same

way as you. Because if not, there's going to be an issue in behaviour management...

(Gillian interview 12.07)

This again suggests a more traditional view of mentoring where there is the expectation of the ST copying the mentor. There is very much a power imbalance of student – teacher relationship here where the mentor is 'teaching' the student.

Gillian does go on to show recognition that the student is not the finished article, which is a supportive attribute. However, again there is an interesting choice of words when discussing a student that had struggled previously. The suggestion was that there was a requirement for the ST to 'make the children' behave in a certain way with regards to general class procedures and in turn this will earn them 'respect' as they will be 'seen as a teacher'.

.... And they're not going to be you know, of a standard that a teacher that's been teaching a few years is going to be but they need to have the basics down don't they... Sometimes I feel like some students can be like, right, I'm going to go in, and I'm going to do this, when actually they need to be able to make the children, you know, sit down, listen, and it's all about respect really isn't it? They [the pupils] have to have the same respect *[towards the ST as they would towards the teacher]*. And sometimes, like that student yeah that was a bit of an issues, you know, them seeing her...as not a teacher...

(Gillian interview 14.44)

Janet on the other hand focusses a lot of her interview on attributes of the mentor in relation to being nurturing and taking time to get to know the ST, especially if they are anxious.

I definitely think nurturing is a bit a big thing, personally, because of my personality, because I'm shy and sensitive and stuff like that. I think so getting to know, the mentee as a person, if I know their personality, so if they don't work well, under pressure or like quick, something like that, getting to know them, to know how they work and what would help them. If you don't know them, and you've given them things that they wouldn't either understand, or be able to work from or do that at that time.

(Janet interview 18.55)

She does go on to discuss the setting of targets, suggesting this can be a negative experience.

I think if you just gonna look for I think targets are good. But if you're just gonna look for targets all the time, it's not going to motivate them mentee. Just I feel like put them down as opposed to wanting them to do better..

(Janet interview 19.22)

She expands this to encompass formal observations and how they can have a negative impact

I definitely think lessons should be observed. But sometimes I think it's a bit off put in if someone sat at the back with a pen and piece paper staring at ye, I don't I don't know how they should be but I feel like yeah, that's a bit scary for a trainee.

(Janet 19.45)

The significance in the above extract lie in their reflection of Janet's anxious personality and her need for nurturing.

Practices that were observed being enacted within the mentor meeting and lesson debrief

Gillian recognised co-planning as an educative mentoring practice she had used with mentees and exemplified how this had worked with one of her previous mentees

So, with the student I had last year, he was the PGCE...because we were going into a new term. So, we did the medium-term plan together. So, he saw helped me, you know, plan the term. So, he knew what was coming... and he could see the progression of skills, and then he'd put his input in and we'd discuss why and what was happening. So, that that's one thing. And then, like, weekly, we'd sit down with me, and I'd be like, we're gonna do... geography and then I've maybe give him the objective, and then he'd go away and think of the lesson, and then would we discuss it together again. Yeah. And then once I had observed him, we'd sit down and discuss what went well, and what he thought went well, and what could be improved in.

(Gillian Interview 17.01)

What was interesting about this is that she continued this description explaining that eventually the student was able to set his own targets which she agreed with and this was due to the development of his reflective skills through the tools he had been given at his university.

Gillian enacted this in the lesson observation debrief with Janet, in that she did discuss with Janet how Janet felt the lesson went. Initially Janet was physically upset because she felt the lesson had not gone well but once Gillian had reassured her that it had not been disastrous, they did work collaboratively through what had gone on and discussed what could be done differently. For example, this was one of the first times Janet had taught the whole class together, starting off with the input on the carpet at the front of the class and they worked through what had happened and how this could be improved

Janet: at the start I noticed that the way they were sat not all of the children could see so I moved them around

Gillian: yes, that was good, you're right with the staggered seating they all couldn't see, but you rectified this. For next time how about you observe me with larger groups, I have two lessons next week with maths that would be good. You can then copy what I do and see if that works for you.

(Lesson observation debrief 10.36)

The use of the word 'copy' again is worthy of note. Janet had previously described this practice as good mentoring when

I feel like a good mentoring session would consist of the mentor guiding you like I think there's there's a difference between telling you what what went well and what didn't go well and then guiding you to do better? There's a difference between just telling you and then, like help assisting you with the next steps.

(Janet interview 14.34)

Janet recognised co-planning or collaboration as aspects of educative mentoring that she recognised. This was enacted in the lesson debrief when Janet initially described the lesson as being 'awful, they were crazy and distracted' and became overwhelmed and physically upset. Gillian reassured her that it wasn't a disaster and that she shouldn't be too hard on herself. Janet highlighted that there were children not listening when on the carpet and she said she had tried using the phrase 'I'm waiting' and tried to not teach again until it was quiet. Gillian agreed this was a good strategy

but before saying 'I'm waiting' you could have praised the ones who are doing as you had described with the carpet rules at the beginning,

by saying 'Lucy and Tom well done you are sitting beautiful', so its important not to ignore those who aren't doing what you want but what you say is more important.

(Lesson debrief 14.45)

When targets were being set at the end of the lesson observation debrief, 'positive reinforcement' was suggested by Janet with Gillian's agreement, demonstrating their developing collaboration.

4.2.7 Section two summary

The examples above were chosen to illustrate how mentor pairs articulated the themes during their interviews and articulated them during the observations of mentor meetings and lesson debriefs. Care was taken to select examples so that the all themes were exemplified across section two.

It would have not been useful (or practical) to include all the examples of each theme as enacted or articulated by the mentor pairs, therefore, Table 6 below was constructed to demonstrate the distribution of themes across the mentor pairs from the semi structured interview data.

Theme	Colour code	Mentor pair one	Mentor two	Mentor pair three	Mentor pair four	Mentor pair five	Mentor pair 6
Mentor behaviour that can lead to a positive mentoring relationship.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mentor and student teacher behaviours that can lead to tensions.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Educative mentoring practices.			✓		✓	✓	✓
Situations that may lead to tensions.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student teacher adopted into the school community as they are		✓		✓	✓	✓	

Table 6 To demonstrate the distribution of themes across the mentor pairs from the semi structured interview data

How the themes were distributed across the other data sets (semi structured interview, observation of mentor meeting and lesson debrief) can be found in Appendix 9.

4.3 Section three: Findings related to the research questions.

This section then looks in more depth as to how the research questions were answered from within the online semi structured interviews, the mentor meeting and lesson debrief. Codes and themes are referred to, in order to demonstrate how they feed into the answering of the research questions.

4.3.1 RQ1: What perceptions do mentors and student teachers have of mentoring and educative mentoring in particular?

Mentoring

The findings related to this research question came from the codes that were allocated to responses to the semi structured interviews questions relating to the attributes of mentors that would be helpful to STs. These codes then became part of the theme ‘Mentor behaviours that lead to a positive mentor relationship’ Table 7 below shows that mentor attributes cited by mentors, STs and those that overlapped.

Mentor	Mentor and Student Teacher	Student Teacher
Invest, protect time (R: All) Previous experience emulated or portrayed (2,3,5) Mentor led evaluation (2,3,4,5) Avoid negatively impacting ST confidence (R: 2,4,4) Success of the ST celebrated (R:1,6) An enthusiastic ST (1,4) Provide opportunities for ST own ideas (4) Push subject knowledge (6) Attributes of the students (All) Experience of mentor (1,2,3,4)	Communication that's open, direct, honest. Dialogue (R: 2,3,5 and 1,2) Holistically discuss pupils and their learning. (1,3,4 and 1) Relationship is built up (R: 1,2,4 and 1,2,6) Reflecting emotional words (R: 2 and 2) Appreciate they are not the finished article (R: 3,1 and All) Mirror you (R: 2,6 and 6) 1. Show support (R: 1,2,5,6 and 1,4) Aspirational behaviours (R: 2,3,4 and 1,3,6)	Friendly (R: 5) Nurturing (R: 6) Approachable (R: 1, 3, 6) Reassuring (R: 2, 4, 5) Positive (R: 1, 2, 5) Discuss expectations from both sides (R: 2, 3, 4, 5) Not a monster (R:1, 2, 3) Understood and abided by university guidance (3) Knows when to ‘push’ or stand back (R: 2, 3) Respond in a personalised way to each individual ST (dynamic) (R: 1,2,3,4,6)

Key
R= relational attribute
Numbers = mentor pair
Numbers **highlighted** in the central column = ST response

Table 7: mentor attributes of mentors that would be helpful to ST's as cited by mentors, STs and those that overlapped.

1. More of the attributes that were cited by just the STs were 'relational' than those cited by just the mentors.
2. Most of those attributes that were cited by both the mentors and STs were relational.
3. Attributes associated with educative mentoring were equally distributed across mentors, STs and both mentors and STs.

Although relationships are not explicitly described in the literature relating to educative mentoring, as the fundamental premise of educative mentoring is that it occurs between a mentor and a mentee, the development of the relationship would seem crucial.

Educative mentoring

The findings related to this research question came from the responses of the participants to a question in the semi structured interview. The participants were read a statement explaining what educative mentoring was and describing some examples. Participants were then asked if they identified any of these examples of educative mentoring and if so to give specific instances from their practice.

Table 8 below shows that educative mentoring practices cited by mentors, STs and those that overlapped

Educative mentoring practices articulated by mentors and student teachers		
Mentors	Both Mentors and STs	STs
ST setting their own targets Using pupil work to plan lessons	Thinking out loud Co-planning Justification Feedback Debriefing	Joint Targets

Figure 8: Educative mentoring practices cited by mentors, STs and those that overlapped.

There was a great similarity between the articulation of educative mentoring practices between mentors and ST's.

1. Mentors and ST's differed in their articulation of target setting within educative mentoring. Mentors mentioned working with ST's to set their own targets whereas ST's spoke more frequently about their targets being set by or with their mentors.
2. Only one mentor could articulate how pupils' work could be used to plan during educative mentoring.

4.3.2 RQ2: What educative mentoring practices are enacted during the mentoring relationship?

During the coding step of RTA, some of the codes that contributed to the Theme 'educative mentoring' were educative mentoring pedagogies that came from the educative mentoring literature. The findings related to this research question come from the enactment of these during the mentor meetings and lesson debriefs.

Table 9 below summarises the educative mentoring practices that were observed across mentor meetings or lesson debriefs. The * symbol represents the pedagogies that had been part of the statement participants had heard defining educative mentoring during their interviews. The numbers on the side are the number of examples seen of that practice.

Number of examples was seen	Educative mentoring practices.
4	Dialogue*, sharing knowledge, giving feedback, observing and giving feedback*, showing and telling, asking and listening, questioning, joint working*, thinking like a teacher
3	Foreground pupil learning*
2	Thinking out loud*, stepping in, explaining practice*, bifocal lens, justification and reasoning*
1	Analysis of pupil work, interrogating practice*

Table 9: Summary of the educative mentoring practices that were observed across mentor meetings or lesson debriefs

1. Most of the educative mentoring practices enacted are those most seen in the literature (and described to the participants in their interviews).
2. Educative mentoring practices additional to the above required the mentor to be an experienced mentor (a mentor that has had a number of years of both teaching and mentoring).
3. The mentor would initially be the 'driving' force for these educative mentoring practices being developed. Only if the ST has the capacity to work in this way would there eventually be a shared contribution to the enactment. This could be linked to the mentorability of the ST as discussed in chapter 5.
4. The educative mentoring practices enacted could be arranged in a hierarchy, dependent on the level of the development of pedagogical knowledge (of both the mentor and ST) and the development of the relationship that was within the mentor pairs. This will be discussed further on pages 124-126, with the hierarchy being outlined in figure 6 on page 124

4.3.3. RQ3: What supports the mentor relationship so it could be conducive to educative mentoring?

The findings related to this research question came from the analysis of all the data sets and the findings already discussed in section two. Where educative mentoring was observed, skills or attributes or environments were noted that were deemed to support the mentor relationship within the mentor pairs.

1. The mentor and ST have the skills and are willing to build and invest in a collaborative partnership (a fundamental attribute for educative mentoring). The converse may also occur. The composition of the mentor pairs in relation to their previous experiences and mentorability of the ST's may also play a part. These are discussed in Chapter five, finding four and summarised in Table 12.

Example A: The ST either has experience of working alongside a professional and their contribution has felt listened to or is aware of and open to this way of working.

This was seen during the observation of the weekly mentor meeting between Maureen and Brenda. The meeting occurred in the classroom whilst the children were at their morning assembly. The meeting took longer than expected and the children started to return to the classroom with the Teaching Assistant, Maureen indicated she would go and find another room for us to continue the meeting in. All the children had returned from assembly before Maureen had come back. The children started to become a little restless, so Brenda, spoke to the Teaching Assistant and then proceeded to confidently lead the children in action songs, with which they all joined in enthusiastically. Maureen returned, praised the class for their beautiful singing and great example to the visitor (me). As we walked to the new venue, I asked Maureen, if this was a regular occurrence for Brenda to do this. She indicated not, but that it was an example that she had seen of how Brenda called upon her previous experience of a Teaching Assistant prior to university, during her time at TPS.

Example B: The mentor has experience of supporting adult learners to excel and has support from others within the school or university partnership to do this.

During her first interview, Catherine outlined a time, early in her career when she worked with a student that was struggling, she felt the experience was 'tricky' (Catherine Interview, 11.02), explaining

I hadn't had that experience of those difficult conversations I've just spoken about. And that was hard to manage in terms of expectation like marking books, the things that as a class teacher, you have full control over, and also the external pressure of people sort of book looking... So as the class teacher, you're still fully responsible. But then things aren't being done as you would do them or the expectation is, and even though you've articulated those expectations, I found that hard in a balancing a professional relationship where you understand that that this student needs support, and you want to guide them, but also managing my own stresses of 'things. have got to be good enough.

(Catherine Interview, 11.05-12.05)

However, Catherine does to go on to expand on the fact that as she was inexperienced and didn't have the confidence in dealing with other adults, that she now has she had to go outside the mentor relationship.

I did seek sort of external support in terms of going... at the time, to the head of the teaching school to raise my concerns, and ...for them to take the lead on it really. And then it meant that sort of, ...things were dealt with sort of beyond me. And I think he was on a support plan. (Catherine Interview, 12.50)

Other mentors, Angela and Gillian also described times when they were able to source advice from their Headteacher and the university Link Tutor.

2. The mentor is aware of the physical positioning of the ST when meeting with them.

Example A: Sitting next to or at right angles to each other and making eye contact was seen as being more supportive than sitting opposite each other, behind a computer screen.

There were three different seating arrangements seen when observing mentor meetings or lesson debriefs.

Firstly, Catherine and Niamh, Maureen and Brenda and Gillian and Janet all positioned themselves next to the ST or invited the ST to sit next to them. Maureen and Brenda and Gillian and Janet sat at children's desks in the classroom, they both had lap top computers and there was ease of exchange between them with both looking at each other's computers through the course of the meeting. Catherine and Niamh sat on the floor next to each other during their mentor meeting (due to proximity of this position to plug sockets for their laptops) and sat next to each other during the lesson debrief.

Secondly, Angela and Mary sat at right angles to each other at a table in the staff room and there was ease of communication across what they were writing or had written on their lap top computers.

Thirdly, Kate and John and Agnes and Edwina sat opposite each other at children's desk in the classroom. The mentors Kate and Agnes had lap top computers but the STs John and Edwina did not. John used a 'post it' note to record points to use in the future and Edwina used a note book.

Despite the differences in seating arrangements there was conversational dialogue between the mentor and ST, except between Kate and John and

Agnes and Edwina. In the latter two cases the mentor spoke most during the interactions and the ST said very little. However, it was noticed that only Agnes and Edwina had little or no eye contact compared the to the other mentors and ST's. There was also an awkwardness from the start of the lesson debrief meeting when Edwina asked if she should come round and sit next to Agnes and read the feedback on her computer as she went through it. Agnes replied 'No, you can just stay there'. Edwina looked hurt and said very little throughout the rest of the meeting.'

3. The mentor has a good knowledge of subjects and pedagogy, can justify them, developing a pedagogical relationship with the ST and employing a bifocal lens.

