

SUNBRIDGE INSTITUTE
STUDENT INFORMATION ON MENTORING VISITS
2016-18

The Role of the Mentor

The role of the mentor is to provide support for the student's development as a Waldorf early childhood educator, offering guidance, answering questions, and helping the student to find next steps in the work. This is not a teacher evaluation. The mentor is not expected to share reports with anyone except the student and the student's Sunbridge advisor. If the student's school would like to invite the mentor to do a workshop or parent evening or other activity, this should be arranged independently between the mentor and the school, and the mentor should be paid by the school for this additional activity.

The Mentor Visit

We ask that the mentor spend one full morning (or equivalent) in your class this fall/winter and one morning in the spring. The dates for visits should be scheduled at your mutual convenience. It is helpful if the first visit can take place before you come to Sunbridge in November, and if the second visit takes place before the end of March. This is not required, and winter weather may affect scheduling.

After the morning visit, we ask that you meet for a full conversation with your mentor later in the day, using the Observation Record Form as a guideline for conversation. Obviously, sufficient time should be set aside for the all-important meeting - generally a 2-hour conversation following the morning visit is needed as a minimum. You may want to include your co-teacher, or lead or assistant teacher in a short lunch meeting, but the main conversation time should be between the mentor and the mentee alone in a quiet, non-distracting setting.

Self-Assessment and Preparation for the Visit

Prior to the first visit, the student should send the mentor a self-assessment, written to help the mentor gain a sense of what you perceive as your strengths and needs as a developing Waldorf early childhood educator.

The mentor may want to arrive the evening before the visit, or discuss any particular areas of concern on the phone before their arrival, so that you can make the best use of the visit, making sure to focus on areas of particular concern. The student is expected to provide meals and accommodation for the mentor for each visit. Sunbridge pays the mentor's honorarium and reimburses the mentor for travel expenses.

Student Visits to the Mentor

Students are encouraged to visit their mentor once during the course of each year, in place of having the mentor visit the student, especially if the student does not yet have experience of Waldorf education outside her own school or early childhood program. In this case, the mentor would still receive an honorarium for the visit, but the student would

receive reimbursement for travel. (Your Sunbridge advisor will provide you with a check request form for travel reimbursement once such a visit is approved by your mentor and program director).

If your mentor is not currently working with children, she might suggest an alternative site for the visit, depending on what she feels would be helpful to broaden your experience, or you may ask your Sunbridge advisor for suggestions.

Reports

After each visit, the mentor should send a copy of the completed Observation Record Form - or a narrative account of the visit - to you, and a copy to your Sunbridge advisor. In some cases, the mentor may ask the student to write the report, focusing on aspects discussed in the mentor visit.

If you visit the mentor or another class by prior agreement, you would then write a report of the visit, focusing on particular issues or aspects of the work as agreed beforehand with your mentor, and send it to the mentor for a scheduled telephone conversation to review the visit. The mentor will forward a copy to your Sunbridge advisor and would then receive her usual mentoring honorarium.

If you have questions or concerns at any time about the mentoring experience, please do not hesitate to contact your Sunbridge advisor.

Mentored Teaching Credits and Requirements:

You will receive credit for 30 hours of mentored teaching practice each semester for four semesters of your enrollment in the training course at Sunbridge. This credit is based on a minimum of 2 one-hour days of activity for 15 weeks in a Waldorf early childhood setting with a one-day visit each of the four semesters.

In the event that you are not working with children in a Waldorf early childhood setting during the two-year training, it is possible to arrange for a student teaching practicum instead. The practicum must be in a well-established, healthy Waldorf early childhood setting and needs the approval of your Sunbridge advisor. In general practicums are for a minimum of three weeks, but preferably five weeks per semester.

If for some reason you are unable to complete the mentored teaching requirement during the training course, the mentored teaching can be made up after completion of the on-campus coursework, with the permission of the program director.