The National Standards for School Leadership

Introduction
The National Standards for School Leadership form part of a wider framework of standards for the whole school workforce and have been drawn up by the Social Partnership, working with the National College for School Leadership.

Given the strong relationship between the quality of school leadership and the outcomes for pupils, the Standards for School Leadership recognise the key role school leaders play in providing professional leadership and management in order to improve outcomes for all pupils.

These standards identify the knowledge and understanding, skills and professional attributes needed by the school's leadership in order to ensure the school builds leadership sustainability that is rooted in promotion of excellence, equity and high expectations for all pupils.

Professional attributes
In the context of National Standards for School Leadership professional attributes are behaviours arising from professional characteristics or qualities. The professional attributes within these standards are relevant across the framework and all five areas. Effective leaders demonstrate these attributes appropriately in their day-to-day work and across a range of contexts, both within and beyond the school. These leaders show:

- a positive, enthusiastic outlook, embracing risk and innovation
- commitment and dedication to social justice, equality and excellence
- engagement in collaborative partnership working, within and beyond the school
- integrity in relation to their own and the school's practice
- courage and conviction to achieve the best outcomes
- respect and empathy towards others
- resilience, perseverance and optimism in the face of difficulties and challenges
- decisiveness, consistency and focus on solutions
- drive for improvement and challenging underperformance
- capacity to be flexible, adaptable and creative

Values
Values are clearly important within professional standards and these have been embedded through the Standards for School Leadership rather than appearing as a separate list.

Key areas of the National Standards for School Leadership

Leading strategically
Creating and delivering a shared, corporate strategic vision, which motivates and inspires pupils, staff, governors and all members of the school community is critical to school leadership. The vision should be underpinned by shared values, moral purpose and principles of sustainability. It should drive the strategic plan and subsequent actions to secure continuous school improvement and quality outcomes for all pupils.

Knowledge and understanding of

developments in education at local, national and global levels
models of effective leadership and organisational structures
new technologies and their potential impact
strategic planning processes, tools and techniques
ways of achieving stakeholder and community engagement
leading change, creativity and innovation
ways of achieving social inclusion, diversity and access

think strategically, analytically and creatively
build capacity and achieve sustainability
deal with complexity and uncertainty
build a vision and communicate clear purpose and sense of direction
model the vision and values of the school
anticipate, lead & manage change
use research to support and challenge practice
inspire, challenge, motivate & empower others to attain challenging outcomes
work strategically with governing body
celebrate achievement and acknowledge excellence
demonstrate political acumen

Leading teaching and learning

With the whole school workforce, school leaders play a central role in raising standards of teaching and learning. School leaders have a responsibility to set high expectations, create the conditions for effective teaching and learning to flourish and to evaluate the effectiveness of learning outcomes. Leaders acknowledge the high status, value and importance of teaching and learning and in creating a learning culture which enables pupils to become effective, enthusiastic and independent, life-long learners.

Knowledge and understanding of

curriculum design and management
principles of quality learning, teaching and assessment including school review and self evaluation
ways of applying effective practice and research evidence to improve outcomes
use of external support and expertise
behaviour and attendance management
new technologies to support learning and teaching
political impact of external, community or family factors on learning
strategies for improving outcomes and achieving excellence for all
tools for data collection and analysis

Skills

design, develop and deliver the curriculum
demonstrate equality and diversity in teaching and learning
achieve the best possible learning outcomes for all
use developmental models for teaching and learning
engage parents in children's teaching and learning
manage and use performance data
develop whole school culture of best practice in teaching and learning
create flexible and comprehensive learning opportunities for all pupils
capitalise on appropriate sources of external support and expertise
deploy technology to support teaching and learning
develop and use effective assessment and moderation systems
evaluate, review and develop systems and structures

Leading the organisation

School leaders should ensure that the school, with the people and resources in it, are organised and managed to provide an efficient, effective and safe learning environment. Using self evaluation and problem solving approaches, school leaders should also seek to improve organisational structures and functions so the school remains fit for purpose. School leaders should build successful organisations by working collaboratively with others, building capacity across the whole workforce and ensuring resources are effectively and efficiently deployed.

legal issues relating to leading and managing a school, derived from all relevant statutory and regulatory frameworks
development of and access to school buildings and facilities
strategic financial planning, budget management and principles of best value
organisational development, planning and implementing change
employment market, effective recruitment, deployment and management of staff
technology to enhance organisational effectiveness
strategies to maximise contributions from the whole workforce
accountability frameworks
project management techniques

Skills

manage the school's financial, human and physical resources
seek expertise and advice from within and outside the school
establish structures and systems so operational decisions are based on informed discussion
delegate, collaborate and distribute leadership
manage others within an accountability framework
create an environment which enables people to perform at their best and underpins effective employee relations
develop and sustain a safe, secure and healthy school environment
create a working environment which takes account of workload and work-life balance
manage industrial relations

Leading people

As school leaders work with and through others, building and sustaining effective relationships and communication strategies are important. School leaders seek to improve their own performance through professional development. To enable others to develop and improve by creating a professional learning culture within the school. Through performance management and effective professional development practice, school leaders support all staff to achieve high standards. School leaders take account of issues surrounding work-life balance and recognise and value all staff and teams in the school.

Knowledge and understanding of

significance of interpersonal relationships, including impact on teacher performance and pupil learning
performance management, continuous professional development and sustained school improvement
building motivation, including the importance of celebrating achievement
building and sustaining a learning community within a diverse workforce
own performance, ways of obtaining feedback and how to improve
support and development systems for individuals and teams

Skills

create a culture which encourages ideas and contributions from others
develop self awareness, self-management and self confidence and use effectively
listen, reflect and communicate effectively
negotiate and manage conflict, providing appropriate support
give feedback and provide support to improve performance
hold people to account and challenge under performance
develop a culture of learning and continuous professional development
receive and act on feedback to build on strengths and improve personal performance
foster an open, fair and equitable culture
motivate, develop, empower and sustain individuals and teams

Leading in the community

With schools at the centre of their communities, school leadership has a crucial role to play in working with the community and other services to improve outcomes for, and the well being of, all children. Placing families at the centre of services, schools and leaders should work with others to tackle all the barriers to learning, health and happiness of every child. School leaders share responsibility for the leadership of the wider educational system and should be aware that school improvement, community development and community cohesion are interdependent.

Knowledge and understanding of

multi-agency work (including the team around the child), benefits and risks of multi-agency working
extended service provision, commissioning and contracting
the diversity of professional cultures and ways of working
diversity and community cohesion issues
collaboration and partnership working (including school, home, community and business partnerships)
strengths, capabilities and objectives of other schools, services and agencies
wider curriculum beyond the school and opportunities it provides

Skills

establish and engage in partnerships, including working with multi-agency teams
collaborate and work within and across the community
engage the community in systematic evaluation of the school's work and act on outcomes
take a leadership role within and across the community
consult, engage and communicate with staff, pupils, parents and carers to enhance children's learning
engage in cross phase working and transition issues
engage in school-to-school collaboration and contribute to leadership in the wider education system
contribute to achievement of community cohesion
broker and commission services