Example A: During the mentor meeting between Kate and John, Kate referred to a lesson that John had delivered in Maths and it had become apparent that the work sheets were too difficult.

that worksheet was just too hard for them you know now and they... they do know doubles because they have to learn doubles in reception, but they wouldn't know...that high, ... So I thought just quickly... go through White Rose it take five minutes and you could just see the previous objective so you know what their prior learning is before because yes, that is an objective for year one but they haven't been taught it yet, so some of them just got on with it ...[but with some] its just gone straight over their head because they haven't really had the time or the skill to develop the knowledge of adding three numbers you know, so they'll know like two add eight or five add six, but it's when you add that third number in they don't understand just yet to have eight add to two, so I know that's 10 and then I'm adding that, you know, so they haven't got the, like the knowledge to hold that 10 in their head before they move on to they could have used some equipment to help them, you know Y, so yes, the sheet was too hard. (Kate and John mentor meeting 5.00)

As can be seem from the above extract, Kate discussed with John why this was. She then went on to how to avoid this happening in the future and if it should happen how to respond.

But then during the lesson [its] just about being there in the moment and thinking of an alternative plan so always having a backup in your head ready. You know it's easy enough to say, okay, well scrap

the sheets, and we'll practice our 100 square, you know, that's easy, but then just think about right, okay, this is too hard. What can I give them now to help them achieve it? Or just say, right, everyone, let's stop, let's look at some questions on the board. And then you could just quickly demonstrate, or you could say, right, I'm going to give you some counters, or go and get this table, some cubes, you know, give them some time, just sometimes just thinking on the spot. But that will develop over time.

(Kate and Andrew mentor meeting 5.30)

Although the educative mentoring practice of employing a 'bi-focal lens' is evident in relation to how John may prepare for his future teaching of Maths, Kate also shares her knowledge of the cognitive development of maths in the children in that she refers to an objective as being appropriate for Year One but that objective is built on previous knowledge that needs revisiting with the children prior to introducing this present objective.

Example B: During the lesson debrief after Brenda had taught a maths lesson to the Reception class Maureen did ask Brenda where the lesson objective fitted within the Early Years Framework.

We know what the learning was like beforehand and how that's been built on in the lesson. But, in terms of perhaps the framework, the early learning goal Do you know where this objective sort of stands within...It?

(Maureen and Brenda lesson debrief, 15.04)

Maureen went on to explain that this question was not to trip Brenda up but as it was nearing the end of the year and they would need to know where each child was in relation to the goals of the Early Years Framework.

the early learning goal, isn't the goal in the sense that every child must get there, because we've got to think about the children as they are. And they all have different goals, don't they, you know, there's some children in there who perhaps won't reach that. However, you know, we've got in our heads where we want them to get them to so they've got the foundations when they go into year one. But it's still we still got to be mindful of that. Because of course, we're thinking about where they've come from, where they're going in as well with their learning. So I do think that you would benefit a lot from making sure that you have those erm goals in your head.

(Maureen, Lesson debrief 15.19)

This excerpt demonstrates that, Maureen and Brenda are developing a pedagogical relationship within which Maureen is sharing her knowledge of using the Early Years Framework to plan suitable objectives 'fore fronting' children's knowledge. She communicates clearly that she is employing a bifocal lens as she knows that Brenda needs to be more familiar with not only the Early Year Framework and associated learning goals, but also must know how these are built on in Year one.

4. The ST feels known and is made to feel like an established teacher. Trust is being built, again a fundamental attribute for educative mentoring.

Example A: During the interview with Janet, she linked the fact that Gillian had taken an interest in her personal life to her being able to start to build trust in her.

she already has got to know me as a person. So she asked about my like, personal things and stuff, because I have a little girl and stuff like that. Only a couple of days, in she was asking about my home life and like not like rude or anything. ((No, no)), getting to know me on a personal basis, ...a bit more friendly. So I had a bit more trust, which now I feel more comfortable and confident teaching lessons in front of her.

(Janet interview, 11.58)

The perceived benefits of feeling known and being able to trust the mentor as expressed by Janet, is then expanded upon by linking it to being comfortable and confident in front of the mentor, something she indicates hadn't happened in her previous placement. The ST feeling confident to teach in front of their mentor is very important as it signifies there is the potential for the mentor pair to work educatively.

Example B: In this example trust is mentioned again by the ST. Niamh, discussed in her interview how she had expected her mentors to just tell her what she was teaching and how to do this, however, she found Catherine to work with her in a much more collaborative way.

I didn't realise it'd be that more collaborative. And I didn't expect my mentor to fully trust me with, this is your lesson. ...I thought it'd be this is what you're teaching. This is how I want it done. here you go... instead of

being like, really formal like I'm the mentor, you're the student. It's been like a collaborative,[sic] how can we help the kids to learn the best?

(Niamh interview, 10.20)

More astutely, she notices that the children's learning is at the forefront of how and what she needs to teach. She goes on to give examples later in the interview about how this collaboration has developed to such an extent she feels she is being treated like a teacher.

Catherine will be like, 'Oh, where do you need me? What do you want me to do?' Like go into the role of the supporting adult, she doesn't take over at all and, and very much that they [Teaching assistant and Catherine] will support any[thing] like... [for example] a change of our break times for the needs of children... And they've asked me questions. I thought, oh, 'you know, you do trust me as a teacher'. Yeah. I mean, the questions you'd ask the teacher.

(Catherine interview, 16.07)

The combination of the experiences of Niamh and Janet does show the fundamental place of the ST feeling trusted is to their pedagogical and practical development. These experiences also show how this can then contribute to a collaborative relationship and for them to feel they are being treated like a teacher.

4.3.4 Section three summary

This section has looked at the data from an inductive / deductive viewpoint as the research questions guided the discussion. The themes that were generated from the RTA can be seen interwoven through the examples chosen to exemplify how each research question was addressed.

4.4 Summary of Findings

The presentation of the findings chapter has presented data from the RTA of all the data sets (semi structured interviews, observation of mentor meetings, lesson observation and debrief) across the six mentor pairs and in relation to the research questions.

In doing this, the data presented has exposed how the clarity of the language used within mentoring is important, whether related to the specific term, in this research of educative mentoring or the specific expectation of the mentoring

relationship between mentors STs. The relational aspect of mentoring was revealed as being dominant within the thinking of both mentors and ST's but it was the composition of the mentor pairs in relation to their previous experiences and mentorability of the ST's that seemed to influence the enactment of educative mentoring practices.

In the next chapter, each of these will be discussed in detail as well as to how the data indicates these have impacted on experiences and practices of the mentoring pairs. The discussion will relate the findings to previous research in the field and explore areas of agreement and deliberation.

Table 10 below summarises how findings presented across chapter four, have been consolidated into the formulation of the specific four findings which will then be discussed.

Discussion chapter	Related to the Findings chapter	What data sets were used?
Finding one: None of the participants recognised the term educative mentoring but when educative mentoring was explained to them, all the participants could give examples from practice of educative mentoring practices.	Section 1 point 1 (page 82)	Semi structured interview
Finding two: Educative mentoring practices that could be articulated by the participants during their interview, were observed in practice (mentor meeting or lesson debrief) as well as practices that had not been articulated.	Section 2 – All mentor pairs (page 83-105)	Semi structured interview Observation (mentor meeting and lesson debrief)
Finding three: The relational aspects of mentoring, dominated both the mentors and student teachers' perceptions of mentoring but this element of mentoring appeared to be more important to student teachers than their mentors.	Section 3 RQ1 (page 106-108) Section 3 RQ 3-point 4 (page 114-115)	Semi structured interview
Finding four: The characteristics and experiences of the mentor pairs and mentorability of the student teacher, did appear to influence the enactment of educative mentoring practices.	Section 3 RQ2 points 2 and 3 (page 111-114) Section3 RQ3 all points (page 109-115)	Semi structured interview Observation (mentor meeting and lesson debrief)

Table 10: How findings presented across chapter four, have been consolidated into the formulation of the specific four findings

Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to explore with six mentor pairs, their understanding of mentoring, in particular educative mentoring and how they enacted this in practice. Three research questions were set to guide the research

RQ1: What perceptions do mentors and STs have of mentoring and educative mentoring in particular?

RQ2: What educative mentoring practices are enacted by mentors and student teachers during the mentoring relationship?

RQ3. What supports the mentor relationship to be conducive to educative mentoring?

Three primary schools took part in the research and there were two mentor pairs from each school. Online semi-structured interviews were carried out with each mentor pair that were audio recorded and transcribed. Each mentor pair was observed taking part in a mentor meeting that was (wherever possible) also audio recorded and transcribed. A lesson observation and lesson debrief was also carried out and the lesson debrief was audio recorded and transcribed. If a lesson observation debrief was not possible a post placement semi structured interview was offered. A reflective journal was kept during the data collection and analysis sections of the research.

In the previous chapter the findings from the RTA of the data collected were presented. The variety and yet similarity of the articulation and enactment of mentoring in general and specifically educative mentoring across the mentor pairs was presented, as well as how the research questions were met.

Four findings have been distilled from all the findings presented in the previous chapter. How these four findings relate to the previous chapter can be seen in Table 10. This chapter deals solely with a discussion of the four findings. In

scrutinising the findings, the literature review will be referred to where appropriate, guiding the discussion, keeping in mind the research questions.

The main findings were as follows:

Finding one: None of the participants recognised the term educative mentoring but, when educative mentoring was explained to them, all the participants could give examples from practice of educative mentoring practices.

Finding two: Educative mentoring practices that could be articulated by the participants during their interview, were observed in practice (mentor meeting or lesson debrief) as well as practices that had not been articulated.

Finding three: The relational aspects of mentoring dominated both the mentors' and student teachers' perceptions of mentoring but this element of mentoring appeared to be more important to student teachers than their mentors.

Finding four: The characteristics and experiences of the mentor pairs and mentorability of the student teacher, did appear to influence the enactment of educative mentoring practices.

Each of these findings will now be discussed individually.

5.2 Finding one: None of the participants recognised the term educative mentoring but when educative mentoring was explained to them, all the participants could give examples from practice of educative mentoring practices.

When the mentors and STs were first asked about their understanding of educative mentoring none of them were aware of the term. Once educative mentoring was explained to them (see the interview schedule in appendix 3) the following attributes could be described with examples from practice: thinking out loud, co-planning, using children's work, justification of practice and exemplification of pedagogy. For example, this can be seen in the excerpt from Gillian's interview, presented earlier in the thesis, where she described co-planning, debriefing with the ST leading this discussion and setting his own targets. However, it is important to be clear that when we are talking about co-planning in educative mentoring, both the mentor and ST contribute to the planning as opposed to the mentor doing the planning and the ST looking at it passively. This is where the term 'collaborative planning' as used by Polambo and Daly (2022) communicates this more effectively. Angela elaborated on this in the post placement interview,

...But she just wasn't proactive... there's a balance isn't there between nurturing and providing ... I mean, we planned together. ...I've had to support students, and I do support students with planning and I send everything I've got. Because, you know, that's what that's what you've got to do...but this was ...I did the planning And then we were looking at, it's very time consuming ...because you don't have any time to do your job really... But there's got to be a bit of give and take. She's got to give as well, which I just didn't see.

(Angela, post placement interview 16.00)

Angela is showing she can distinguish between the collaborative requirement of co-planning that occurs in educative mentoring, and indicates that there is a difference between 'nurturing' a ST and 'providing' for them. This

demonstrates she is willing and recognises the importance of entering into a supportive relationship with the ST, but the ST seemed reluctant to engage. This tension will be discussed further when discussing Finding four in section 5.5.

Examples of educative mentoring were also seen during mentor meetings and lesson debriefs (discussed in more detail in findings two). A question that must be asked, is that if educative mentoring is occurring, why do mentors and STs not know and use the term, or does this not matter? In addition, why do other types of mentoring such as the more 'in vogue' instructional coaching become adopted by the education community much more readily?

One explanation could be a result of the prescriptive and instrumental environment that pervades the education system from teaching standards for STs and ECT's through to how children are taught and assessed (Murtagh and Dawes, 2020; Murtagh and Rushton, 2023; Murtagh et al, 2023; Sachs, 2003). The non-statutory National Standards for School Based Mentors appear to concentrate on mentoring to meet government standards and as such 'fail to promote mentoring as a critically informed, analytical practice with the potential to transform learning' (Murtagh and Dawes, 2020, p.42). There is also the assumption of a hierarchical expert/novice model being employed. Instructional coaching does lend itself to this way of mentoring and it can be seen how it could therefore be easily 'sold' to those in schools working with ECTs and responsible for mentoring, particularly when the recommendations of the Teaching School Council and invited practising school leaders who developed the National Standards recommended that 'Ofsted, who already inspect the quality of mentoring, should have regard to the standards on any ITE inspection' (DfE, 2016, p.5).

Daly et al. found in their study analysing the dominant trend of mentors engaging with instructional coaching to support ECTs in the English system, that there was a 'lack of explicit knowledge of professional learning pedagogies amongst mentors and insecure understanding of how new teachers learn' (2023, p.350). Whilst they documented benefits of using instructional coaching as a template for mentors to adhere to they cited that it

did promote 'limited and over-prescribed concepts and practices related to the learning of new teachers' (ibid). The more dialogic approach to mentoring could address the apparent deficit of instructional coaching.

It could be said that instructional coaching has become 'buzz words' or 'a fad... leading to some superficial understandings' (Lofthouse, 2022, n.p.). It is easy to see how such practices gain momentum within a pressurised, standardised and over-scrutinised education system. It could simply be that the words 'educative mentoring' could be seen as opposing instructional coaching which is the approach very much seen to be in fashion' with Ofsted and the DfE. This could drive school leaders to opt for the mentoring approach that appears to be more favoured by the Government.

Educative mentoring however, is based on a dialogic mentoring model where through a collaborative approach to mentoring both the mentor and ST learn from and with each other (Feisman-Nemser, 1998, 2001, 2012). This has not been promoted by the DfE and has not really had a high profile 'guru' promoting it, nor is it supported by exemplar materials and systems that help with recording the mentee progress. Whereas instructional coaching has the likes of Knight, van Nieuwerburgh and Munro supporting and promoting its development. As suggested earlier, does this matter? Maybe not but it can make a particular approach to mentoring (or any other aspect of teaching and learning) much more attractive. An 'off the shelf' approach as it were and one recommended by the government, does appear much more attractive to schools who are being expected to respond rapidly to new developments, than searching out an approach that they would need to then personalise themselves.

Educative mentoring practices could be described by mentors and STs, and was seen in operation in mentor meetings and lesson debriefs, even though they were not familiar with the term. It could be argued that terminology does matter because if there are significant benefits to educative mentoring contributing to STs getting to grips with the tacit knowledge required to be a successful teacher, building pedagogical capacity leading to teachers retained within the profession, then this should be being explicitly promoted. To do so

educative mentoring, must be a term that can be read about and studied so it can be a fundamental part of a mentor's toolkit. It could be that the term itself is the stumbling block. Then again, it is more likely that it is just seen to be more problematic that 'such rich and authentic evidence of learning can be 'backward mapped' to professional teaching standards' (Talbot, Denny and Henderson, 2018, p.49) when involved in such collaborative and dialogic mentoring practices as seen when involved in educative mentoring.

5.3 Finding two: Educative mentoring practices that could be articulated by the participants during their interview, were observed in practice (mentor meeting or lesson debrief) as well as practices that had not been articulated.

Unfortunately, there was not any literature found to support this finding, suggesting that this is an area of practice that is ripe for further and deeper research in the future.

During the mentoring meeting or the lesson debrief, the following qualities of educative mentoring were enacted, thinking out loud^{3*} questioning, the ST sets their own targets, exemplification of subject knowledge or pedagogy*, foreground pupils' learning, co-planning and bi-focal lens (that is, the long-term goals of the ST as well as short-term points).

There are many attributes of educative mentoring that were articulated and enacted by mentors and STs, the following example focusses on how students even at an early stage can begin the process of setting their own targets.

Janet (ST, mentor pair six) recognised co-planning or collaboration as aspects of educative mentoring that she recognised

Yeah, when we do our summaries at the end of the week, it's a joint, joint thing. It's not... My targets are joint targets, my things that I've done throughout the week and what I need to do for the next week, and feedback and stuff like that they're all joint.

(Interview with Janet 20.00)

Again, this was enacted in the lesson observation debrief when Janet initially described the lesson as being 'awful, they were crazy and distracted' and became overwhelmed and physically upset. Gillian reassured her that it wasn't a disaster and that she shouldn't be too hard on herself. Janet highlighted that there were children not listening when on the carpet and she said she had tried

³ * represents those attributes that were also mentioned in the mentor or student teacher interviews

using the phrase 'I'm waiting' and tried to not teach again until it was quiet. Gillian agreed this was a good strategy

but before saying 'I'm waiting' you could have praised the ones who are doing as you had described with the carpet rules at the beginning, by saying 'Lucy and Tom well done you are sitting beautiful', so its important not to ignore those who aren't doing what you want but what you say is more important.

