

How Good is Your School's

Vision, Values and Aims?



A Guide for School Leaders on Promoting
Leadership of Change

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Introduction

In order to create the right conditions for leadership of change, it is important that a school has a clear vision, and a set of agreed values and aims.

1 School Vision

A 'vision' is a clear statement of what the school is trying to achieve so that all stakeholders – teachers, learners, their families and community members – are working together. The vision is much more than a few words of vague intention; it embodies the values of the community and is the foundation for actions that will lead to school improvement.

Example of school vision

Our vision is the pursuit of excellence for all. We strive to achieve a stimulating and inspiring school that is at the heart of the local community.

When creating or reviewing your school's vision, ask yourself the extent to which your vision fulfils the following.

- The vision is ambitious, reflecting the highest possible standards and outcomes for all learners.
- The vision has evolved through ongoing reflection and debate across the school and community.
- The vision reflects social, economic and cultural factors of the school's community.
- The school's vision is shared and promoted throughout the school community.
- The school's vision influences decisions about future improvement priorities.
- Learners are supported to understand the school's vision.
- The vision is referenced in key school documents and guidance, eg school handbook, the improvement plan.
- The vision is revisited and reviewed at appropriate intervals.
- Effective leadership at all levels enables the school to turn the vision into a sustainable reality.

2 School Values

Values are central beliefs that are clearly understood and shared by every member of the school community. They reflect the ethos of the school and highlight how these beliefs underpin day to day life and work.

Example of School Values:

Our schools values are Commitment, Opportunity, Respect and Excellence.

By **commitment** we mean that everyone

- *shows loyalty to friends, colleagues and the school*
- *is willing to support and show care for those who need help*
- *is willing to work to the highest level*
- *keeps the school rules*

By **opportunity** we mean that everyone

- *develops confidence through participation*
- *volunteers in a variety of school situations*
- *considers their own strengths and*
- *sets personal goals for improvement*
- *pursues individual interests in a manner which broadens horizons*

By **respect** we mean that everyone

- *values all members of the school community*
- *displays good manners at all times*
- *displays tolerance of others with different points of view and beliefs*
- *shows respect for the school buildings, facilities and surrounding environment*

By **excellence** we mean that everyone

- *is proud of personal achievement*
- *produces work of the highest quality*
- *sets high standards and personal goals for improvement*

When creating or reviewing your school's values, ask yourself the extent to which they fulfil the following.

- Stated values underpin the life and work of the school, eg, inclusion, equity; diversity; achievement for all; respect; social justice; excellence.
- Values reflect social, economic and cultural factors of the school's community.
- The school's values are shared and promoted throughout the school community.
- Values have evolved through ongoing reflection and debate across the school and community.
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- Learners are supported to understand the school's values.
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- Values are reflected in the day-to-day work of staff and learners.
- Values are revisited and reviewed at appropriate intervals.

3 School Aims

School aims give all stakeholders something to work towards and achieve. Aims represent a pathway to fulfilling the school's vision.

Example of school aims

- *Provide a rich, diverse and challenging education through excellent and innovative teaching and learning.*
- *Celebrate success, promote a "can do" attitude and inspire each to achieve their best.*
- *Support personal development, social responsibility and a sense of self-worth.*
- *Develop the attitudes and skills that support a healthy and fulfilled life together with the confidence for a lifetime of learning.*
- *Work as partners in learning with students, parents/carers and the community.*
- *Provide a safe, supportive and well-ordered environment where students and staff are happy and confident as they aspire to achieve*

When creating or reviewing your school's aims, ask yourself the extent to which they fulfil the following.

- Aims have evolved through ongoing reflection and debate across the school and community.
- Aims reflect key priorities in education, eg Closing the Attainment Gap, NIF, Raising Attainment for All.
- Aims are presented in clear goals, targets and intentions.
- The school's aims influence decisions about future improvement priorities.
- Aims reflect social, economic and cultural factors of the school's community.
- Aims are reflected in key documents and guidance, eg school handbook, school improvement plan.
- Aims are revisited and reviewed at appropriate intervals.

Use the [Impact](#) online quality improvement tool to complete the traffic lighting exercise and record your school's strengths and weaknesses.

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Theme 1: Vision, values and aims

School vision

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The school's vision influences decisions about future improvement priorities.	
Learners are supported to understand the school's vision.	
The vision is referenced in key school documents and guidance, eg school handbook, the improvement plan.	
The vision is revisited and reviewed at appropriate intervals.	
Effective leadership at all levels enables the school to turn the vision into a sustainable reality.	

School values

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