

How Good is Your School's Leadership and Management of Staff?



An audit tool for school leaders to support
building a professional staff team

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Leading and Managing Staff

Building and developing an effective staff team is critical to a school's fortunes. This applies not just to the senior leadership team but throughout all departments and support staff.

As Head Teacher or senior school leader, the appointments you make, together with the quality of professional development and learning, are two fundamental pillars of school improvement. Getting these things right can transform the quality of learning and teaching and improve outcomes for all learners.

Building a great staff team is not just a matter of appointing the right candidates to the right jobs. It's about getting relationships right so that all staff, regardless of their status or experience, feel connected to and supported by colleagues. In an effective staff team, people inspire and challenge and learn from each other, accomplishing far more than would be possible alone. Building and sustaining an effective staff team leads to:

- Collective commitment to school vision, values and aims
- New and innovative ways of working
- Sharing of effective practice
- Higher quality of learning and teaching
- Improved professional learning
- Improved staff wellbeing
- Reduced staff absence and turnover

Quality indicator 1.4 from *How Good is our School 4*, Scotland's national quality improvement framework for schools focuses on 2 key elements of building and sustaining an effective staff team:

- 1 Recruitment and selection of staff
- 2 Developing the staff team

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

Finding people with the necessary skills, experience, qualifications and attributes will help the school to deliver better outcomes for learners. Therefore, it is important that a school has well-established and effective procedures for the appointment of staff, so that when vacancies arise, the chances of getting the best person for the job are increased. It will also help to ensure that schools recruit a diverse workforce.

In state schools, the procedures for appointing senior leadership posts will usually involve the local Council's Education department as well as parent representatives and elected members at the short list stage. However, regardless of the level of post advertised, the Headteacher must take overall responsibility for the appointment. This applies as much to recruiting and selecting a new teacher, as it does to appointing a Head of Department.

The following tips and advice help to ensure that the best appointment is made (more detailed guidance on recruitment and selection is contained in one of our other publications: [Recruiting and Selecting School Staff](#)).

1. Recruitment arrangements should be outlined clearly in the school's policy and procedures documents.
2. The school should work closely with our education authority and HR department in the recruitment of staff.
3. The school should use effective recruitment/selection procedures that ensure the best candidate is appointed.
4. Appointment procedures should give due regard to the skills, aptitudes and experience required for the post.
5. Job descriptions/specifications should be in place for all advertised posts.
6. Appointment procedures should be consistent with current legislation and with local and national agreements.
7. Equalities legislation should be adhered to and made explicit in recruitment procedures.
8. Recruitment arrangements should take appropriate account of parental involvement legislation.
9. Those taking part in shortlisting, selection and interviewing should have been appropriately trained in recruitment and selection techniques.
10. The school should involve learners in the recruitment and selection process (where appropriate).
11. Safeguarding procedures should be understood by those managers with responsibilities for recruitment.
12. The school should actively monitor and track staff membership of the PVG Scheme membership (with Council HR support).
13. The school should have supportive induction policies and procedures for all staff.

For more on the selection process, interviewing and appointing staff see our other publication: [Recruiting and Selecting School Staff](#).

Developing the Staff Team

Appointing candidates is only the first step in building and sustaining a great staff team. Under GTCS requirements, all teachers have a responsibility to ensure that they participate in career-long professional learning.

However, school leaders at every level also have a responsibility to help colleagues build on their strengths and address areas for improvement. A crucial part of leadership is spotting people with talent and giving them opportunities to grow and utilise their skills and abilities

within the school. The PRD process and Professional Update help to ensure that the school promotes a culture of critical reflection and self-evaluation, which in turn helps people to grow and push themselves, both personally and professionally.

For more on this topic, see our other publication: [Leading Professional Learning and Development](#)

While induction programmes, CPD events and courses are all important in supporting career-long professional learning, successful teams are built through friendship, trust and spending time together. Approaches such as coaching and mentoring can significantly build trust and establish a culture of critical reflection and self-evaluation.

It is also important that senior leaders are willing to address underperformance where it arises, within the appropriate policy framework and procedures. This is covered in more detail in one of our other publications: [Having Difficult Conversations](#).

Below are some of the key features of building and sustaining an effective staff team.

1. The school should have effective procedures for the development of all staff.
2. The school should promote a culture of critical reflection and self-evaluation.
3. Staff should take personal responsibility for their professional learning and development.
4. Teachers should be confident in their application of the GTCS standards and their professional learning.
5. Staff development and career long professional learning should be well coordinated.
6. There should be a structured professional learning programme, with an annual calendar of CPD events.
7. The school should provide meaningful opportunities for staff to learn from each other as well as with others outside the school.
8. Arrangements for PRD should be in line with national guidance.
9. Coaching and mentoring approaches to PRD should be in place.
10. Student teachers and newly qualified teachers should be well supported to develop sound pedagogies.
11. Supply teachers and temporary staff should have equal access to PRD and professional learning opportunities.
12. The school should create and utilise opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles across and beyond the school.
13. There should be evidence that professional learning and PRD has a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Evaluating Leadership and Management of Staff

The following chart shows an extract from an audit for evaluating the quality of leadership and management of staff using the **Impact** online toolkit. The full audit of QI 1.4 *Leadership and Management of Staff* can be accessed online at: www.hashtag-learning.co.uk

Use the **Impact** online quality improvement tool to complete the traffic lighting exercise and record strengths:

Theme 2: Building and sustaining a professional staff team	
Recruitment and selection of staff	
Our recruitment arrangements are outlined clearly in policy and procedures documents.	
Our school works closely with our education authority and HR department in the recruitment of staff.	
Our school uses effective recruitment/selection procedures that ensure the best candidate is appointed.	
Our appointment procedures give due regard to the skills, aptitudes and experience required for the post.	
Job descriptions/specifications are in place for all advertised posts.	
Our appointment procedures are consistent with current legislation and with local and national agreements.	
Equalities legislation is adhered to and explicit in recruitment practices.	
Our recruitment arrangements take appropriate account of parental involvement legislation.	
We involve our learners in the recruitment and selection process (where appropriate).	
Safeguarding procedures are understood by those managers with responsibilities for recruitment.	
We actively monitor and track staff membership of the PVG Scheme membership (with Council HR support).	
We have supportive induction policies and procedures for all staff.	
Developing the staff team	
Our school promotes a culture of critical reflection and self-evaluation to improve the effectiveness of staff.	
Staff take personal responsibility for their professional learning and development.	
Teachers are confident in their application of the GTCS standards and their professional learning.	
Staff development and career long professional learning is well coordinated.	
We have a structured professional learning programme with an annual calendar of CPD events.	
We provide meaningful opportunities for staff to learn from each other as well as with others out with school.	
Arrangements for PRD are in line with national guidance.	
We promote coaching and mentoring approaches to PRD.	
Student teachers and newly qualified teachers are well supported to develop sound pedagogies.	
Supply teachers and temporary staff have equal access to PRD and professional learning opportunities.	
We create and utilise opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles across and beyond the school.	
Professional learning and PRD has a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people.	