(Gillian and Janet Lesson observation debrief 26.00)

When targets were being set at the end of the lesson observation debrief, 'positive reinforcement' was suggested by Janet with Gillian's agreement. Gillian in her interview previously mentioned this was something that she encouraged with students and explained that eventually a previous student was able to set his own targets which she agreed with and this was due to the development of his reflective skills through the tools he had been given at his university. This suggests that the professional relationship develops more easily if the mentor is not behaving in an hierarchical way, but employs a more collaborative approach (Earl and Timperley, (2008); Kemmis et al. (2014a); Langdon, (2017); Peiser et al, (2018).

However, this research could contribute to the literature on educative mentoring by proposing that the educative mentoring practices themselves maybe hierarchical and maybe linked to the mentors' experience of both mentoring and teaching. Figure 6, over the page, outlines this hierarchy, although it may not always be enacted in a linear manner by every mentor. The suggestion is that the skills required to enact the higher steps are built upon an enactment of the lower steps, although this was not always the case (see steps 4 and steps 6 below).

The steps were decided upon based on the pattern of educative mentoring practices that were articulated or observed being enacted by the different mentors. Their enactment appeared to be dependent on the level of pedagogical knowledge and relationship that was within the mentor pairs and could said to be developmental. These points, or even the experience of the mentor and ST will be discussed further in section five.

Step 1 - sharing knowledge, sharing practice, exemplification of practice and thinking out loud, were all practices that were articulated and enacted by most mentor pairs and seems to be quite common practices.

Step 2 – Using children's learning and foregrounding children's learning again was articulated and enacted by most mentor pairs and usually was linked to or building upon step one

Step 3 –From step three onwards, the educative mentoring practices seemed to be linked to the experiences of teaching and mentoring of the mentor. True co-planning and justification of the lesson activities was seen in mentors that were developing a collaborative working relationship (mentors Catherine, Kate and Maureen)

Step 4 – It is at this point onwards that as the mentoring relationship developed, so did these practices particularly the setting of the ST own targets. The enactment of these practices became less linear for some of the mentor pairs. So, for example, Gillian, although was she developing co-planning with the ST was able to encourage the ST to set her own targets. Whereas it was evident that ST's Niamh and Brenda took the opportunity of setting their own targets. However, mentors Kate and Angela and did not enact this with their ST's.

Step 5 –Questioning was seen in mentors Catherine, Kate, Maureen and Angela and in much the same way that effective questioning in the classroom is seen between the teacher and learner. That is to say that although higher level thinking cannot happen without building upon surface level thinking, it does not mean that surface level questions are bad and all questions need to be high level (Booth, 2019). However, higher level questions were more frequently enacted by mentors Catherine, Angela and Maureen.

Step 6 – Mentors Catherine, Kate, Maureen and Angela, again employed a bi-focal lens within the mentor meeting or lesson debrief, not only discussing the 'here and now' with the ST as well as looking beyond that to either a future development need for them or the children. However, mentors Catherine and Maureen, exemplified this practice the most.

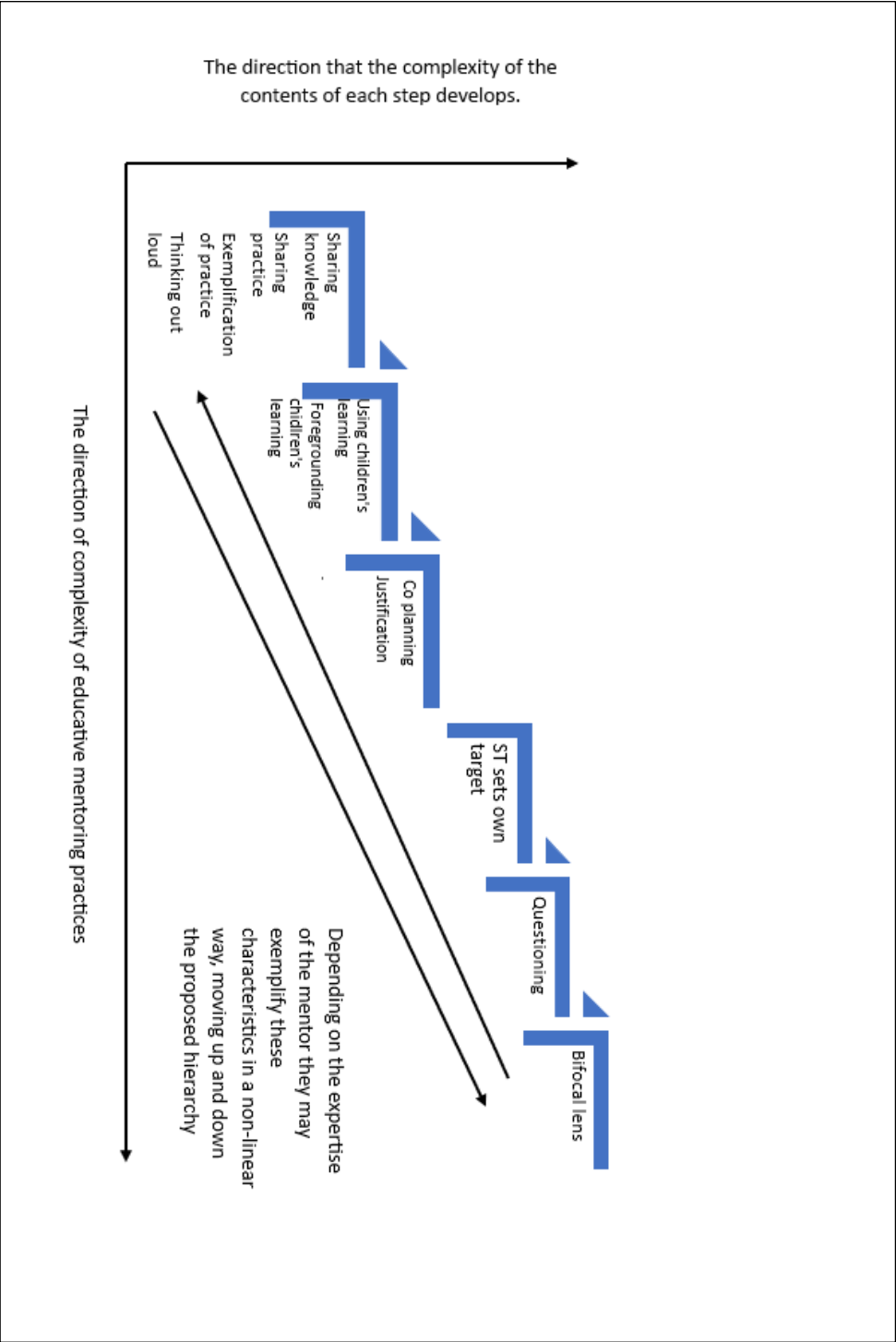


Figure 6: A suggestion as to a possible hierarchy of educative mentoring practices based on the complexity of skills require to enact them.

5.4 Finding three: The relational aspects of mentoring, dominated both the mentors' and student teachers' perceptions of mentoring but this element of mentoring appeared to be more important to student teachers than their mentors.

In the context of this finding the perceptions of practice encompass skills and views of mentoring expressed by the mentors and STs. Whilst there was a wide range of perceptions across the mentors and STs from the analysis of the semi structured interviews there were some commonalities, particularly those that could be classed as relational or interpersonal. such as 'communication that's open or direct or honest', 'building trust' and 'fostering an environment where the ST feels known'.

Relational qualities of mentoring are well documented in the literature (Bradbury & Koballa, 2008; Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn, 2000; Hennissen et al., 2011; Nguyen, 2009) and this was reflected in the findings.

Most of the perceptions cited only by STs' perception were relational, but not many of the perceptions cited only by the mentors were relational Table 11 below shows this

Relational perceptions of mentors	Relational perceptions of mentoring (student teacher)
Invest / protect time Avoid negatively impacting the confidence of the student teacher Want the student teacher to be successful	Friendly Nurturing Reassuring Positive Discuss expectations Not a monster Knows when to push or stand back Respond dynamically to the student teacher

Table 11: The perceptions of mentoring expressed by mentors and student teachers that could be described as relational.

This difference could be because most of the mentors in this study saw their role as providing feedback, modelling practice with a much more ‘technically oriented...gatekeeper of the profession...supporter of reflection’ (Matsko et al., 2023, p.3) approach to mentoring. It also could be the reason that all the mentors to greater or lesser extent could articulate educative mentoring practices that does go beyond the ‘traditional’ mentoring approach where the role of the mentor is heavily biased towards offering emotional support whilst offering an instructional and hierarchical approach to mentoring (Schwille, (2008); Hudson and Hudson, (2018); Murtagh, (2020) and Knight, (2023). That is not to say that they did not exemplify temperaments that could be classed as those that build relationships. These dispositions were such that offered emotional support (when it was needed and this was enacted in some of the mentor meeting observed), encouraging and reassuring the ST. However, they just did not articulate the mentoring behaviours linked to building relationships as being paramount in their interviews. The STs focussed on the aspects of the mentor relationship relating to them seeing the mentor as ‘the expert’ they also articulated a need for the mentor to care for them as a person (and in John’s case he said in the semi-structured interview (23:13) ‘like their parent’) and in doing so make them feel they were part of the school, and trusted to be included socially being given the responsibility of a teacher that belonged to that school.

What is interesting is that these findings are the opposite of what was found by Matsko, et al. who found mentors

‘...prioritize personal exchanges rooted in respect and regard to build productive relationships with their STs, while student teachers identify their teachers’ instructional competence and mentoring commitment as more important considerations’. (2023, p.1)

This could have been because in the Matsko, et al. study the participants were asked specifically questions such as “How do you go about building a relationship with your ST?” or “What steps did your mentor teacher take to establish a relationship with you?” (2023, p.5). whilst the mentors and STs for this thesis were not asked such specific questions.

Another reason the STs focussed more on the relational aspects of the mentoring could be that they were aware that the mentor would be assessing them and therefore having a positive relationship and 'not letting the mentor down' (as articulated by STs Mary, John and Janet in their interviews) would help towards this. However, Feiman-Nemser and Carver (2019) contend that researchers have found that the following make for a successful mentoring relationship; 'proximity, grade-level and/or subject matter matches, personal compatibility, allocated time and availability of mentors' (p. 243). In this present research proximity and grade level matches were evident, however, the rest of these requirements were not always evident consistently throughout the data collection. It could be postulated that whilst these are desirable characteristics, they are more likely to not all be present in every mentoring situation. This is an area that future research could attempt to address, particularly in relation to personal compatibility and allocated time availability.

From the findings the relational aspects of mentoring were subdivided into 'belonging (making the ST feel welcome, valued and part of the school), dedicating specific and regular time to mentoring, communicating appropriately as well as being able to have tricky conversations. Figure 7 below presents how 'belonging' is central to the other relational aspects of mentoring. The discussion following will explain how this is so.

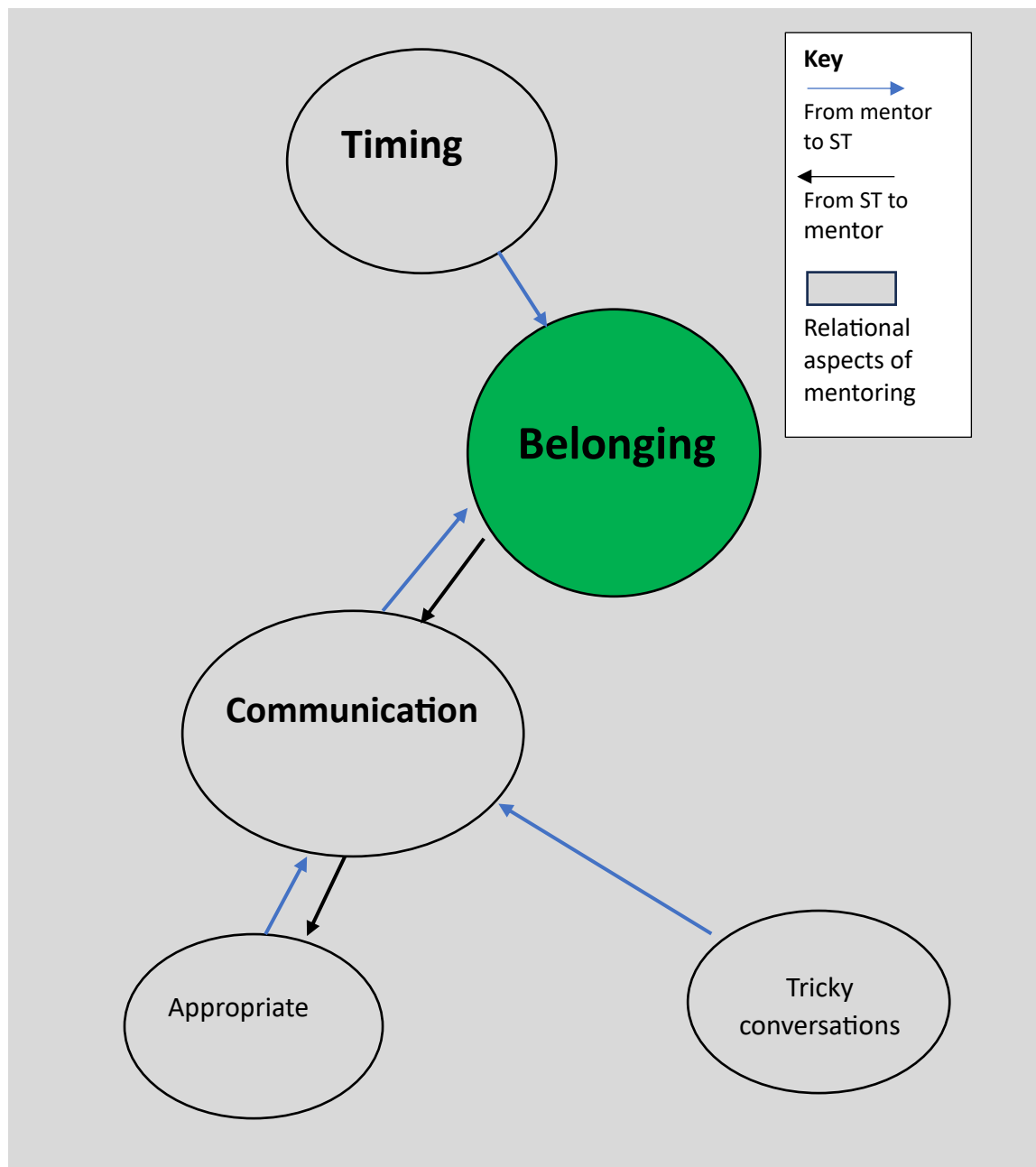


Fig 7: How the relational aspects of the mentoring relationship contribute to the student teacher belonging in the school

5.4.1 Belonging

The findings from the mentor and student interviews focusing on aspects of 'belonging' could be understood as making the ST feel welcome, valued and part of the school.

Matsko et al. suggests that one of the principal duties of a mentor is 'establishing a welcoming and safe environment for the ST' (2024, p.3). This allows them to take risks, trying out new practices and allow them to reflect on their teaching honestly especially when things go wrong or not according to plan. Angela showed awareness of this in her interview when she said

...I suppose, ... just give them these opportunities...it might go horribly wrong. But hopefully she'll learn from it and move forward. Or she might fly with it...you won't know until you give them the opportunity. (Angela Interview, 27.42)

Except for Edwina all the STs mentioned that they felt welcomed by their present school, they felt they had been given everything they needed from the mentor to be able to complete any tasks set. They were all welcome in the staffroom and there was evidence from the interviews with mentors that they explicitly directed the STs regarding how to engage with other teachers either 'off duty' in the staffroom or in their capacity as lead teachers. It was not that Edwina articulated not feeling welcomed she sidestepped this by referring to her previous school as opposed to present school (KAPS) making her feel welcome.

