

Mentoring Waiting List Protocol (version 2014)

This sheet explains what happens when we get a request from a school, agency or family to mentor a young person and we are not able to match them to a mentor straight away.



In this instance, the “Request” is put on our waiting list (a spreadsheet). The points below show how we manage this waiting list in a fair, prompt and consistent manner.

Summary of process:

- a) Mentoring Request form is received by us
- b) Risk assessment carried out
- c) The Request is recorded, acknowledged and coded on our system
- d) Weekly team discussion regarding all incoming and pending requests
- e) Response and allocation to appropriate mentor
- f) Waiting list numbering and management if not immediate allocation
- g) Other issues that arise including: capacity limits, declinations, withdrawals, multiple requests

Detailed process:

1. **Form received:** Our “**One to One Mentoring Request Form**” (from hereon called ‘**the Request Form**’) is completed and signed by school / agency / parent / carer and submitted to us (by post, fax, in person or by email). The Request Form can be easily accessed from our website (click [Get Help](#)). Or it can be requested by email / phone. **It must have an authorising name for us to accept the Request.**

The Request Form requires information about:

- The name, gender, age and school attendance % of the young person
- The person authorising the request and their contact details
- The reasons for requesting one-to-one mentoring support
- Any objectives or intended outcomes
- Whether the request is part of a CAF process (Common Assessment Framework)
- Previous patterns of not engaging with services or being excluded
- Whether the young person has been asked
- Parental / Guardian consent
- Risk issues – historic or current

The Request Form is stored securely on our premises in accordance with our Data Protection Statement and Policy. A copy of this Statement is available in the [How We Help](#) section of our website.

2. **Risk Assessment:** This is always required – it is not an optional part of the form. This is completed and signed by the school / agency / parent / carer on the reverse side of the Request Form (Section 4: Risk Plan). This highlights any implications for how the mentoring proceeds such as venue and timing considerations, who else needs to be informed of progress or problems, and whether there are any no-go areas in terms of the mentoring conversation.
3. **Date:** The date that the signed and completed Request Form is received by us is entered on our system.
4. **Acknowledgement:** A member of the Lifespace team will usually acknowledge receipt of a Request Form, whether in person, by phone or email. **If you have sent a form in and have not heard from us within five working days then please contact us to ensure it has been received safely.**
5. **Coding:** The name of the young person is entered on our system using a special code for data protection purposes. We endeavour to use coded forms (even just initials) when

communicating about young people by email with external organisations. We respect their right to privacy.

6. **Team discussion:** The team discusses all incoming Request Forms on a once per week basis, and endeavours to allocate a mentor as quickly as possible. Whilst we can sometimes accommodate requests for a specific mentor to work with a certain young person we can never promise this to be possible.

Through team discussion we have found that over the last eleven years **we successfully allocate a suitable mentor to a young person more than 97% of the time**. We emphasise matching the particular experience and expertise of a mentor with the young person and the situation they are in, rather than looking for common hobbies or shared interests. Also, nearly all our mentoring is same gender (male: male and female: female). There are some exceptions to this that we plan for appropriately.

7. **Response rate:** **We can usually allocate a mentor to a young person between one week and one calendar month (seven to thirty-one days) from receipt of the Request Form at our office.** We do not promise to be able to meet every request within this time period, but it is unusual for a young person to be waiting longer than this timeframe. We recognise that issues are often pressing.

→ **Whilst we are a voluntary organisation with no external targets forced on us, we are motivated to help meet the wide range of needs that young people face as soon as we can in whatever way is appropriate for us to do so.**

8. **Allocation:** In usual circumstances, mentors are matched to young people on a first come first served basis. When a match of a young person to a mentor has successfully taken place, Lifespace will send a confirmation email or phone call to the person who made the Request to confirm that mentoring is ready to begin. This may be through the Reminder Slip system with schools where this process is established.

When a mentor has been allocated to a young person, a copy of the Request Form is made for the mentor and passed to them by their Supervising Mentor. All our mentors are familiar with our policy for keeping personal information in a secure and confidential place. All notes that are kept use coded forms of the name.

9. **Waiting List Number:** If we cannot allocate a suitable mentor straight away then the young person is allocated a Waiting List Number on our system e.g. 01, 02, 03 etc. This is usually allocated in chronological order – those young people at the top of the Waiting List are those with the earliest date of receipt.
10. **Management of Waiting List:** The Waiting List is managed collectively by the Lifespace staff team who meet once per week, and monitor the caseload of all our team of mentors through individual supervision and liaise directly with schools / agencies / families. In some cases, Mentoring Requests will be prioritised not by **date** but by the **severity** of the young person's situation deduced from the risk assessment and in conversation with whomever is making the Request. Therefore, a young person with specific high level needs may be granted priority on the Waiting List. We may also need to consider (a) involvement of other agencies – do they have a strong network of support already? (b) mental health status - will they engage psychologically? (c) School/Agency/ Family budget situation – is funding in place for this work immediately?
11. **Capacity:** The Waiting List will be affected by our capacity to respond (e.g. gender of young people and gender of mentors we have available, as we usually only match male young people to male mentors and female young people to female mentors – although there are infrequent exceptions with all the necessary safeguarding considerations in place).
12. **Waiting List Limit:** Lifespace has set a limit of **20 young persons on the Waiting List** at any one time. Lifespace will not in usual circumstances accept any more Requests which would

exceed this limit. Where this is the case we will keep relevant organisations informed of when we expect to be able to receive further Requests. Our average number on the waiting list is 6 – 10 young people and we allocate mentors to young people for 46 weeks of the year (we do not allocate mentors during the two week Christmas holiday or during the month of August).

13. **Multiple Requests:** If a school / agency / parent / carer make multiple requests for mentoring at one time e.g. more than three in one week, we will ask them for their considerations of prioritising, taking into account risk and severity issues; whether the support is primarily behavioural, therapeutic or based on special educational needs; and to confirm they have the necessary budget to support the work.
14. **Updates:** Schools / agencies / parents / carers are able to see a Twitter-feed update on the Waiting List on our website in the Get Help section. This is usually updated each Wednesday. Schools / agencies / parents / carers are permitted to enquire directly with us about progress of a Request they have made at reasonable time periods by phone / email / in person, and can submit additional appropriate information as part of the Request which will be taken into consideration. We value being **proactive and transparent** in our communication and will accommodate requests for updates as much as we are able to.

➔ **We respect the right for people to know when they should expect support.**

15. **Withdrawal of Request:** Those making Requests are free to pursue other avenues of support/intervention whilst a young person is on the Waiting List, and Lifespace Trust should be made aware of this. Schools / agencies / parents / carers are free to withdraw a Request at any time without reason, and will only be liable for payment if mentoring work has been undertaken with the referred young person.
16. **Engaging:** Once a young person has been matched with a mentor, we usually allow a three week window period for them to respond. If a young person is not engaging with the mentor after three attempts then we will investigate the reasons why, and either the time period can be extended; the Request is removed from the list; or the Request is suspended and reallocated to the Waiting List. We do expect and encourage whomever is making the Mentoring Request to speak to the young person about in advance. This can be notified on the Request Form.
17. **Declined:** The Lifespace team reserve the right to decline a Mentoring Request at any time without explanation – although we will provide a reason whenever appropriate. Wherever possible, if we cannot provide mentoring support or do not believe we are the most appropriate provision for a young person we will signpost your request to alternative service(s) e.g. CAMHS, Compass, Echoes (bereavement support service). Our 'Matrix of Presenting Issues' outlines a number of other agencies we signpost to depending on the issues a young person is facing. This is available on our website in the **Get Help** section.