

## **NFER Evaluation of the Mentoring for Early Career Chemistry Teachers (MECCT) Project for the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)**

### **Information sheet for schools**

#### **What is the aim of the evaluation?**

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to undertake a process evaluation of the Mentoring for Early Career Chemistry Teachers (MECCT) pilot project which is being delivered by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC). The evaluation is being undertaken between December 2018 and March 2020.

The aim of the evaluation is to explore:

- **evidence of promise** – including what needs the project addresses, the quality of mentoring provided and perceived outcomes
- **feasibility to deliver** – including whether the right mentees are reached, the suitability of the mentor/mentee matching and delivery approaches, areas for improvement and scalability
- **readiness to be evaluated in a trial** – including what factors would support or hinder a successful trial and how it should be administered.

#### **What activities will the evaluation involve for schools?**

The evaluation involves three key activities in gathering data from the schools involved in the pilot. These are described below.

##### **1. Baseline and end-point survey of mentees**

We will administer a paper baseline survey with all of the 40 mentees signed up for the project. This will be administered in February 2019 during the initial training day held by the RSC. It will take around 10-15 minutes to complete. It will explore reasons for engaging with the mentoring and what mentees hope to gain from their involvement. It will also include a range of Likert-style questions in which mentees will be asked to assess their confidence, subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, classroom management, their satisfaction with teaching and their intentions in terms of their future teaching career.

We will then administer a 15-20 minute end-point survey at the conclusion of the mentoring in February/March 2020. This will ask mentees to assess their confidence, knowledge, skills, satisfaction with teaching and intentions for the future in the same way as the baseline survey in order to assess change over time. It will also incorporate questions exploring the

mentoring received, views on effectiveness and areas for development and any challenges faced in engaging with the project.

## **2. School case studies including telephone interviews with a mentee, their head of department/line manager and mentor**

We will also undertake ten school case studies, which will include three telephone interviews per case-study school with: a mentee, their head of department/line manager and their mentor. Each interview will last around 30 minutes and will be undertaken between October and December 2019.

The aim of the interviews with mentees will be to explore: their reasons for participation in the project and the benefits they hoped to gain; the frequency and type of mentoring they have received; views on the effectiveness of the mentoring and any areas for development; any challenges in engaging with the project; perceived early outcomes and likely future impacts; and what other support they have received alongside the RSC mentoring.

The interviews with the mentee's head of department/line manager will gain an external perspective of the impact of the mentoring on the mentee and any spin-off outcomes for other teachers in school. We will also explore the other support and professional development that mentees have been receiving in school alongside the RSC mentoring.

In terms of mentors, we will explore their reasons for participating in the project and the benefits they hoped to gain and the extent to which these have been realised. We will also gather data on the mentoring they have provided to their mentee, what has worked well, challenges and areas for development. In addition, we will explore their views on the outcomes realised for their mentee.

## **3. Log of mentoring activities delivered**

We will need to gather data on the type and extent of mentoring activities delivered in order to understand differences in effectiveness and resulting outcomes. To gather this data, we have created a log to record the frequency, duration, mode and nature of each contact between the mentor and mentee. We will ask mentors to complete the log on an ongoing basis during project implementation.

## **What other activities will the evaluation involve?**

Alongside collecting data from schools, the evaluation will include: consultations with RSC staff delivering the project including project managers, the RSC mentoring professional, RSC trainers and the local RSC education coordinators; and observation of the mentor training in February 2019 and October/November 2019.

### When will I need to get involved?

#### Baseline and end-point surveys of mentees

- **February 2019:** administration of paper baseline survey with mentees.
- **February/March 2020:** administration of paper end-point survey with mentees.

#### Case-study school telephone interviews

- **October to December 2019:** we will complete ten school case studies which will each include a 30 minute telephone interviews with:
  - a mentee
  - their head of department/line manager
  - their mentor.

#### Log of mentoring activities

- **Ongoing:** we will ask mentors to complete a log of the mentoring they are providing to their mentee on an ongoing basis.

### Who is NFER?

NFER is an independent research organisation with many years' experience of undertaking research and evaluation with schools. For more information please visit:

<http://www.nfer.ac.uk/>

### Who can I contact for more information?

Matt Walker, the Project Leader at NFER, is very happy to answer any questions you might have. Please contact him on 01904 567646 or at: [m.walker@nfer.ac.uk](mailto:m.walker@nfer.ac.uk)

**Thank you very much for your support with this evaluation.**