The observations made by the STs did reflect Duffield (2006, p167 findings that '...teachers who were welcoming, trusting and could share ownership in the classroom provided the teacher candidates the most successful experience'. This along with Shanks et al (2022, p755) reference to 'new teachers feeling more empowered in their work', if the school and the ST benefit from the relationship. Niamh gave examples in her interview that embodies this action. She was clearly thrilled to be asked to return the children to their parents at the end of the day and decide the time for break being made to feel like a teacher by being treated like one was encouraging to her. In addition to this she also recalled being given a lot of responsibility for the class when she was teaching the whole class, when her class teacher was involved in the interview process for a new teacher. The Headteacher as well as the class teacher expressed their gratitude which contributed to Naimh feeling trusted and part of the school. On the other hand, there is a balance about how much autonomy and when a ST is given this as Coolahan (2007) and

Chambers et al. (2011) suggest it can lead to little meaningful mentoring occurring in turn inhibiting further development of joint relationships and teamwork. This is something mentors and partnership tutors need to monitor, in order that the ST develops from where they are at the start of the placement and don't stagnate.

However, Matsko et al. (2023) maintain that making STs feel appreciated and welcome in the classroom alone would not necessarily lead to the desired development. This would suggest that fostering a sense of belonging is a good foundation for STs to then be receptive to further developing the skills necessary to become a qualified teacher, but does not guarantee successful development follows. Angela and Kate's experience with their ST ((Mary and John) corresponded with this, they both expressed frustration that despite being welcoming and accommodating the STs did not develop as expected, with regards taking ownership of the class. This matches to the work of Körkkö and Lutovac that acknowledges that whilst no matter how rewarding collaborating with STs is 'relationships with them are also burdening for the teacher's and a source of stress' (2024, p.8). Other examples of this 'stress' will follow in this discussion.

What was curious about both Mary and John was that they did feel as if they belonged and were taking ownership of the class as if it was theirs. Explanations for this could be that they did not want to admit to me, a stranger to them that this was not the case as they thought this was how they should be feeling at this stage in their placement or they genuinely believed they were behaving in such a way and were, struggling with what this entailed. Alternatively, this could be that the mentors feel forced to behave as described by Stanulis et al. as being 'more like cheerleaders than teacher educators' (2019, p.568). It could follow that although the STs recognised and desired to experience these 'cheerleading' attributes of their mentor it was clear that some of them had difficulty responding to these in such a way as to make the expected progress. However, it could be that the STs were aware of their shortcomings but did not want to appear weak to their mentor and this could have been a stumbling block that caused the STs not to benefit from the supportive and welcoming environment.

It could be said that when a ST feels as if they belong in a school that they are more receptive to 'informal' mentoring, such as being curious about the tacit knowledge and practice of their mentors, leading to additional pedagogical capacity being built. Such behaviours seen would be with the ST and mentor having conversations outside of their formal meetings, during breaks or even in the classroom as appropriate, something that would be seen in educative mentoring. This idea of 'informal' mentoring, although being recognised as powerful and desirable within educative mentoring could be the victim of 'criticism' due to the perception that 'informal' is a deficit because 'defining something by what it is not; it does not provide a basis to understand the nature of the learning' (Shanks, 2023, p.445). This 'informal' mentoring could be an example of the practice architecture that Kemmis (2014a, p.156) would describe as 'physical space-time', relating to where and what type of mentoring takes place. The location of the mentoring varied and whether this was initiated by the ST or mentor could assist or hinder the mentoring. It could also exemplify 'social space or medium power and solidarity' Kemmis (2014a, p. 156). The approach to mentoring could be seen as supportive if the mentor is willing to engage with the ST outside of formal meetings and address concerns the ST has or offer praise and encouragement as these instances arise. However, it is important to remember that Kemmis (2014a) would be mindful, that practice architectures may predict the type of mentoring that could be taking paces but due to the complexity of mentoring they cannot completely influence them.

5.4.2 Timing

From the findings, 'timing' relates to the mentor dedicating specific and regular time to mentoring. In their guidance for Mentors and ECT's (and therefore could be applied to STs), in relation to the ECF Daly et al (2021, p.5) assert that

'Mentors need time for mentoring. Time for regular mentoring conversations and observations of ECTs' teaching was universally recognised as essential... Mentors also need support to prioritise demands on the use of protected mentoring time. It is vital that

mentoring responds to ECTs' needs in a timely way, with sufficient attention to thoughtful, unhurried dialogue about the ECT's teaching and the inevitable challenges that will arise'

Despite this being known, a commonly held idea around mentoring according to Lofthouse (2018) is that the mentor often acquires an increased role, but more often or not there is very little extra time allocated, if any, a view supported by Wilkinson (2024). However, rather contentiously, Hobson (2009) suggests that although availability is important, proximity and time, empathy and sympathy, may not take lots of extra time, which was certainly not the case found in this present research.

Others such as Wildman et al., (1992); Gratch, (1998); Hudson and Hudson (2018) and Wildman et al., (1992) are keen to draw attention to the claim that a lack of time for mentors and STs discussion can itself be a precursor to the ST taking umbrage leading to a breakdown of the mentor relationship. With that in mind all the mentor pairs that participated in this study did have specific times set in the week for mentor meetings, which was encouraging.

More specifically, in this present research, TPS was the only school that both teachers timetabled these meetings within the school day and these times were publicly available on the school timetable so could be regarded as protected time for the mentor and ST. This would contribute to a ST feeling valued by the school. This would reflect Kemmis' practice architecture of physical space-time (2014a) as the mentor is governing when the mentoring is taking place in conjunction with the practice architecture of social space when the location was determined by the mentor ranging from a room that was available, a classroom that had resources conveniently located to the mentoring or a part of the classroom near to plug sockets to facilitate the use of lap tops.

Only one of the teachers in MPS's meetings were timetabled and the other held hers out of school, this was because Kate was part time and therefore held her meetings after school. This does raise questions about the additional burden placed on part time teachers to fulfil their role of mentoring. It could also raise the question of parity of ST's who have been paired with part-time

staff as opposed to full-time staff. This was not raised by either Kate or John. Kate outlined how she worked with the teacher she shared the class with, in relation to mentoring John. John also suggested he did not feel disadvantaged. In fact, he suggested it was an advantage as he had the input of two mentors.

Mentors at KAPS held their mentor meetings outside school as well as the lesson debriefs. This could indicate that there was a lack of support staff to cover the classes that would still have to be taught if the meetings took place during the school day. Conversely, it could also suggest that either the student's development is not seen as important or that it is viewed as very important because having it after the school day could suggest the ST will then have the undivided attention at the end of the school day, which is what I observed. This was the same with the lesson debriefs.

All mentors and STs referred to conversations they had during the day that were not formal, but arose naturally maybe as they were team teaching or dealing with behaviour management or just generally working together, but could occur also during breaktime and lunchtime. It was accepted that such conversations were expected and encouraged. This is again further evidence for the importance of informal mentoring to be validated and not criticised (Shanks, 2023). Importantly, however, most of the mentors and STs were aware of boundaries regarding time away from school and conscious of a work life balance.

Niamh did speak about an instance where a previous mentor had called her to discuss lessons on a Saturday evening when she was socialising with friends. This was something she felt uncomfortable with, and also exemplifies that the boundaries are not there for the protection of the mentor but the ST too. Edwina spoke about how she had struggled with some maths planning and had spent hours in the evening trying to sort it out, could not, so became 'overwhelmed' (Edwina, Interview 14.11) in school the next day. Once she had spoken to the mentor the problem was solved in 5 minutes. The mentor had said in future she must call her as she would rather have the 5-minute conversation as opposed to the meltdown.

This openness of Edwina to discuss her emotions and the response to this by her mentor, along with additional instances discussed below, made me

consider 'emotional labour' in relation to mentor and ST relationships. The term, emotional labour, in relation to the controlling of emotions to produce a visible display (of the face and body) is thought to have been coined by Hochschild (1983) and is used to illustrate how individuals (as in this case mentors) 'modify their emotional expressions from their truly experienced emotions for communicative purposes' (Wang, Hall and Taxer, (2019, p.655). Hochschild expands on this definition by proposing that there is considerable effort expended by those who do their utmost to display emotions that are thought to be required or in line with the organisation they are working in (in this case a school). This emotional regulation is thought to be done 'through various cognitive, physiological, and expressive processes, with the resulting disconnect between internal feelings and external expressions corresponding with higher psychological strain' (ibid).

The conceptual framework constructed by Hochschild has two components, surface acting, ('faking emotions' Humphrey and Ashforth, (2015), p.749), deep acting ('summoning up the appropriate feelings one wants to display' ibid) and 'genuinely expressing emotions' was later added by Ashforth and Humphrey (1993). This addition was because they disputed the fact that the 'expected' emotions required by an organization do not always have to be intentionally called upon but happen spontaneously (Humphrey and Ashforth, 2015). An example from a school perspective is that if a teacher saw a pupil struggling with a concept, they would respond with empathy as an automatic response to that pupil and support the pupil in bridging the gap in their knowledge. Unsurprisingly, emotional labour is not 'clean' cut and two different teachers may have different emotional responses to the same situation. This would be the case therefore for mentors. The fact that the emotional response would be different does not take away from the fact there would be an emotional response, depending on what it was, there is the potential for long term 'burn out', as opposed to long-term enjoyment of their work. Due to a fundamental requirement of successful educative mentoring being a developing relationship between the mentor and ST, the cost to the mentor in emotional labour does need to be considered.

Apart from these examples of making contact out of hours as it were, the consensus was mentors had shared what their boundaries were for out of

school hours. This tended to be along the lines of 'you can email me at any time and if I am working then I will answer, but don't expect me to.' (Interview with mentors Catherine, Kate, Maureen, and Angela). This reflects the recognition over the last ten years or so within education about the contribution of work load and boundary setting to a healthy work-life balance and teacher wellbeing. However, this is not always easy and could be seen as an example of the tension that may be experienced by mentors who as K rkk  and Lutovac describe, 'need to be kind towards themselves and accept that teachers can do only their own share, even though they would like to do more' (2024, p.8).

This leads to the next relational quality of mentoring 'communicating appropriately'. When and where this happens has already been dealt with but the impact on the mentoring relationship of 'how' appropriate communication occurs (or does not) will be discussed below.

5.4.3 Communication

Appropriate communication

From the findings 'communication' focussed on the mentors communicating appropriately with the STs. The communication component of the mentoring relationship is described by Bradbury and Koballa, as being 'vital' (2008, p. 2135). This was reflected in what was revealed in the mentor and STs' interviews. All mentors and some of the STs cited communication as being important attributes when mentoring and furthermore that the communication was clear, honest, open, and direct.

Clarity of communication was something Maureen discussed as she appreciated how the topic of communication can be quite complex

with education, you know, what it's like, it's not black and white. It's not right or wrong, there is a difference. You know, it's, it's always so long winded. And it actually takes a little bit of thought and getting to know the situation and the children that are in the class, or cohort or what have you.

(Maureen interview, 14.00)

This was in relation to dealing with behaviour management where she gave an example of when, what she described as perceiving to be ‘woolly’ communication, had a good impact on the ST’s behaviour management strategy. She had a conversation where she guided the ST in terms of behaviour management policy, but then also, discussed with the ST about how this can be personalised to different students. This could have been an example of a mentor switching between the dialogic and directive stance of mentoring, to illustrate how ‘do it like this’ does not really work in real time in a classroom. She did explain that if a policy is applied literally then it could have the opposite effect of that intended. Whilst balancing managing pupil behaviour and more importantly the pupil’s response to this and the ST’s response to this would be crucial. However, the ‘woolly’ conversation seems to have had a good impact

... what I'd said was, maybe it was food for thought. And consequently, the way in that interaction between the teacher or the ST with some of the children in the class has drastically improved ...So, I felt, you know, initially I questioned myself for the way I'd worded it from watching and observing it seemed to have worked.
(Interview Maureen 14.30)

The ST would also have felt that they had agency, something that Munro (2022b, p.3), adapted from Munro (2020) continuum of learning conversations, suggest occurs along ‘with personal or professional growth, critical thinking and capacity building’, in the case of the above interview with Maureen this could also be classed as ‘pedagogical capacity’, Curtis et al. (2024). When the learning conversations move between the directive and non- directive and become dialogic, Munro observes that such conversations may not ‘start out as learning opportunities but they can end up there, when managed intentionally and sensitively’ (Munro, 2022b, p.3). This does seem to be what happened in the conversation between Maureen and her previous ST.

The above example also exemplifies Kemmis’ (2014a) practice architecture of ‘semantic space’ where the language of the policy requires or expects there to be specific understanding associated with it. Although Maureen felt she hadn’t

communicated the specifics very well, the ST had understood what she was saying and had implemented it.

Kate recalled a time when she felt she had been unprofessional in her communication with a ST (who had repeatedly failed to present lesson plans on time), by making her frustration and annoyance obvious.

And then literally like the one of the days I was like, 'WHERE'S THE LESSON PLAN'? And I could hear the tone as well and as I come (sic) away I thought 'I shouldn't have spoke (sic) like that'. That was my patience being you know...that was like I had had enough. I need this lesson plan and I think, 'you know, that probably wasn't, the best tone to use or, you know, the way to go about it'. But it's just because you like you'd been, pushed and pushed and pushed and tested.

(Kate interview 18.42)

These examples exhibit how reflective these mentors were about any communication the mentors had with the STs particularly if they were aware they maybe had said something wrong or inappropriate. It is also another example of the emotional labour experienced by mentors.

Janet gave examples of how it's important that mentors recognise that a ST may be upset by feedback or the tone they have used and what to do if this happens.

I got a bit upset because she was getting a bit annoyed at me about my planning. She wasn't like, having a go at me. She was just getting more annoyed. And I just got upset thinking, I'm not doing her justice... it might have just been more of a tone. It's just, it wasn't her fault. It was just the way it made me feel. But I hadn't done her, yeah, like justice and I've let her down and that's how that made me feel. But then afterwards, she realised and then she came to me, and then we talked it out. (Mary, Interview 12.10)

It is not uncommon for 'hurt feelings' to be the source of tension and ultimate breakdown in the mentor relationship if not addressed. This was something John alluded to when he recalled Kate speaking to him about not meeting deadlines for his planning, he described being offended by 'feeling like he was

being told off' and 'back at school' (John Interview 22.00). Stanulis and Russell make reference to this when describing the relationship within of one of their mentor pairs

...they described several occasions when they shut down to protect themselves, closing avenues for communication and feedback.
(2000, p.73)

Although I witnessed, what I would describe as extreme patience being employed during mentor meetings particularly Angela and Kate. They had to repeatedly go over targets that had been missed from previous weeks, and did so in a way that would not result in hurt feelings, even though the mentors were frustrated. However, the potential for hurt feelings was when Edwina asked if she should come round and sit next to Agnes and read the feedback on her computer as she went through it. Agnes replied 'No, you can just stay there'. Edwina looked hurt and said very little throughout the rest of the meeting, not only where the mentor and ST on opposite sides of the table but separated by a computer screen. This situation could have been avoided if the mentor had discussed with the ST in their very first meeting how she would give feedback and where. Edwina would therefore have expected initial verbal feedback sitting on opposite sides of the table and there would have been no hurt feelings, from her suggestion of where she should sit being rejected..

Sjølie, Francisco and Langelotz, define a communicative learning space as a collaborative learning location that is 'a democratic, safe and supportive social space where trust is crucial' (2019, p.3), which would be useful to bear in mind when mentors are engaging with their STs. Again, something that could be developed at the start of the mentoring, will the feedback of lesson observations or mentor meetings be given in a private familiar space or not. Hudson notes that positive mentor ST relationships are social constructs requiring 'open communication' within 'supportive friendly' settings 'developed through respect and trust' (2013, p.8). This is in line with the mentor employing a dialogic mentoring stance as described by Munro (2020). Hudson (2013) also refers to the fact that the ST has a responsibility to contribute to the relationship, something that will be discussed later in finding four.

At times the mentor is required to have 'tricky' conversations with the ST and this will be discussed next.

Tricky conversations

'Tricky conversations' were cited by multiple mentors during the semi structured interviews as having the potential to negatively impact the mentor relationship causing tensions. The subject of these conversations did tend to be around students who were not making sufficient progress, particularly in relation to targets not being met repeatedly.

The repeatedly missed targets that seemed to cause most issue were those related to lesson planning. This was when lesson planning did not contain enough detail or was not submitted to the mentor for checking by the deadline set. This was when comments surfaced from the mentors regarding the realisation that they ultimately had responsibility for the pupils' learning.

