Models of leadership

Succession planning  A planning guide for governors

Resource

A joint initiative with the National Governors’ Association, Co-ordinators of Governor Services and National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services.
Introduction

Few would dispute that the role of the headteacher is one that is developing rapidly to respond to an educational landscape that is changing at a national and local level.

As a result, some governing bodies are reviewing the model of leadership for their schools. This may include a focus on arrangements within a single school, for example through appointing a school business manager, developing more distributed leadership or creating a jobshare arrangement for the headteacher. Other models support partnership and collaborations between schools and between schools and other agencies, for example through federations and trusts.

Opportunities presented by different models of leadership

As you develop your plans for the succession of the current headteacher, it would be timely to review the leadership structure for your school.

This may include considering whether it is appropriate to appoint a school business manager to the school leadership team (or to share the resource of a business manager with another school or schools). You may also consider the extent to which the principles of distributed leadership can be adopted throughout the school.

You may find you can solve some of your greatest challenges by collaborating with other schools, perhaps starting with one particular issue such as pupils’ transition from primary to secondary phase. School partnerships are increasingly familiar today because shared accountability and inter-school collaboration builds capacity within schools.

Of course, no two schools are the same. The complexity of the environments in which schools operate means that different schools will need to apply different leadership styles and models to meet their needs. It follows that the traditional model of one headteacher for each school may no longer be the most appropriate way of meeting your leadership needs.

Models of leadership

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive headship</th>
<th>Federations</th>
<th>Headship jobshare</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hard federations (see Federations column) are normally led by an executive headteacher, who takes overall responsibility for all the schools. Each school within the federation may have a head of teaching and learning or head of school, who reports to the executive head. In some cases, a headteacher who is already leading a successful school adds the leadership of another to their remit. Executive heads in this definition may be deployed in schools where leadership needs to be strongly supported because the school is not performing well. This may be for a fixed term where the partner school is facing difficulties for some reason. What are the benefits? Development opportunity for a good headteacher to extend his or her impact and legacy through taking on the overall leadership of more than one school. Opportunities for potential school leaders to take greater responsibility within the executive head's own school while he or she works with another school. This is distributed leadership in action. A federation is a group of two or more schools that formally agree to work together to raise standards. One headteacher may oversee more than one school within the federation, hence challenging the tradition of every school having its own dedicated head. Hard federations – two or more schools under a single governing body and an executive head. Soft federations – an informal arrangement in which two or more governing bodies share some elements of governance and set up a joint strategic committee with some delegated powers. What are the benefits? Smaller schools in particular may benefit from a wider leadership team giving greater support to the head. Development opportunity for a good headteacher to extend his or her impact and legacy through taking on the overall leadership of more than one school. Opportunities for potential school leaders to take a wider range of leadership roles within the line management structure of the group of schools. The role is shared between more than one person. Where two people share the role, they might both work full time, each with contracts for 0.5 headteacher and 0.5 deputy; or they might both work part-time, and together make up 1.0 headteacher role. In a step-up step-down co-headship an experienced headteacher approaching retirement may stay on to support and mentor a new, less experienced, head into the role. Working arrangements are tailored to meet the needs of the schools and the headteachers. What are the benefits? The combined skills, experience and capacity of two talented people leading the school. This model can be an attractive option for leaders seeking a better work-life balance. An opportunity to retain the skills and experience of a headteacher nearing retirement during the induction period of a new leader.</td>
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### Action checklist: Models of leadership

Use this checklist to identify suggested short and longer-term actions. Then transfer them to your action plan and refer to the resources overleaf for more help.

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<th>Questions</th>
<th>Short-term actions</th>
<th>Longer-term actions</th>
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| Have we considered revising the leadership model for our school for the coming years? | Review the online self-learning interactive guides, Models of leadership action planning tools.  
Ask your local authority, and diocese if appropriate, to put you in touch with other schools operating a different leadership model and arrange a visit to share learning and understand experience. | Consider as a school whether formal or informal collaborative leadership structures would make more of your current leadership capacity and offer greater opportunities to those with leadership potential. Use the Yewlands Family of Schools case study on the Innovation Unit website to stimulate discussion. |
| Do we know how one of these models could help us find, develop and keep good headteachers? | Read sections 4 and 5 of the publication Succession planning – key themes for school governors.  
Ask your local authority, and diocese if appropriate, to put you in touch with other schools operating a different leadership model and arrange a visit to share learning and understand experience. | Review the online resource, Models Matrix to see what solutions other schools have developed and consider which are similar to your situation.  
Use the Models of leadership action planning tool to support your discussions; and register for the online community to talk to others. |
| Have we considered the benefits, both to us and to others, of extending the responsibility of our headteacher beyond the school? | Discuss with your headteacher the benefits and opportunities for him or her to take on a role beyond the school.  
Contact your local authority, and diocese if appropriate, to establish executive headship opportunities in other schools, children’s services and community organisations, and discuss with your headteacher. | Review opportunities for your headteacher to take on a role beyond the school on an annual basis – most likely as part of the performance management process. |
| Do we know if establishing a jobshare would help encourage interest from leaders who would otherwise not consider a full-time headship role? | Review practicalities of jobshare to understand how it might work in practice.  
Use the questions from the online checklist Diversity in Leadership – building and maintaining equality to review how you can widen the pool of headship candidates. | Consider advertising your next headship vacancy as a potential jobshare as a means of increasing the number of potential applicants.  
Ensure ongoing monitoring of applications, shortlists, appointments, training, promotions and leavers to identify potential barriers to headship application or success. |
| Have we considered collaborating with other schools to help us build on our strengths and tackle shared challenges? | Consider whether joining forces with other local schools might help you meet some of the challenges you face (eg shared CPD programme; shared specialist human resources; broader curriculum offering) as well as offering wider development opportunities for current and potential leaders.  
Ask your local authority to put you in touch with schools already in collaboration, to find out how it works; or build on any existing classroom collaborations developed by teachers. | Download the online Collaboration Checklist to support a more in-depth discussion.  
Watch the keynote address by Simon East on The power of networking and collaboration. |
The National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services is committed to excellence and dedicated to inclusiveness. We exist to develop and inspire great leaders of schools, early years settings and children’s services. We share the same ambition – to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people.

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