**Amigos Policy**

***St Mark’s CofE Primary School***

***& Parish of Basingstoke Down***

*Amigos is a joint programme, run by St Mark’s CofE Primary School and Parish of Basingstoke Down, Basingstoke. Where the word ‘we’ is used below, it is used to represent both organisations.*

**What is mentoring?**

We believe in the power of mentoring. Mentoring occurs when a positive role model supports the development of another person’s character, knowledge or skills. Mentoring sessions happen on a regular basis, and with a specific intention or objective. It is based on the premise of an older, wiser person, usually with life experience, mentoring a younger person. The mentor and mentee often develop a trust and friendship.

**What is Amigos?**

The Amigos programme intends to put mentoring into practice within the school environment, for the benefit of pupils. Many pupils could benefit from extra support from a mentor-style approach. The benefits include building confidence, improving resilience, learning new skills, strengthening academic areas of need, and building a more richly-connected society. Indeed, we believe both mentors and mentees will benefit from the Amigos programme.

Amigo means ‘friend’ in Spanish. The principle underlying the programme is that the young person would see the mentor as someone who is trusted and who supports them in their development.

**Who is a mentor?**

A mentor is the adult who is supporting the mentee. We carefully select and train mentors. Only those who we consider suitable will be able to take on the mentor role. It is a purely volunteer role.

**Who is a mentee?**

A mentee is the pupil of the school. They are carefully chosen by the staff. Parental agreement is vital; they **must** give consent for their child to partake. Mentees also agree to take part, and are never forced to do so.

**What will a session look like?**

A session will be tailored to suit the needs of the mentee, and take into account the abilities of the mentor. There will be a focus to the session, and where possible, the sessions should aim to support the academic needs of the child as well as the character/pastoral needs. Each session will last approximately 45 minutes, and will generally take place during an afternoon. Careful attention will be paid to ensure that the Amigos programme does not have a negative impact on the child’s education.

The sessions may consist of activities including: Playing board games, craft activities, reading, special projects that your child is interested in, extra learning opportunities, talking about life, what they enjoy, and what they find tricky

**Safeguarding**

The school will take the lead in matters of safeguarding. The church will support and uphold all matters of safeguarding. However, the school and church will work together should a safeguarding concern arises.

Mentors will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction. Induction must happen before any mentoring begins. Subsequent training and updates will also include safeguarding training. On an annual basis, all mentors will sign to confirm that they have read the school’s safeguarding and child protection policies, code of conduct, and the latest Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) guidance.

Mentors will know what action they should take if a concern arises. This includes using a record of concern form, and being aware of who the DSLs are.

In order to comply with safer recruitment practices, a full application process is carried out, including application form, references, interview, and full, enhanced DBS check. The process and documentation will comply with both church and school recruitment policies. At least one of the interviewers will have had safer-recruitment training during the past three years.

**Induction & Training**

Before a mentor meets with a mentee, an induction will take place. This will include:

* Reading of this policy, and the safeguarding policies;
* Awareness of how to keep themselves safe, as well as the mentee;
* Awareness of health and safety issues and responses;
* Awareness of practical activities;
* Awareness of weekly recording sheets;
* Awareness of data protection;
* Awareness of communication channels, including between school, church and parents.

Training will take place at least annually. It will cover issues that have arisen, aspects of the induction programme, and any other appropriate updates.

**Timings and frequency**

The Amigos plan will take place on a weekly basis. It is intended to run throughout the school year. The mentor makes a commitment to the programme, and especially the pupil; the default commitment period of the mentor is one year.

**Concerns and complaints**

Should an issue arise from either the mentor, mentee or leadership teams, or through a safeguarding or whistleblowing procedure, then that relationship and provision will be reviewed immediately. This may result in finishing the programme for either or both individuals. Support will be put in place to ensure a smooth and appropriate end.

The normal school and church complaint procedures apply. Complaint policies and procedures are available on the organisations’ websites.

**Process**

In a typical lifecycle of mentoring, the following will take place:

1. Recruitment of mentor
2. Induction and training of mentor
3. Selection of mentee, based on the school’s view of the mentor and mentee
4. Parent/Carer consent for mentee to take part
5. Pre-mentoring meeting with parent, school, mentor and co-ordinator
6. Weekly session with the mentor and mentee, followed by review of the session
7. Subsequent training of mentor and review
8. Meeting of school, Head teacher, and Amigos co-ordinator to determine continuity of programme for both mentor and mentee.

**Roles**

The Amigos co-ordinator will:

* facilitate communication and organisation between church, mentors, school and parents;
* ensure that all paperwork is safely and securely kept at the school or at the church;
* have a recent DBS check carried out; and,
* ensure that all paperwork is kept up-to-date.

The Head Teacher, or delegated school Amigos leader, will:

* ensure that this policy is implemented well;
* ensure that the training provided to mentors is sufficient and regular;
* ensure that the communication between school, parents and church is effective;
* ensure that safeguarding practices are sufficient (the Head Teacher is a DSL); and,
* ensure that a suitable and safe location at the school is made available each week.

The school’s pastoral team will:

* be supportive of the Amigos programme, giving their advice and knowledge when appropriate; and,
* carry out actions as requested by the head teacher;

The Mentor will:

* act in accordance with the school and church ethos, code of conduct, and safeguarding policies and practices;
* provide all information and documents requested during the application process;
* inform the co-ordinator of any change in circumstances which may affect their role, position, or the safeguarding of the child;
* be aware of the needs of the mentee, including medical issues or SEND, and have a clear understanding of the implications;
* give as much notice as possible if unable to attend a session;
* commit for a year to the Amigos programme;
* do their upmost to support the mentor, through engaging activities and encouraging conversations;
* plan and resource the weekly Amigos session;
* complete a weekly reflection sheet, following the Amigos session;
* let the Amigos co-ordinator know immediately of any concerns or issues;
* not discuss issues that are contrary to the school’s or church’s views;
* not liaise with the mentee outside of Amigos sessions or events; and
* not liaise with parents/carers, as this will happen through the Amigos co-ordinator or school.

The Parent/Carer(s) will:

* agree to their child being mentored as part of the Amigos programme, and confirm this in writing;
* understand that their contact details will be shared with the Amigos co-ordinator, and the information will be stored securely at school;
* liaise with the Amigos co-ordinator or school staff as needed.
* be able to raise concerns with the school or Amigos co-ordinator directly; and,
* be able to request that their child is removed from the Amigos programme.

The Governors will:

* be informed on an annual basis of the progress of the Amigos programme;
* ensure that this policy is being put into practice; and
* review this policy at least every two years.

**Data Protection**

St Mark’s CofE Primary School and Parish of Basingstoke Down collect and use personal information (referred to in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as personal data) about pupils, parents and mentors. This information is gathered in order to enable the provision of education and other associated functions. In addition, the school or church may be required by law to collect, use and share certain information.

The school is the Data Controller of the personal data that it collects and receives for these purposes. The school has one Data Protection Officer, who may be contacted through the school office.

The school issues Privacy Notices (also known as a Fair Processing Notices) to all pupils/parents and staff. These summarise the personal information held about pupils and staff, the purpose for which it is held and who it may be shared with. It also provides information about an individual’s rights in respect of their personal data

The school and church both have data protection policies, which can be consulted further. This includes information about the complaint procedures.

Date new policy adopted: Spring 2, 2020

Date of policy revision: Spring, 2023

Next review: Spring 2025