So as the class teacher, you're still fully responsible. But then things aren't being done as you would do them or the expectation is, and even though you've articulated those expectations, I found that hard in a balancing a professional relationship where you understand that that this student needs support, and you want to guide them, but also managing my own stresses of things. I've got to be good enough [book marking to support the children and also the requirements of the school policy regarding this].

(Catherine Interview 11.40)

In these instances where tricky conversations had been had, all mentors expressed that they felt awkward having to have these conversations or act beyond the mentor pair, particularly if they felt this had damaged the relationship. However, they did all concur that, given time, most of the students after a time of reflection did come round to accepting advice on the way forward.

When Catherine is referring to 'being good enough' in relation to book marking and school policy, she is alluding to what Page (2017, p.992) refers to as 'vertical surveillance that includes Ofsted, senior leaders' strategies such as

learning walks', this idea of teacher surveillance could also be expanded to include parents and peers. Whilst this impacts the emotional burden of a mentor's work (Tarantul and Berkovich, 2025) it also has the potential to increase this emotional pressure if the mentor feels the ST is not (in this case, marking books) to the same standard as they themselves would and that the school expects.

However, there were also 'tricky' conversations described around what could be classed as personal attributes such as the ST's handwriting or the negative impact their presence made within the classroom. In these cases, the mentors did report having an emotional response to speaking to the ST about such matters. Catherine and Kate both referred to their 'stomachs being in knots or churning' as they went to have a potentially difficult conversation with a ST. Once again these are examples of teachers regularly becoming involved in situations where significant emotional labour is expended (Tarantul and Berkovich, 2025)

These findings reflected Hass, Hudson and Hudson's (2022) study when they found that mentors did understand the ST situation when difficulties arose and showed empathy towards the ST. The mentors in this present research were clear that if a difficulty was such that the ST would not meet the required standard that a third-party mediation would be beneficial such as a Headteacher or the university tutor.

The above discussions about the relational aspects of mentoring reflect how wrong the common expectation 'that any experienced teacher will go on to mentor and be able to adapt to the role while continuing to teach at the same capacity' (Willy, 2022, p.52). This expectation is both unfair to the mentor who may not have the skills, training or interest in mentoring and the ST who is allocated that mentor. Stanulis et al. (2019) explore this further highlighting that the roles of teachers and mentors do not demand the same skills and training.

This latter point is important as an understanding of the complex role mentors must play and the emotional labour cost to those involved in mentoring needs to be recognised by mentors themselves and their leadership team. This would mean that the leadership team would need to know the staff in their schools

well enough to know who had the skills necessary to be a good mentor or had the potential to be so. However, as is mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, whilst there may be a group of staff who would be best suited to the role of mentoring, the whole school community needs to understand the different aspects of mentoring and recognise their responsibility towards it. If this was to be the case then a school culture would develop where mentoring would pervade and be seen as normal practice. All staff would feel welcomed and as if they belonged and confident that their professional development would be personal to them.

The next section explores how the characteristics and experiences of the mentor pairs and mentorability of the ST, did appear to influence the enactment of educative mentoring practices.

5.5 Finding four: The characteristics and experiences of the mentor pairs and mentorability of the student teacher, did appear to influence the enactment of educative mentoring practices.

The experiences of the mentors and ST's is outlined in Table 12 below and its contents will be discussed in the sections below, in relation to the enactment of educative mentoring within the mentor pairs. Mentor pairing and selection will also be discussed along with whether the mentor and ST have the skills and are willing to build and invest in a collaborative partnership.

	Mentor	ST	Mentor	ST	Mentor	ST	Mentor	ST	Mentor	ST	Mentor	ST
Mentor pair	One		Two		Three		Four		Five		Six	
Names	Catherine	Niamh	Kate	John	Maureen	Brenda	Angela	Mary	Agnes	Edwina	Gillian	Janet
Teaching Experience	8 yrs		3 yrs		12 yrs		10 yrs		12 yrs		4 yrs	
Mentoring experience	6 yrs		2 yrs		8 yrs		6 yrs		0 yrs		3 yrs	
ST experience of working with children (outside of requirements for the course / previous placements)		Worked in a nursery for a year before Uni		None		Worked as a Teaching assistant between College and Uni		Volunteering when at school and college at family members school		3-4 weeks every year since yr 11 at family member's school. School trips and forest school. Volunteered at present school for 6 weeks.		Teaches gymnastics to ages 3-18 (since qualifying and every evening / day except Thursday presently)

Table 12 Summary of the teaching and mentoring experiences of mentors, and the previous experience of the ST's working with children

5.5.1 Mentors' experience of mentoring

Whilst there is an abundance of literature on the characteristics of mentoring, guidance on how to be a good mentor and outlining roles and responsibilities and their impacts (Bradbury and Koballa, 2008; Beutal, Crosswell and Willis, 2017; Stanulis et al, 2019; Wexler, 2020; Burger, 2024), little has been written about how the previous experience of mentoring impacts their present practice. This could be because mentors could be viewed as being on this often-solitary practice (Burns, Jacobs and Yendol-Hoppey, 2016; Ulvik, Helleve and Smith, 2018), and on a constant treadmill from one year to the

next with little time to capture their reflections on the effects of previous mentoring experiences. It would be beneficial for mentors to have the opportunity to share reflections with others. Much could be learned from capturing this that would benefit mentors themselves and others too. Additional research related to this could alleviate this perceived gap in the literature.

Unsurprisingly, experience of the mentors was a mediating factor in illuminating the relational aspects of mentoring. Agnes, although an experienced teacher who had had no experience of mentoring could only reflect on what she had found useful when she herself had been mentored. Even though she had been teaching for twelve years and would have been around mentors in schools during that time, she did not enact any educative mentoring practices in either the mentor meeting or lesson debrief. Whereas Maureen and Catherine had many years' experiences of mentoring and articulated the most educative mentoring practices during their interviews. They also most frequently enacted educative mentoring practices that were towards the top of the hierarchy as described in Figure 6.

However, Kate was a relatively inexperienced teacher and mentor and even though she was part time, she did enact many educative mentoring practices. This suggests that it is not just length of teaching and mentoring experience that contributes to good mentoring, in relation to educative mentoring. Other factors could also be the culture of the school and the mentors experience of being mentored as a new teacher themselves. This could explain why Kate although relatively inexperienced, did enact many educative mentoring practices, as MPS had previously been a teaching school and therefore had a regular number of ST's throughout each academic year. Also, mentors within their teaching school alliance would regularly meet to discuss practice, which may have contributed to what had become Kate's tacit practice.

Although Heilbronn (2008, p.103), is considering professional judgement when they remark that

'Each teacher experiences her place of work or study through their own meaning-making. These personal experiences are the grounds on which practical judgement builds and is connected to action'

it could be suggested that the same could be said of the skills related to mentoring practices developing and evolving, which in the case of Kate's personal experience, led to her enacting many educative mentoring practices. The place of mentor training is discussed in section 5.5.3 below. As the success of any mentoring practice, particularly educative mentoring is not the sole responsibility of the mentor, it is also related to the ST's experience and the relationship that develops between them, the next section considers matters related to the ST's previous experience in the classroom.

5.5.2 The ST's previous experience in the classroom

Most of the literature explores mentoring from the mentors' perspective regarding their roles and responsibilities and what the mentor should or should not do to build and maintain a successful mentoring relationship that would ensure the ST meets all the requirements for QTS. There is much less literature written with the mentee experiences or ST in mind (Wexler, 2020a, 2020b; Black et al (2018); Taylor and Black, 2018). Even in these cases they do not explore the previous experience of the ST prior to engaging with an ITE course and working alongside a teacher mentor.

Five out of the six STs had had previous experience of working with children outside the requirements for their course and school placements. Niamh and Brenda had significant paid positions working with children and consequently would have been used to working with other professionals, which may have supported their making strong professional relationships with their mentors in their present practice.

Three out of the five STs (Mary, Edwina and John) came straight from school or college to their ITE programme. John had no experience of working in a classroom beyond previous university placements and the pre course requirements of his ITE programme. This may have led John to be much more passive in his relationship with his mentor as he may not have made the transition, in his mind to him now being in a teacher role and working alongside his mentor, as opposed to the mentor who like his teachers were the expert who expert who exerts power in the relationship. Interestingly, when asked

what made a good mentor, he suggested that the mentor would be like a parent

...like a parent to them, it's knowing when to push them, when to not push them...as a parent, you need to learn to cut your child some slack in terms of things...checking everything's okay...parents teach their children throughout their life they give pass on experience... from their life through teaching so that you can learn from their good experience on both their bad experiences.
(John Interview, 23:11)

If this is how John perceives mentoring to be then it is as if he is expecting to be ministered to within the mentoring relationship as opposed to him contributing to the relationship, which is what educative mentoring relies upon.

In the work of Curtis et al (2024) where they considered tensions between mentors and ECTs (but the findings could be applied to STs as well), that may occur due to their different perceptions of the mentor role, they did find that the ECTs did consider one of the positions of the mentor was that of a parent. This was not the case with the mentors in this study. This was seen as something that could cause tension, if an ECT expected the mentor to act as a 'parent like' figure, but the mentor saw themselves more as a gatekeeper or 'builder of pedagogical capacity' (ibid, p.1342). This tension could be between the mentor and ST but also within the mentor themselves if they felt they had to make a choice between the role the ST wanted of them and the role they themselves thought they should be playing. For example, 'a mentor charged with moving the ECT from provisional to full registration may feel that they do not have the time or space to assume the role of 'parent' (ibid, p.1342)

Furthermore, when reflecting post placement on how his target setting had progressed, discussing whether he felt he was able now to set his own target he once again did suggest as Kate was the expert it was down to her and even her responsibility

...to be honest with you, I sort of left that to Kate, I thought you know, like she's my mentor. I have no experience of judging...Kate's, my mentor that's her job...But she knows what the school expects but she's also been talked through the university documents so she

knows what they expect...I felt it's not my place to say, you know, to say, 'I don't think I need that target' (John, post placement interview 23:59)

Again, it would have been quite an uphill struggle for Kate to work with John in an educative way, if this was a strong belief that he held that he had no role to play in for example the development of setting his own targets. That is not to say that John is not wrong that Kate has had more experience than him with mentoring and knowing what a ST needs to do to be successful, but he does not from the above extracts suggest that he is aware of and even open to working with his mentor in a collaborative way on setting targets.

Mary and Edwina, also came straight onto their ITE programme straight from school or college but they had close family members who had senior positions in primary schools and therefore had opportunity to volunteer in those schools since they were in year 11 at school and work alongside teachers. The difference between Mary and Edwina was that Mary volunteered at the school as part of the requirement of work experience and seemed to have limited her experience to being an assistant in the classroom, under the direction of the class teacher (Mary interview, 4:46-5:14) Edwina on the other had as her experience of volunteering grew; became more involved in the wider aspects of working with children and their teachers such as Forrest schools and residential and daily school trips. In addition, she also volunteered for most of the previous half term with KAPS, when the whole school had to move to a different site as the result of the catastrophic incident.(Edwina interview, 2:46) She worked alongside Agnes in Year Six, who encouraged her to return to complete her Key Stage One (KS1) placement after the summer as Agnes knew at that stage, she would be moving to Year Two and as they were both maths specialists, they were a good fit (Agnes interview and Edwina interview)

This mentor pairing between Agnes and Edwina had such a promising foundation, but of all the relationships seemed from the observations of the mentor meeting, lesson observation and lesson debrief, to be the least developed. Edwina, seemed keen to contribute to the life of the classroom beyond lesson delivery and the Headteacher was keen to point out that

although she was only a few weeks into the placement she had brought in an advent calendar, she had knitted for the classroom and introduced how it could be used each day to reward pupils. In contrast, when Edwina was delivering the geography lesson, there was no interaction between her and Agnes, as Agnes was sitting at the back of the class behind her computer, in what could be described as a traditional 'observer' stance. It became obvious as the lesson progressed, that Edwina's lesson would 'run over' the end of the school day, Agnes stood up and started the ending of the lesson procedures, without discussing this with Edwina. This could have been because the covid-19 restrictions at that time required strict adherence to the time each class departed the classroom to meet their parents, maintaining the 'covid school bubbles'.

However, it could be said that it would be a mentor behaviour that caused tension in the mentor relationship, suggesting the mentor is not genuinely allowing the ST to take ownership of the class and is not in that moment working collaboratively with the ST. This could have led to the ST feeling undermined in front of the class and if this continues to become disillusioned and discouraged. Alternatively, as this is just a snap shot of their relationship at that moment in time, this behaviour could however have been due to the fact they were just at the beginning of their relationship and Agnes was still establishing herself as a Year Two teacher, as well as considering mentoring for the first time. However, it does reflect Hansman (2003) thoughts that there not only needs to be an awareness of the power relationships that will exist between the mentor and ST but how to manage them so that they do not cause distress leading to damaging the ST's ultimate progress. This leads into the further examination of the importance of mentor pairing and selection.

5.5.3 Mentor pairing and selection

The previous two sections have outlined how the quality of the mentor-ST relationship is affected by many factors such as the mentor's and ST's personal and professional abilities, skills and procedures within the individual context within which they operate (Rippon and Martin, 2003; Forsbach-Rothman, 2007; Hall, et al., 2008). However, as Hobson et al (2009), also

advocate, the selection and pairing of mentors and ST's have an important role to play too in the success or not of this relationship.

Following on from the above two sections, it is not surprising that mentor pairs Catherine and Niamh and Maureen and Brenda were observed to have the most developed collaborative mentoring relationship with educative mentoring practices being enacted more frequently and at a higher level. These mentors had the most experience of teaching and mentoring and their ST's both had had a considerable amount of experience working alongside teachers as a fellow professional. This would suggest that the ST's familiarity with working with teachers whilst having some responsibility themselves enabled the ST's to develop their working relationship with their mentor more quickly and confidently. Mentor pair two were an interesting pairing because although Gillian only had three years mentoring experience, Janet had a vast amount of working with many children and young people through her teaching of dance. She confided in her interview that she did not feel as 'comfortable' with the mentor in her previous school as 'the teacher just sat at the back and observing [sic], with Gillian, it's so much more comfortable' (Janet, interview, 11.25). When asked to expand upon this she said it was because Gillian was

...a lot more positive, and a lot more, a lot more nurturing...got to know me as a person... she asked about my life, personal things and stuff, because I have a little girl and stuff like that... I had a bit more trust, which now I feel more comfortable and confident teaching lessons in front of her. (Janet interview, 11.57)

Janet felt comfortable with this more nurturing aspect of mentoring and this would be, if maintained going forward a good foundation for the development of educative mentoring practices. Not all mentors and ST's may be comfortable with discussing their personal lives in such a way, but it does highlight the need for the mentor to show support for the ST, making sufficient time for conversations to be two way and in doing so to demonstrate good interpersonal skill (Hudson 2013) This was seen being enacted in the lesson debrief when Janet was physically upset at the start of the meeting as she felt the lesson had been a 'disaster' and Gillian had reassured her, sitting right next to her saying 'it was not a disaster, don't be too hard on yourself' (Gillian and

Janet, Lesson debrief, 3.00), the conversation developed to such an extent that Janet was able to see a way forward and indeed made steps to apply her own targets for the week ahead. Observing the stark contrast between the mentor pairings of Agnes and Edwina and Gillian and Janet, although they were in the same school, does suggest there are grounds for careful mentor-selection processes (Kilburg, 2007; McCann & Johannessen, 2009). The consequences of not doing so could lead to as Murtagh (2024, p2) says 'weak methods of mentor selection' leading 'to some mentors undertaking the role when they are ill-equipped to do so'. It was not clear in this present research what the reasonings were behind the Headteacher of each school selecting the mentors, but it would not be beyond the realms of possibility that it was based on the availability and willingness of mentors within the school (Hudson, 2016).

Recognising the lack of an abundant supply of mentors, it could be suggested that there would be a prerequisite that suitable training would be undertaken. The data for this present research was collected prior to the introduction of the ECF, which had the potential of validating mentor roles within their schools, and giving them access to a planned training programme underwritten with online resources (Murtagh2024). The mentors in the present research, without exception, indicated that their training had been related to compliance related to the completion of paperwork required by their providers and they were directed to the providers' online training. It would be hoped that mentors on the introduction of the ECF, would be exposed to training that is contextualised and be supported within pedagogy and practices that are encouraged within their individual school. This contrasts with what is often seen as 'a privatised and isolated mentoring relationship where the locus of responsibility...rests solely on one mentor rather than the wider school staff/team' (Milton et al, (2022) p.884). Mentor training that is somewhere between the sole reliance on each individual mentor and being so prescriptive as to nullify any personalised mentoring work with STs or ECTs could be said what the ECF was intended to do. However, recent research (Murtagh 2024; Ovenden-Hope, 2025) has suggested that the reality is in fact a mentoring regime that is so demanding on the mentor as to detrimentally impact the mental health and wellbeing of the mentors themselves. This next section

expands the discussion on how educative mentoring practices may match what Millwater and Yarrow (1997) observed in mentors with a ‘mentor mindset’.

