

21.08.25 Sue Connell

<b>Title of your good practice/case study (one short line what it is about)</b>
Mentor Moments- NQSWs being linked with a colleague for a one-off conversation around a specialist area.
<b>More detail of your good practice/case study</b> <b>If your good practice is about a person/people please share more about them and what they've done.</b> <b>If your practice is about an activity(s) or process please tell us more about this activity(s)/ process and what it involved.</b> <b>What difficulties (if any) did you overcome and how did you do this?</b>
<p>We started Mentor Moments back when we had lockdown in 2020 and we did not have enough colleagues for all NQSWs to have regular buddies. The idea was to use the system of each NQSW and to build upon this. As an issue/interest has come up, we have negotiated conversations of up to an hour with a colleague who has a specialism or has completed certain areas of practice. Examples are working with Female Genital Mutilation and preparing for direct work around this, working with adoption processes or Children Looked After processes. A favourite is a colleague who has a great specialism in finding ways to facilitate a conversation with children who are non-verbal. I have been in the organisation 25+ years, and it helps that I know a few of the colleagues. This has grown over the last few years. Initially it might have felt a bit strange (2 colleagues who don't know each other being randomly brought together). However, we are using our relationships and the feedback from both parties is that it has been a rich and rewarding discussion. Often followed by an ongoing working relationship, as that introduction has been made.</p>
<b>What has been the positive impact of this for the ASYE programme, NQSWs, assessors, wider workforce, your organisation, or people who draw on care and support?</b>
<p>There has been an empowering feel to the Mentor Moments. Once we have negotiated and matched, the NQSW &amp; Mentor make their own arrangements to meet up within a certain timescale (usually a week or 2). There is a reassurance for the NQSW that they are going to have a learning discussion and also be able to share some of their own learning and expertise with a colleague in their system. As an organisation, our practice model is Systemic so this fits in nicely with that idea of NQSW's systems growing. It's a small task without any detriment. Often, the NQSW takes the learning back to their team (e.g. team meetings) which can boost confidence. Good practice is being shared. It's win win!</p> <p>The Mentor Moments also provide Continuing Professional Development tasters for the Mentor. Invariably they have come back to me to ask to do it again. Then maybe going on to do Onsite Supervisor training. It has opened doors that we could not have imagined. So those colleagues who are at the Early Professional Development stage have been very keen to offer Mentor Moments, but more experienced staff have also shared that they are very happy to help too. It fits into the rich learning culture here at Wandsworth. Line managers have asked about it,</p>

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and they have brought it into positive feedback for staff. So we have good feedback and openness going on.

Now we have lots of buddies available and we have kept the Mentor Moments as they have been such a hit. More recently we have had a match where they discussed having neurodivergence and navigating a busy social work role. That was particularly powerful too, in this case around identity as well as practicalities. So, the Mentor Moment is so flexible. For each one, it has gone well and been enriching.

**Supporting quote(s) (Please add quotes from members of your team/people who you support about this person/activity/process)**

*From the NQSWs*

'It made such a difference being able to talk with D'. She has helped me to see how I can make it work and given me really great examples. I was able to think about things in a very different way'.

'I had felt so stuck about what to do. W had such creative ideas about how to reach a child or young person who cannot talk'. She had a range of toys and even suggested music. That has really boosted my confidence'.

*From the Mentors*

'I was so happy to meet with R. It reminded me of how far I have come along myself, to be able to share those experiences and ideas that seem to work. They told me they had some new ideas from our conversation and that made me feel good too. Happy to do it again any time'.

'This has shifted my way of thinking. We can always put an hour aside to support a colleague. It's an area of practice I am passionate about and that helps! I told my line manager and it's been added to my CPD. Could you tell me more about being a buddy?'

**Organisation name**

Wandsworth Children's Services  
(Richmond and Wandsworth Councils)

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