Table 13 below is based upon the work of Millwater and Yarrow (1997) who described the mentor doing these things if a mentoring mindset was observed. It shows how these practices were seen in various interactions within the mentor pairs in the present research and whether this could be linked to educative mentoring. This table does validate some of the observations from earlier sections that show that mentor experience and ST experience working with children do lead to educative mentoring being observed enacted more. Interestingly, the absence of the last two mentoring practices could suggest that these aspects of mentoring mindsets extend the hierarchy (see Figure 6) beyond bi-focal lens.

Mentoring practices observed when a mentoring mind set was present as found by Millwater and Yarrow (1997, p.22)	Which mentors were observed employing these practices in the present study. EM denotes that this could lead to educative mentoring practice.
Earning the trust and therefore the friendship and respect of the learner.	Mentors Gillian, Maureen and Catherine (EM)
Tolerating the learning style of learners.	Mentor Kate (EM)
Accepting but challenging the mistakes and differences of the learner.	Mentors Gillian, Angela, Kate, Maureen and Catherine (EM)
Accepting that there are times when help is needed and doing this with a minimum of fuss.	Mentors Gillian, Angela (EM)
Taking the learner from where they were and developing the person from there.	Mentors Gillian, Angela, Kate, Maureen and Catherine (EM)
Responding to the needs of the learner in both personal and professional areas	Mentors Gillian, Kate, Maureen and Catherine (EM)
Taking every problem in their stride spending the time to talk about the practices or preferred pedagogy that they were operationalising.	Mentors Gillian, Angela, Kate, Maureen and Catherine (EM)
Being dynamic and creative in their Teaching.	Mentors Angela and Catherine (EM)
Encouraging the initiation of shared innovation	Mentor Catherine (EM)
Sharing confidences on the political atmosphere within the school	Not seen
Reflecting together on the way that the school and the professional community impacted on their work as teachers	Not seen

Table 13: Examples of mentor mindsets (Millwater and Yarrow 1997) enacted by mentors in this present study

These extensions to the hierarchy would be in line with Stanulis and Brondyk (2013, p.31) who suggest that educative mentoring could eventually lead to the mentor to contemplate a 'push back against institutional norms, to focus on new possibilities for pupil and [mentor and student] teacher engagement and learning' (p.31).

The above sections have emphasised the fact that mentoring is between two people and therefore their experiences and relative skills and attributes contribute to the success or not of the mentoring relationship and educative mentoring. This final section will now look more closely at the concept of mentorability and whether this impacts on mentoring and particularly educative mentoring.

5.5.4 Mentorability

A previously mentioned Black et al's (2019) work, although conducted in the US, could be applicable to the UK context. The students in the study viewed the following characteristics to be important for their own mentorability 'open-mindedness, flexibility, listening skills, and persistence' (p.140), going on to suggest that although they could see the importance of these characteristics, they may not possess these at the start of their mentoring relationship. They suggested that it would be beneficial to, who would be STs in this present research, to have their responsibility within the mentoring relationship made explicit to them. Whilst mentors and STs had the roles of the mentors and the STs outlined to them in the Programme handbook, they would not have had any information as to what this meant in practice.

During the online semi structured interviews most of the ST's (except Edwina) did express that the mentoring experience was better than they had expected. Curiously, 'what' they had expected was derived from anecdotal information they had gleaned from STs in the year groups above them. John had been fearful of 'monster mentors' that were 'full on' (John Interview, 16.00) and Niamh thought that the mentor would have been more 'formal and intense' (Niamh Interview, 10.20). Several of the STs were surprised how supportive the mentors were (Janet, John and Mary) and Niamh in particular, although she had worked in schools prior to university was surprised how much

collaboration she was involved in with her mentor and how much she was trusted.

This latter point raises the observation again of how much the ‘mindset’ of the mentor could have upon the development of the mentor relationship. The work of Yeager and Dweck (2020) has importance here as it can be seen from the findings of this present research that being aware of the mentors and ST’s mindset could have an impact on how the mentoring relationship develops. If a mentor has a fixed mindset related to how far they believe a ST could develop during their placement, and this is in place from the start of the relationship, then progress could be severely limited. Contrast this with another mentor accepting a ST as not the ‘finished article’ at the start of their placement and so accepts the ST ‘where they are’ and work with them.

This would be a more ‘natural’ or authentic outlook to foster if it is supported by the school culture that has been in turn inculcated by the leadership team. The leadership team must intentionally demonstrate that they acknowledge, and show their understanding of, the ‘complexity of classroom life – especially the multidimensionality, simultaneity, immediacy, unpredictability...of the demands made on teachers in classroom lessons’ (Pedder and Opfer, 2013 p. 542). It would therefore become inherent in the culture of the school and therefore applying it to the mentoring of STs would not be unusual or strange questionable practice.

It would be important to note when looking at mentorability that it would necessary to be satisfied that the mentor had been ‘appropriately selected such that they could fulfil the demands of the role’... not on an ‘ad-hoc basis’, ...or ‘were allocated to the role with little or no choice in the matter’ Murtagh and Dawes (2020). From earlier discussion, it can be seen, that if the mentor had not been selected appropriately it could have a negative impact on the ST and they could appear to not have ‘mentorability’ when in fact this would be their response to an inappropriately selected mentor.

If the STs John and Mary are looked at a little more closely as they were the STs that struggled most to make sufficient progress at times throughout their

school experience. That is not to say that they would be classed as 'not having mentorability' but their verbalisation of their experience of being mentored and what was observed and reflected upon by their teachers will be referred to. John had what could be described as a fixed mindset with regards to his expectation of how Kate should be as a mentor, the following excerpt is from a discussion in his post placement interview regarding any ownership he had setting his own targets

...to be honest with you, I sort of left that to Kate, I thought you know, like she's my mentor. ...Kate's, my mentor that's her job... ...I felt it's not my place to say, you know, to say, 'I don't think I need that target' (John, post placement interview 23:59)

Not only is this quite telling that John seems to have a fixed mindset about what Kate's 'job' is as his mentor, he seems to suggest that his understanding of setting his own target is not dialogic in any way but would bring him into conflict with Kate. This could suggest that John does not really exemplify, in this instance the characteristics of 'open-mindedness, flexibility and listening skills' that Black's (2020, p.140) students refer to as being characteristics to be required for a student to have mentorability.

Similarly, Mary seemed reluctant to decide regarding which subject she would like to teach the following week when the percentage of teaching was meant to increase. Her mentor Angela, gave her the choice of Geography, History, RE and Computing. There was silence for over three minutes whilst Mary appeared to be considering this choice before finally choosing computing. I was surprised in the post placement interview with Angela, where she revealed that this was not the first time, she had had that conversation with Mary

...that conversation we had before Christmas ...and I gave her the long-term plan and I said "you know, I know it feels like a long way off but here's our topics for the time that you're teaching have a look you know". There are certain things I love teaching during year. But I said "you know you do what you fancy or something you've not taught before" So, she's had the long-term plan then probably end of November to be thinking about, so at that point it should have

been 'right I really want to teach 'whatever'... the Great Fire of London', but nothing!

(Angela post placement interview, 38.07)

The mentor meeting that had been observed had taken place in early February and therefore the Mary had had several months to consider a subject and topic they would prefer to teach. This was a difficult situation, as Mary did struggle to meet the requirements of the placement and it could be that she was so overwhelmed that the mentor giving her a choice was just too much. She did not appear to be able to choose a subject that would work to her advantage, in that it would be something she had an interest or enjoyment in and this could have been transferred to her preparation and ultimately teaching. Controversially it could also be that teaching was not the correct career for Mary or maybe it was that Mary struggled with working with the younger children, preferring maybe to work with the older children in Key Stage 2.

Angela's words maybe also illuminate how tensions may arise between a mentor and ST if the ST does not behave in the same way the mentor would have thought on reflection, they themselves, would have responded in the same situation. It would therefore seem that the advice given by Singh (2021, p.3) relating to the importance of the mindset of an effective mentor cultivating being 'reflective and introspective and is crucial for ensuring that our students develop a growth mindset' would be crucial in this instance. This could play a part in whether the ST is considered to have mentorability or not.

5.6 Summary of the discussion of findings.

In this chapter I have postulated a detailed review of the four discussion points that had developed from the data. Findings one and two both raised the subject of the importance of language in education but especially in mentoring and how this should be considered. Finding two also put forward a suggested hierarchy of educative mentoring practices, based on what mentor pairs articulated and enacted. This could contribute to making the development of educative practices more accessible going forward.

Finding three and four both reflected the complexity of the school environment, exemplifying what Milton et al (2022, p.8) advocated that 'from a related ecological perspective, schools need to become effective ecosystems for teacher learning'. However, this present research expands on this by suggesting that both the mentors and STs previous experiences, the selection and pairing of mentor pairs and the mentorability of the ST does impact this.

In the next chapter, I will reflect how the research questions were addressed, and how the research contributes to the theoretical and methodological literature. The strengths and limitations of the study along with recommendations for future research and practice will also be proposed.

Chapter Six Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

At the heart of this thesis has been STs who are at the beginning of their career, working with their mentors within the complex educational establishments that they have been placed. Effective mentoring has long been recognised as an essential ingredient in not only the success of ST's entering the profession but choosing to remain within it as their chosen career path. Educative mentoring, was the focus of this study and working with six mentor pairs, their articulation and enactment of educative mentoring practices was explored.

The three research questions set, guided the parameters of the research that was carried out, they were:

1. What perceptions do mentors and STs have of mentoring and educative mentoring in particular?
2. What educative mentoring practices are enacted by mentors and student teachers during the mentoring relationship?
3. What supports the mentor relationship to be conducive to educative mentoring?

Although it was found that the term educative mentoring was not known by any of the mentor pairs, they could all give examples from their practice of educative mentoring practices. The educative practices that were observed being effectively enacted either during mentor meetings or mentor debriefs, seemed to be linked to the mentors' experiences of teaching and mentoring, the ST's previous experience of working with children, mentor pairing and selection and the mentorability of the ST's.

The relational aspects of mentoring, dominated both the mentors' and STs' perceptions of mentoring but this element of mentoring appeared to be more important to STs than their mentors. Mentor behaviours and practices that contributed to the STs feeling they belonged and a school culture that

reinforced this was also found to be beneficial to the development of a collaborative relationship that is crucial to educative mentoring, in turn building pedagogical capacity.

Appropriate and helpful communication that promoted and gave space for, critical reflection by both the ST and mentor, made it possible for them both to grow and develop personally and professionally supporting the behaviours implicit for educative mentoring practices. It is suggested in this present research, that as the STs realise and work out their own agency, that this could lead to, if fostered appropriately a much more satisfied ECT community within a profession that would have greater appeal. The complexity and 'multidimensional ecologies' that exist within schools has been demonstrated through the relationships between STs, mentors and the leadership team, as well as with all members of the community. The impact that such relationships have on not only welcoming the ST into the school community but to thrive within it through experiencing educative mentoring practices has been explored.

This approach to mentoring is not without cost, given the personal investment required of mentors of not only time, but also the risk of entering a collaborative relationship with ST's who traditionally they were seen by and maybe see themselves as being, the expert within a more passive relationship.

6.2 How the research questions were met

Table 14 following gives an overview of how the research questions matched the findings

Findings / RQ's	Finding one: None of the participants recognised the term educative mentoring but when educative mentoring was explained to them, all the participants could give examples from practice of educative mentoring practices.	Finding two: Educative mentoring practices that could be articulated by the participants during their interview, were observed in practice (mentor meeting or lesson debrief) as well as practices that had not been articulated.	Finding three: The relational aspects of mentoring, dominated both the mentors and student teachers' perceptions of mentoring but this element of mentoring appeared to be more important to student teachers than their mentors.	Finding four: The characteristics and experiences of the mentor pairs and mentorability of the student teacher, did appear to influence the enactment of educative mentoring practices.
RQ1: What perceptions do mentors and student teachers have of mentoring and educative mentoring in particular?	✓		✓	
RQ2: What educative mentoring practices are enacted by mentors and student teachers during the mentoring relationship?	✓	✓		✓
RQ3: What supports the mentor relationship to be conducive to educative mentoring?		✓	✓	✓

Table 14: A summary of how the Findings match the Research Questions

There was a lot of data collected so it was important that for the purposes of this thesis the research questions guided the discussion, and this table demonstrates that the research questions were each addressed within at least two of the findings. The research questions were kept in mind as the findings began to take shape and kept the focus on the aim of the study.

6.3 The contribution made to the existing literature

The thesis contributed to the existing literature related to educative mentoring in two ways, theoretically and methodologically and each will now be discussed individually.

6.3.1 Theoretically

The discussion related to the developmental and evolving nature of educative mentoring practices as outlined in Table 2, contributes to the existing literature related to educative mentoring in relation to the proposed hierarchy of educative mentoring practices that were observed. This hierarchy was constructed based on the complexity of skills required to enact them, and related to the experience of the mentors in this present research. An extension of this hierarchy was suggested by adding in characteristics of 'mentoring mindsets' as described by Millwater and Yarrow (1997) and will add to the debate on educative mentoring practices going forward. As the mentoring relationship develops through educative mentoring practices, the ST is nurtured to be the best ST and future teacher possible as the ST is made to feel like an established teacher. This has the potential to have a positive impact on schools as these educative mentoring practices become more common practices throughout the school.

This perspective of educative mentoring, when considered through an ecological view of school communities, will also contribute to the discourse surrounding the role of educative mentoring in transforming the culture of a school. The fundamental importance of the leadership of a school to infuse collaborative practices across the school between all members of the community was seen as important for educative mentoring practices to be most effective.

However, whilst the leadership team has a role to play, in supporting the development of the skills that educative mentoring requires, this research also recognised that, mentors 'on the ground' working in an educative way with their STs could be the role models that could support the spread of such practices building pedagogical capacity across the school. The place of social learning theory, which is at the heart of the collaboration that takes place within

educative mentoring, has also been recognised and the significance of it, also adds to the debate surrounding educative mentoring.

Mentors would need time to not only work with their STs, but to reflect on the process and share their experiences with others within their own school community or others beyond the school, who also were keen to develop educative mentoring within their practice. The value of working within a community of practice would also make sure that what mentors had learned from working with each ST via educative mentoring is not lost in the frenetic pace that exists in schools from year to year as they respond to and prepare for policy changes.

6.3.2 Methodologically

This thesis contributes to the methodical literature in the following three ways:

Firstly, RTA was chosen as the preferred method of data analysis Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013, 2021, 2022), describe a six-step procedure within RTA. Although they warn against treating these in an escalator way, within the first step 'familiarisation with the data and identifying items of potential interest' I introduced a step that could be said to be 'pre coding' which then helped in the second step of 'generating codes'. I also introduced two cycles of code generation, when the generation of themes became overwhelming. This added to the rigour of the RTA and I would recommend that others should not fear doing this going forward, to ensure robustness of the themes they finally settle on.

Secondly, Inductive (data driven) analysis was employed as the intention was for the data to speak for itself and the coding and themes to bear little resemblance to any of the questions that the participants were asked. However, it was also recognised that aspects of the analysis were deductive in that they were guided by the RQs, this is seen as a strength and added to the rigour and robustness of the organisation of the data and its analysis (Bingham and Witkowsky (2022). It does suggest further research is required based on inductive and deductive analysis of data.

Finally, and it could be said the most significant contribution this thesis makes to the literature related to research methods could be the inclusion of observations in my data collection. These observations were backed up with audio recordings so this meant that I did not limit the data collected to that solely collected from the online semi structured interviews. The audio recording also meant that I was able to consider what was said in the interview in light of what was said during the mentor meetings and lesson debriefs. This increased the opportunity for a much richer discussion on such things as educative mentoring practices that I observed being enacted, which given that none of the participants recognised the term was a valuable source of data. Whilst the inclusion of observations and audio recordings resulted in a large amount of data being generated, it was worth it to contribute to this rare but valuable body of research recognising the rhetoric and reality of practice is not always the same.

6.4 Recommendations for future practice

This thesis argues that educative mentoring practices are fundamental to good mentoring, set within the context of good teaching and learning. Therefore, it would be advantageous to consider how to develop and harness the following - the mentor has a good knowledge of subjects and pedagogy, can justify them, developing a pedagogical relationship with the ST and employ a bifocal lens, building pedagogical capacity. This would require schools and mentors in partnership with their accredited ITE provider, to engage in training beyond those related to compliance. One way could be to incorporate the development of educative mentoring practices, for example, by sharing concrete examples and scenarios through the participants own videos of educative mentoring practices being enacted. Facilitating clusters of mentors to meet, that are based within easy distance from each other to develop educative mentoring practically would be beneficial. These cluster meeting would enable good educative mentoring practice to be shared but also give the mentors opportunity to reflect on their experience to date and what practice or pedagogy they can take forward. Having access to such communities of practice would support the embedding of educative mentoring practices within

the pool of mentors but would increase the likelihood of such practices permeating across each school community.

There are some practices that would need to be built into the school timetable to provide the best foundation for educative mentoring to be considered and enacted.

Consider the pairing of mentors explicitly as opposed to schools just matching the year group that the ST needs, with whoever is teaching that class in schools that have indicated they could accommodate a ST. This could require that potential mentors for the next academic year to complete a short questionnaire outlining their previous teaching and mentoring experiences, views of mentoring, concerns about mentoring. Their interest and commitment in working in a collaborative way with the next cohort of STs would also need to be captured. The accredited ITE provider would then need to consider these responses when matching STs to a particular school, based upon the STs experience of working with children. Although this could be seen as time consuming, the pairing of mentors is seen to be crucial from this research if educative mentoring practices are to be developed as opposed to the mentors just working with STs in the same way they always have. Attempting to intentionally pair mentors with STs would elevate and give additional credence to the roles of mentors in the practice of educative mentoring.

The mentor to be the ST's class teacher, or at least be someone who the ST works with on a regular basis, this goes on from the above in that schools and the accredited ITE provider would need to positively consider who is going to be a mentor. This would mean It is appreciated that this would limit which classes would be available to have a ST. Again, this would promote the importance of the expectation that the mentor and ST will be collaborating and working in a different way than in traditional mentoring.

Mentors and STs are to meet, prior to the placement at a time and location that is convenient for the mentor. This would give the ST a feeling of being valued and worth 'getting to know.' It would be important at this initial

meeting for the mentor and ST need to share expectations of the mentoring going forward and sharing past experiences. This would take some trust on part of the ST if previous experiences have not been good.

Facilitate school placements overlapping time wise so that STs can see how the mentor works in action with the previous student, and how the mentor relationship could look at the end of the practice. It is appreciated that there could be problems with logistics and there may also be resistance if the previous ST is struggling to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

Facilitate opportunities for ST to develop reflective practice. For example, the ST could be encouraged to engage in the completion of a 'hot written reflection'⁴ prior to the initial debrief of any lesson observation. This has the potential to increase the depth of the discussion between the mentor and ST, particularly if the ST is encouraged to draw upon this 'hot reflection' during the meeting between the mentor and ST that focuses on the lesson.

6.5 Strengths of the study

The strengths of this study relate to working with the mentor pairs, given there was a global pandemic still impacting on how schools were able to operate. The mentors, STs and researcher exhibited resilience and flexibility to respond to the ever-changing government guidance related to Covid-19. It follows that the methods chosen for this study can be applicable in most situations going forward. Given most of the participants were able to take part in all aspects of the proposed research and the rich data recorded, is testament to the enthusiastic and positive relationships that were built up with the participants.

The fact that there was no input from the researcher to the participants, does suggest that what was observed being articulated and enacted was more likely to reflect where the mentor and ST were at within their relationship.

⁴A hot written reflection refers to a written reflection completed as soon as possible after the event that is being reflected upon.

The data analysis of the study is also seen to be a strength, the time spent on ensuring the analysis was carried out in an organised and robust way adds to the conviction that the findings can be relied upon.

The mentors appreciated, during the interview, to have the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their practice. On more than one occasion, a mentor said something along the lines, 'you've made me think there' and therefore another strength of the study is that it contributed to the professional development of the mentors. It also suggests that there is a desire from teachers for the chance to reflect and discuss their practice, which could be so valuable in the development of educative mentors.

6.6 Limitations of the study

This was only a small study of working with six mentor pairs, and as such the findings cannot be generalised. The mentors were chosen to participate in the research by the Headteachers and therefore there is a potential that the sample may be skewed towards mentors that the Headteacher had confidence in their mentoring. Although there were some mentors who exhibited a more advanced level of mentoring expertise, Agnes did not exhibit educative mentoring practices (as outlined in Table 13) and she exhibited some behaviours that may not have been helpful to building the mentor relationship, during the research. This may have been that although she had had twelve years' experience of teaching she had never mentored and as such maybe felt a little vulnerable and on edge being part of the research.

The mentor pairs took part at different times in the academic year and therefore the ST practice. The findings need to take that into account as a possible reason for some mentor pairs being less developed than others. Also, just because educative mentoring practices were not observed during mentor meeting or the lesson debrief did not mean they would not have occurred at another time as this research is just a snap shot of mentoring practice.

It also needs to be considered that had the mentor had the opportunity to maybe read the statement about educative mentoring and reflect upon it prior

to the interview, they would they have been able to articulate more or different educative mentoring practices.

6.7 Personal professional development

Although I have been involved in collaborating with colleagues on research projects that were related to practice and presented the findings at conferences, this was the first time I had designed and carried out a research project on my own, working with other professionals as participants. Although the schools and Headteachers were known to me professionally, I was still quite apprehensive at approaching them regarding the involvement of their mentors and STs. Despite the impact of Covid-19 (and one school recovering from a catastrophic incident, the previous term), they were not only accommodating but enthusiastic to be involved, seeing this as an opportunity for their mentors to showcase their practice. This has given me confidence going forward that although recruitment to research projects is difficult it is not impossible.

Presenting the research firstly at the design stage and then the data analysis stage at doctoral conferences, also gave me the opportunity to present enthusiastically and confidently to peers and other academics. It also gave me the opportunity to defend decisions I had made and share good practice and pitfalls to avoid, to peers who were considering using similar research designs or data analysis.

Keeping a reflective diary as I was analysing data, made me realise that there are some elements of the analysis that I must 'let go' as they did not completely fit with the boundaries, I had set with the research questions. Having gone through the process of writing up the thesis, has given me the confidence to share these additional findings in research papers in the future and share good practice with school mentors.

Although I was aware from my practice that not all STs had the same experience due to the mentor they were paired with or the schools they were placed in for their training, I had not really considered in any great depth, how

complex this 'pairing' was. In any future role working with mentors, I would be keen to involve the STs as soon as possible prior to the placement experience beginning. I would be keen to work with mentor pairs to develop their collaborative relationship, emphasising the importance of a pedagogical relationship that builds pedagogical capacity, in educative mentoring. I would be keen to share the value of reflective practice in capturing mentoring experiences that could be useful going forward.

6.8 Recommendations for future research

The following research could be considered

- A longitudinal study following one mentor through an academic year to see how their practice develops with different STs with or without any additional input.
- An action research study that worked with one mentor to develop educative mentoring practices, developing their knowledge of educative mentoring and what it looks like in practice. Use video (of mentor meetings and lesson observation debrief) as a vehicle to discuss their practice, help them recognise educative mentoring practices and how to develop them further.
- A Case study exploring with one mentor pair, that does meet initially to discuss expectations and past experiences of mentoring, to see how this impacts upon their mentoring relationship and enactment of educative mentoring.
- I would include in any future research that used semi structured interviews, an additional step where after reflecting on the interview and what was said, an additional follow up interview could be included. This is so that points raised by the interviewee that may be pertinent going forward in the research, but were not fully explored in the initial interview could be followed up, giving a more comprehensive understanding of the views of the interviewee.
- Further research into the perspectives of link tutors, programme providers and headteachers in relation to educative mentoring would add to the discourse related to the complex ecologies of schools.

6.9 Concluding statements

The intention of this thesis was to explore the articulation and enactment of the concept of educative mentoring with mentors and STs. In doing so, the complexity at every level (mentor, ST, pairings, relationships, school culture and, partnerships between schools and their accredited ITE provider) was confirmed. Although the relationship between the mentor and ST is crucial to the success of the mentoring experience for both the mentor and ST, I was surprised at the depth, importance, and complexity of this in relation to the ST feeling as if they belonged in a school and treated as a teacher. Contributing to this was the ST feeling they were known and valued, and the mentor and school community accepting them when they arrived, as they were. These really are the foundational building blocks for a successful relationship between mentor and ST, making it possible for collaborative mentoring practices to be fostered. The climate is consequently then ready for the mentor and ST to develop educative practices that will enhance the ST's awareness of their agency. An aspirational aspect of this is that this feeling of belonging will result in the ST contributing via educative mentoring to their own professional development and that of their mentor.

This will not however, occur in a vacuum and time and resources are needed to support the training of mentors to feel confident to mentor in this way seeing its benefit and not rely on the 'default' mentoring practice they have always done. This thesis is fundamental to highlighting the importance that the contribution of educative mentoring makes to good mentoring practice that in turn supports the recruitment and retention of STs and ECTs serving to stabilise the teaching profession. However, there will always be staff turnover and this is not a onetime 'fix' or fad and everything associated with recruitment and retention will be sorted out.

As a result, if schools do not invest in mentoring, it will be as if they are building on sand all the time, with no firm foundation. Whereas, if we secure good mentoring practices at ST level, this will transfer into the ECT population,

eventually becoming the accepted practice within more and more of the school population, which would be most desirable. This is why the findings of this thesis are necessary to establish educative mentoring as the mentoring practice that can be a firm foundation for mentors to work with STs. Educative mentoring facilitates the mentor developing a reciprocal relationship that allows collaboration between the mentor and ST to grow, through such practices as co-planning, justification of pedagogy and practice. The classroom becomes the site of enquiry into pupil learning and progress. As the mentor employs a bi-focal lens to ensure the ST's present needs are being addressed but also, they are being pointed to future pertinent practices and pedagogical capacity is evolving. This occurs right from the start of the mentoring relationship, when educative mentoring becomes the vehicle by which mentors work with STs where they are at, and through feeling welcomed and belonging in the school community they flourish and work towards QTS. As mentors become more experienced and confident in employing educative mentoring practices, this collaborative reciprocity, between mentor and ST has the potential in time to permeate throughout the school.

The findings of this thesis are relevant to the current situation in ITE with the introduction of the initial teacher training and early career framework (ITTECF) in September 2025. The role of mentors is at the heart of this and ITT accredited providers, will be keen to ensure that mentors develop their own pedagogy and practice in the process of mentoring STs, with the potential of this transforming their schools. Therefore, the findings of this thesis suggest that educative mentoring is one way mentoring can be substantiated by the establishment of collaborative reciprocity between the mentor and ST. The findings ultimately provide ways mentors can be supported to become the best they can at working together with their STs in an educative way.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Summarising information about the participants.....	194
Appendix 2: Research Consent Form for Head Teacher and mentors and Mentees.....	196
Appendix 3: Interview schedule (Mentor and Mentee)	198
Appendix 4: Observation of mentor meeting proforma.....	202
Appendix 5: Observation of taught lesson proforma.....	205
Appendix 6: Observation of lesson de-brief proforma.....	208
Appendix 7: Examples of codes generated and theme development.....	210
Appendix 8: Examples of a work in progress for some of the themes that can be found in figure 5.....	212
Appendix 9: Distribution of themes across mentor pairs from the analysis of all the data sets.....	213
Appendix 10: Text to clarify Figure 5.....	214

Appendix 1: A summary of participant information

Part 1

	School One		School Two		School Three	
Pseudonym	Mountain Primary School (MPS)		Tyndale Primary School (KPS)		King Alfred Primary School (KAPS)	
Type of school	C of E Primary Academy (formerly a Teaching School)		Voluntary aided C of E Primary		Community Primary	
Number on Roll	191 (2021)		236 (2021)		172 (2021)	
	Mentor	Student teacher	Mentor	Student teacher	Mentor	Student teacher
Mentor pair	One		Three		Five	
Name	Catherine	Niamh	Maureen	Brenda	Agnes	Edwina
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
Teaching Experience	8 years		12 Years		12 years	
Mentoring experience	6 years		8 Years		0	
Year Group	Reception		Reception		Year 2	
ITE Pathway		PGCE Primary Education + QTS		PGCE Early Years + QTS		BA Primary Education + QTS year 3
Date of Placement		28/2/22 - 10/6/22		28/2/22 - 10/6/22		22/11/21 - 11/2/22

Part 2

	School One		School Two		School Three	
Pseudonym	Mountain Primary School (MPS)		Tyndale Primary School (KPS)		King Alfred Primary School (KAPS)	
Type of school	C of E Primary Academy (formerly a Teaching School)		Voluntary aided C of E Primary		Community Primary	
Number on Roll	191 (2021)		236 (2021)		172 (2021)	
	Mentor	Student teacher	Mentor	Student teacher	Mentor	Student teacher
Mentor pair	Two		Four		Six	
Name	Kate	John	Angela	Mary	Gillian	Janet
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Female	Female	Female
Teaching Experience	3 years		10 years		4 years	
Mentoring experience	2 Years		6 Years		3 Years	
Year Group	Year 1		Year 4		Year 1	
ITE Pathway		BA Primary Education + QTS year 3		BA Primary Education + QTS year 3		BA Primary Education + QTS year 3
Date of Placement		22/11/21-11/2/22		22/11/21-11/2/22		22/11/21-11/2/22

Appendix 2: Research Consent Form for Head Teacher and mentors and Mentees



LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM (Headteacher)

Title of research project: 'Hiding in plain sight': Exploring the experiences of mentors and mentees as they engage with educative mentoring.

Name of researcher: Susan Williams

- 1 I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Yes	No
-----	----

2. I understand that the participation of mentors and mentees is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

Yes	No
-----	----

3. I agree that mentors and mentees may take part in this research project and for the anonymise data from observation, video recording and audio recording to be used as the researcher sees fit, including publication.

Yes	No
-----	----

4. I agree for interviews and mentor meetings to be observed and digitally recorded using a digital voice recorder

Yes	No
-----	----

5. I agree for nominated lessons to be observed and digitally recorded using a video recorder

Yes	No
-----	----

Name of participant:

Signature:

Date:

LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM (Mentors and mentees)

Title of research project: 'Hiding in plain sight': Exploring the experiences of mentors and mentees as they engage with educative mentoring.

Name of researcher: Susan Williams

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. | Yes | No |
| 2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. | Yes | No |
| 3. I agree to take part in this research project and for the anonymised data from observation, video recording and audio recording to be used as the researcher sees fit, including publication. | Yes | No |
| 4. I agree for interviews to be observed and digitally recorded using a digital voice recorder | Yes | No |
| 5. I agree for mentor meetings to be observed and digitally recorded using a video recorder | Yes | No |
| 6. I agree for nominated lessons to be observed and digitally recorded using a video recorder | Yes | No |

Name of participant:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 3: Interview schedule (Mentor and Mentee)

Mentor Semi structured interview

Introduction (Rapport formation)

1. The purpose of research is to explore the process of mentoring and I will be considering the views of mentors and mentees.
2. I must reassure you at this stage there are no right or wrong answers, I am interested in your views and opinions you may have.
3. Are you OK with this interview being recorded?
4. Your responses will be kept confidential unless anything you says gives me cause for concern for yours or someone else's safety in which case I would have to disclose this to your designated safeguarding officer
5. Your identity will remain anonymous and anything I use from your responses will refer to you using a pseudonym,
6. I will transcribe the interview verbatim and the transcriptions shared with you for comment. Extracts may be included within my final thesis

Warm up

1. How long have you worked in School X?
2. Where did you train to be a teacher?
3. Did you do anything else before training to be a teacher?
4. How did you come to be a mentor this year?⁵
5. How long have you been a mentor?
6. What training have you had as a mentor?

Main body

1.Mentoring

1. How is mentoring organised in this school? How often are the mentor meetings and what are their foci?
2. From your experience what kind of things of things can impact the mentoring relationship?
3. I'd like you to describe a time when something related to you or your mentee, impacted positively on your mentoring and you would describe as an example of 'good mentoring'

⁵ The red text shows that the question is adapted from Appendix A and B (Wexler, 2019, p.65-67)

4. Conversely, I'd like you to describe a time when something related to you or your mentee, impacted negatively on your mentoring and you would describe it as an example of 'poor mentoring'
5. Has there been a time when you felt uncomfortable with something associated with the mentoring you were involved in?
6. What advice would you give future mentors as to how to best support their mentees?

2.Educative mentoring

1. I do not know if you have come across the term 'educative mentoring'? If NO the following is read to the mentor.

This is where research suggests there is a type of mentoring that is different from traditional mentoring. Traditional mentoring would be where the mentor is seen as the 'knowledgeable other' passing on your knowledge and expertise to your mentee. You support, the trainee emotionally, where you do what you have described doing, where you know what they have got to do and they've got to have a particular set of skills and you work through these – making judgements as to how the mentee is progressing against these. That is what your job is.

Educative mentoring has got those things in mind but it is done through the mentor and mentee learning together, in a partnership so there is much more of a relationship between the mentor and mentee working together. This is particularly so when you are co-planning, observing a lesson and debriefing after the lesson, talking maybe about the pupils' work. Right at the start of the debrief you ask the mentee to say how they felt the lesson went and they can explain why they did things in the way they did. In the planning stage the mentee can say why they may intend doing something in a lesson that is different to the way you may have planned to do it.

What develops is a 2-way conversation where there is a joint enquiry into the pedagogy and what was going on in the classroom, so time is allowed to have that discussion. You may have an eye on where the mentee is now and where they need to be in the future, this is known as a bi-focal lens.

To summarise, I would say joint enquiry into pedagogy and practice, co-planning, observation of lessons, to debrief and maybe looking at students work, being able to analyse student work together. You are very much a team.

2. Would you be able to give me an example of when you engaged with any of these processes (but you would not refer to any of these as 'educative mentoring')?

Cool Down

1. Is there anything you would like to add or ask me?

I will go away and transcribe the interview and email you a copy for you to check and return if there is anything you would like to query

Thank you so much for your time in helping me with this interview, this is appreciated

Mentee Semi structured interview

Introduction (Rapport formation)

1. The purpose of research is to explore the process of mentoring and I will be considering the views of mentors and mentees.
2. I must reassure you at this stage there are no right or wrong answers, I am interested in your views and opinions you may have.
3. Are you OK with this interview being recorded?
4. Your responses will be kept confidential unless anything you says gives me cause for concern for yours or someone else's safety in which case I would have to disclose this to your designated safeguarding officer
5. Your identity will remain anonymous and anything I use from your responses will refer to you using a pseudonym,
6. I will transcribe the interview verbatim and the transcriptions shared with you for comment. Extracts may be included within my final thesis

Warm up

1. How long have you been School X?
2. Where are you training to be a teacher?
3. How did you choose this route?
4. Did you do anything else before training to be a teacher?

Main body

1.Mentoring

1. What has the mentoring you have received so far looked like?
2. How is mentoring organised in this school? How often are the mentor meetings and what are their foci?
3. How has the mentoring you have received to date differed from what you expected mentoring to look like? How do you feel about this?
4. Can you describe a good experience of mentoring?
5. Can you describe an example of a mentoring situation that wasn't helpful?

2. Educative mentoring

1. I do not know if you have come across the term 'educative mentoring'? If NO the following is read to the mentor.

This is where research suggests there is a type of mentoring that is different from traditional mentoring. Traditional mentoring would be where the mentor is seen as the 'knowledgeable other' passing on your knowledge and expertise to your mentee. You support, the trainee emotionally, where you do what you have described doing, where you know what they have got to do and they've got to have a particular set of skills and you work through these – making judgements as to how the mentee is progressing against these. That is what your job is.

Educative mentoring has got those things in mind but it is done through the mentor and mentee learning together, in a partnership so there is much more of a relationship between the mentor and mentee working together. This is particularly so when you are co-planning, observing a lesson and debriefing after the lesson, talking maybe about the pupils' work. Right at the start of the debrief you ask the mentee to say how they felt the lesson went and they can explain why they did things in the way they did. In the planning stage the mentee can say why they may intend doing something in a lesson that is different to the way you may have planned to do it.

What develops is a 2-way conversation where there is a joint enquiry into the pedagogy and what was going on in the classroom, so time is allowed to have that discussion. You may have an eye on where the mentee is now and where they need to be in the future, this is known as a bi-focal lens.

To summarise, I would say joint enquiry into pedagogy and practice, co-planning, observation of lessons, to debrief and maybe looking at students work, being able to analyse student work together. You are very much a team.

2. Would you be able to give me an example of when you engaged with any of these processes (but you would not refer to any of these as 'educative mentoring')?

Cool Down

Is there anything you would like to add or ask me?

I will go away and transcribe the interview and email you a copy for you to check and return if there is anything you would like to query

Thank you so much for your time in helping me with this interview, this is appreciated

Appendix 4: Observation of mentor meeting proforma

Observation of Mentor meeting

School			
Mentor		Student	
Time & date of observation		Location of observation	
Others present			
Location of observer			

	Observation	
Time	Mentor	Mentee

	Observations	
'Potential' Themes (from the initial interview)	Mentor	Mentee
Relationship building Quality and characteristic of conversations		
Scaffolding		
'Letting go' of the class Responsibility, accountability and for what		
Boundaries (Time for and types of communication)		
Negotiating 'difference' (Teaching style / passion/ interest/ personality etc)		
Compliance (TS / ITT paperwork/ school policy)		
Other		

	Observations	
Educative mentoring practices	Mentor	Mentee
Student teacher given opportunities to justify planning		
Joint enquiry / learning together/ partnership		
Co-planning		
Looking at pupils' work		
Pedagogy discussed		
Bi-focal lens		
Other		

Appendix 5: Observation of taught lesson proforma

Unstructured observation

Focus is on recording what is seen without analysing and interpreting during the lesson.

Analysing and reflecting can be done at the end of the lesson before the debrief

Date:	Group:
School/mentor/mentee	Location:
Observation notes	

Analysis (trends and themes)	Reflection (learning and implications)
-------------------------------------	---

Observing learner and teacher activity

I will make quick notes that capture the activities of both the student teacher, mentor and the learners at 5-minute intervals. This approach will force the observer to focus on the general activity in the lesson, rather than focus on specific phenomena.

Learning intentions (objective / outcome / success criteria)			
Minutes	Student teacher activity	Mentor activity	Learner Activity
0			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			
35			
40			

45			
50			
55			
60			

Appendix 6: Observation of lesson de-brief proforma

Observation of Lesson debrief

School			
Mentor		Student	
Time & date of observation		Location of observation	
Others present			
Location of observer			

	Observation	
Time	Mentor	Mentee

	Observations	
'Potential' Themes	Mentor	Mentee
Relationship building Quality and characteristic of conversations		
Scaffolding		
'Letting go' of the class Responsibility, accountability and for what		
Boundaries (Time for and types of communication)		
Negotiating 'difference' (Teaching style / passion/ interest/ personality etc)		
Compliance (TS / ITT paperwork/ school policy)		
Other		

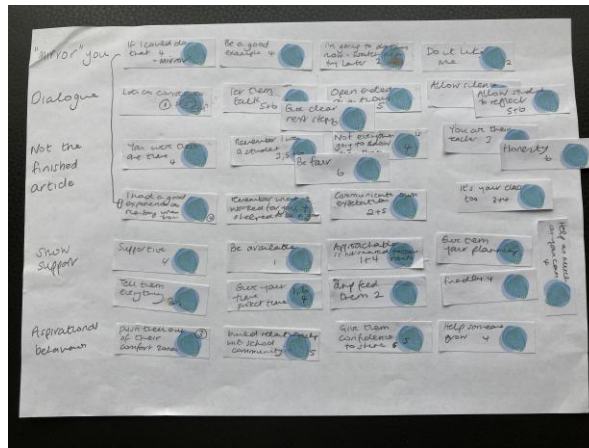
Appendix 7: Examples of codes generated and theme development

Examples of codes	Mentors who mentioned this	Potential themes generated
1. Paperwork dominated 1. Functional and procedural 2. Informal (through shadowing others) 3. Online refresher 4. Supported by university and visiting tutor 5. Expectations of mentors 6. What to do if something goes wrong 7. Own experience classed as 'being trained'	1. All 2. 2,4,5,6 3. 6,2,3,1 4. All 5. 2,4,6 6. 2,4,6,5 7. 6,4	A. Mentor training
1. Communication that's open/ direct / honest 2. Invest / protect time 3. Holistically discuss pupils and their learning 4. Previous experience of mentor emulated or portrayed 5. Relationship built up 6. Appreciate they are not the finished article 7. Mentor -led evaluation 8. Avoid negatively impacting confidence 9. Success of ST 10. An enthusiastic ST 11. Provide opportunities for ST own ideas 12. Reflecting Emotional words 13. Push subject knowledge	1. 5,2,3 2. All 3. 4,3,1 4. 5,2,3 5. 4,3,1 6. All 7. 4,5,2,3 8. 5,2,3 9. 6,1 10. 4,1 11. 4 12. 2 13. 6	B. What supports mentoring (positive mentoring)
1. Attributes of the students 2. Experience of mentor	1. All 2. 4,2,3,1	C. What could impact the mentor relationship
1. Poor communication 2. Targets continually not met 3. Unprofessional mentor behaviours 4. Confidence negatively impacted 5. Going beyond mentor relationship for guidance - Relationship impacted	1. 4,2,3 2. 6,4,2 3. 4,2,3 4. 5,6,4,3,1 5. 6,4,2,1	D. What could hinder mentoring

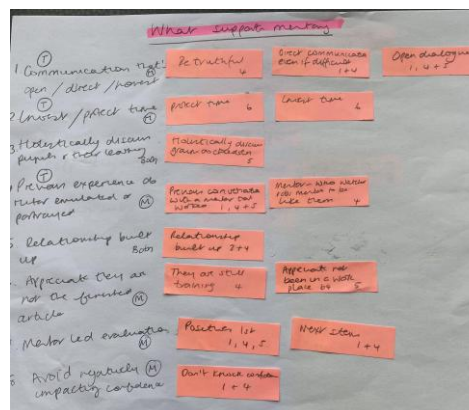
1. Justification 2. Thinking out loud 3. CO-planning 4. Work together 5. Risk student teacher ideas 6. Allow Student teacher ownership 7. Set own targets 8. Reflective practice encouraged 9. Joint responsibility of pupils explicit 10. Equip Student (as opposed to being prescriptive) 11. Dialogue expected 12. Remind student teacher what they have achieved 13. Lesson study practices 14. Innate	1. 4,2,3,1 2. 4,2,1 3. 4,2,1 4. 6,1 5. 4,3 6. 6,1 7. 6,1 8. 6,4,2,3 9. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 10. 3 11. 4,3,1 12. 2 13. 5,4 14. 1	E. Educative mentoring pedagogies recognised
1. Continually learning 2. Question their ability 3. Self-importance from mentoring 4. Still honing own boundaries 5. 'Perfectionist' traits 6. Possessive of class 7. Open to CPD 8. Balancing responsibility and stress 9. Emotional vocabulary	1. All 2. 2,3 3. 1,2, 4. 5,2,3 5. 5,2,3 6. All 7. 1,3,4 8. 4,2,1 9. 2,3,6,4,1	F. Mentors' perceptions of themselves and tensions that may arise due to these
1. Appreciate they are not the finished article 2. Mirror you 3. Dialogue 4. Show support 5. Aspirational behaviours	1. 4,2,3,1 2. 6,2 3. 5,3,1 4. 5,6,2,1 5. 4,2,3	G. Qualities to pass on to other mentors
1. Imbalance of effort 2. 'tricky' conversations 3. Repetition of advice 4. Student teacher overwhelmed by advice	1. 4,3 2. 6,2,31 3. 6,4,2 4. 3,1	H. Uncomfortable situations
1. Work ethic 2. 'self-reflective' 3. Amenable 4. Relationships with children	1. 4,1 2. 6,2 3. 6,4,2 4. 4,1	I. Qualities of students

Appendix 8: Examples of a 'work in progress' for some of the themes that can be found in figure 5

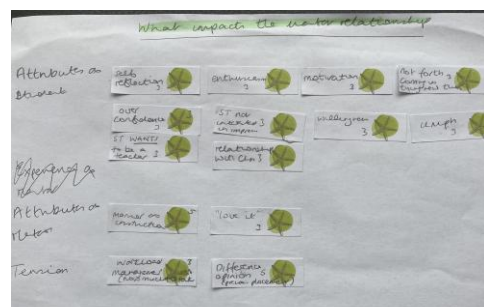
8.1 Advice to pass on to other mentors



8.2 What supports mentoring



8.3 What impacts the mentor relationship



Appendix 9: Distribution of themes across mentor pairs from the analysis of all the data sets

9.1 Mentor meetings

Theme	Colour code	Mentor pair one	Mentor two	Mentor pair three	Mentor pair four	Mentor pair five	Mentor pair 6
Mentor behaviour that can lead to a positive mentoring relationship.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mentor and student teacher behaviours that can lead to tensions.			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Educative mentoring practices.		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Situations that may lead to tensions.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student teacher adopted into the school community as they are				✓	✓		✓

9.2 Lesson debrief

Theme	Colour code	Mentor pair one	Mentor two	Mentor pair three	Mentor pair four	Mentor pair five	Mentor pair 6
Mentor behaviour that can lead to a positive mentoring relationship.				✓			✓
Mentor and student teacher behaviours that can lead to tensions.				✓		✓	✓
Educative mentoring practices.		✓		✓			✓
Situations that may lead to tensions.				✓		✓	✓
Student teacher adopted into the school community as they are		✓					

Appendix 10: Text to clarify Figure 5

Themes	Codes
What supports mentoring	Be truthful, Direct communication even when difficult, open dialogue, protect time, invest time, holistically discuss groups of children, previous conversation with a mentor that helped, wanted to be like a mentor they had had, relationship built up, STs are still training, appreciate the ST may not have been in a work place, positives first, next steps, don't knock confidence
What could hinder mentoring	Communication, manner of telling (tone), repetitive targets, letting personal frustrations impact, bullied ST into compliance, knocking confidence impacted relationship, seeking extra support (mentor), delivering a 'wow' lesson for link tutor
Mentor training	Paperwork, functional and procedural, informal through shadowing others, on line refresher, never really on own, importance of Link tutor, whole staff trained by ITE provider, what to do if things are going awry, own experience being classed as training, recommended reading, expectations of STs
What impacts the mentor relationship	Attributes of ST: self-reflection, enthusiasm, motivation, not forthcoming in finding new things, over ST not interested in improving, willingness, 'umph', ST 'wants' to be a teacher, relationships with children Attributes of mentors: manner of instruction, 'love it' Tension: workload management, different opinions from previous placement
Educative mentoring pedagogies recognised	Justification, thinking out loud, planning together, work together, plan own lesson around mentor's objective, ST allowed to have own ideas, allow ST to take ownership and share ideas, used formative assessment to teach groups and have ownership, allowed to set own targets, help to realise errors on their own, encourage reflection, joint responsibility of class
Qualities to pass to other mentors	If I could do that, be a good example, I'm going to do this now watch me, do it like me, lots of conversations, let STs talk, open ended questions, allow silence, allow students to reflect, give clear next steps, you were where the STs are, be fair, honesty, remember what worked for you, communicate expectations, its your class too, be available, approachable, tell them everything, drip feed them, friendly, push STs out of their comfort zone, build relationship with school community, give them confidence to shine, help someone grow
Uncomfortable situations	Imbalance of effort, ST doesn't try to build relationships, etiquette, being professional, tricky conversations, managing an emotional ST, saying the same thing repetitively, lengthy 'to do' lists
Qualities of students	Lazy, lack of motivation, good planning, self-reflective, receptive to feedback, didn't communicate that they like children, lack of animation or enthusiasm, Don't build relationships with children, don't improve.
Self perceptions of mentors and tensions that may arise from this	I'm still learning, don't always get things right, early career expectations to have 'tricky conversations', work in establishing own boundaries, don't think ST should assume availability, proud to be a mentor, inadequate, am I doing my job right, perfectionist, like routine and structure, these are my children, my way first, letting go of your class, open to CPD, torn constantly balancing different aspects of the mentoring relationship, I've done all I can, tread carefully, from the heart, passionate about subject

