Succession Planning Policy (LLT)

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1. Introduction

It is the belief of Lydiate Learning Trust that the quality of leadership is second only to the quality of teaching and learning in determining the overall effectiveness of any school, and, in fact, is crucial in setting out expectations of high standards of classroom practice. Almost invariably, outstanding schools have outstanding leaders.

Leadership is important at many different levels in the school from the Executive Headteacher and Headteacher, through the senior leadership team, curriculum team leaders, class teachers, support staff and governors. Our school also seeks to develop leadership skills in its students. The principles and advice in this policy may be applied to all levels of leadership.

The crucial importance of high-quality leadership, together with recruitment difficulties, makes it essential for schools to plan for leadership succession. However, this does not simply mean preparing members of staff for leadership positions in our own school (s), but, rather, for our Trust to play its part in growing and developing future leaders for the wider education system. Being such a "greenhouse" or "springboard" school for leadership development brings immediate benefits to our school and its students in terms of the development of the professional skills of members of staff with raised leadership aspirations.

2. Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy on leadership succession planning are to:

- raise awareness in our school community(s) of the importance of the development of leadership skills; support all staff and students in developing their leadership skills to their full capacity by providing, whenever possible, leadership opportunities;
- prepare staff for taking on leadership roles;
- recognise and enable different styles of leadership as necessary and to work to establish a culture where leadership at all levels is encouraged and valued (including with our students);
- be prepared to work in collaboration with other schools/trusts in growing future senior leaders for the education system of which we are a part;
- be pro-active in planning for any future leadership changes.

3. Our principles for leadership succession planning

No single school will succeed alone in developing great educational leaders for the future. Individuals in school, partner schools, local Headteachers, community stakeholders, and national organisations all have a part to play.

It is easier to retain and further develop capable, experienced leaders than to recruit new ones. The priority for our succession strategy is to develop and hold on to valued experienced leaders. However, retention also needs to be considered within the context of a wider unit than just a school and therefore, the Trust provides this opportunity. Retaining quality leaders within our Trust is a key priority.

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Leadership capability needs to be defined in relation to the tasks we expect leaders to undertake. We must understand our leadership requirements now and in the future before translating that into skills and knowledge that will deliver success.

There are many different types of leadership roles operating at different levels. People will have varied preferences and abilities in relation to these. We are committed to the principle of distributed leadership in our school and recognise the possibility of a multi-track career path.

The Board and Governing body encourage and expect the senior leadership of the school and Trust to identify leadership talent and potential at all levels in the school. The identification of people who can fill leadership positions now, or who have the potential to be effective leaders, should be based on agreed criteria and evidence of proven capability.

People learn to be leaders through a combination of formal training and on-the-job development. Structured and varied experience of actual leadership is crucial, especially for those aspiring to the most senior roles.

The Trust seeks to ensure equal opportunities for all staff, giving due regard to groups with "protected characteristics" (in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership), in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

We seek to ensure a range of continuous professional leadership development projects and opportunities and to integrate these into our performance management and appraisal processes.

4. Distributed leadership

Lydiate Learning Trust, and the schools within, seek to promote distributed leadership. This requires senior leaders to maximise opportunities for other members of staff to take on genuine leadership roles which entail creative thinking, problem solving, initiative and active decision making, rather than merely being a delegation of management tasks.

We aim to ensure that all our staff feel able to contribute to leadership roles in our school and that they are supported in preparing for sustained leadership both in this school and across the Trust.

When recruiting new staff, we aim to be flexible in our readiness to consider a range of leadership structures, in order to promote distributed leadership, where appropriate, and not just seek to replicate the existing staffing model.

We consider the skills and characteristics of potential leaders, including using transferable skills from outside teaching, and following best practice in equal opportunities when appointing staff.

The executive and senior leadership team, across the Trust, endeavour to model effective leadership and encourage development through coaching, mentoring and shadowing.

We will ensure that due consideration is given to the work-life balance of senior staff and that processes and practice in the school contribute to sustainable expectations of leadership, particularly Headship and Executive Headship.

5. Leadership characteristics

We have adopted, as a framework, the learning outcomes of the 'Future Leaders Trust' but injected some aspects of the 2015 'National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers'. Through our performance management process, we identify and develop relevant aspects of those characteristics, appropriate to the needs and aspirations of individuals, of which individuals want further experience, or in which they wish to develop a higher skill level.

6. The context of this policy

This policy is linked specifically with the following school policies:

- Appraisal Policy: the identification of objectives that will support the further development of leadership skills, together with any professional development needed is most effectively undertaken through the performance management process. We encourage our staff to consider leadership as a potential career route and support them through the performance management process.
- Staff Induction Policy: the induction of new staff, including newly-qualified teachers is covered in our induction policy. New staff may have had leadership experience outside education and this will be recognised when planning their induction and identifying leadership opportunities for them during their employment at the school.
- Pay Policy: our pay policy recognises the staffing structure and leadership model of this school, and allows for this to be flexible and subject to review, in order to support our leadership succession policy. It also contains our statement on the use of recruitment and retention allowances.
- Equal Opportunities Policy: it is our intention to ensure that leadership succession planning strategies provide full and equal opportunities for all, including staff with "protected characteristics" (see above), to maximise their leadership potential.

7. Monitoring and review

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy is monitored by the governors' resources/personnel committee, informed by leadership and management reports from the Headteacher.

The policy will be reviewed every three years.

Attached

1. SLT profile (as agreed by Trust Headteachers 2015)
2. The Lydiate Learning Trust Learning Outcomes Map based on the model produced by "Future Leaders."
3. Suggested questions for the Board and LGBs to review annually.

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Key Questions asked by the LLT Board/ LGBs

Leadership and skill requirements

- What are the leadership skills and experience needed to implement the School Improvement Plan (SIP) over the short, medium and long term?
- How close is the match between our current leadership skills and experience and that required over the next few years?
- What additional leadership skills, experience and capacity might we need over the next few years?

Leadership potential

- How do we know who aspires to leadership?
- How do we identify and nurture our potential leaders of the future?
- How do we use performance management and review processes to develop our future leaders?

Leadership opportunities

- What leadership development opportunities have been available to our staff and what has been the take -up?
- How can we use any forthcoming recruitment opportunities to strengthen leadership capacity, particularly around our priorities?
- What links do we have across the Trust or with other schools to share opportunities for leadership development?
- Are we confident in our capacity to cope with the resignation or long-term absence of the Headteacher or others in the Senior Leadership team?
- Do we give a sufficiently clear message about our commitment to leadership development when advertising posts?

Implementation

Through an appropriate committee or as part of governing body meetings, the Trust will:

- Monitor, on an annual basis, leadership development opportunities available within and outside the school and their take-up.
- Keep under review the work-life balance of staff
- Maintain an overview of the schools staffing profile by collecting data by age, ethnicity, gender and disability and implications arising.
- Support the development of a school culture which is seen by all current and prospective staff to offer leadership development opportunities which benefit individual staff as well as the school.
- Ensure the allocation of sufficient funding from the school budget to support agreed priorities for leadership development.

An effective school in regards to leadership development and succession planning:

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Makes clear links in its school development plan to leadership development and succession planning

- Ensures that its Self-Evaluation Form addresses workforce capacity development
- Makes all staff aware of leadership development opportunities in Lydiate Learning Trust and beyond and encourages access and participation
- Identifies leadership "potential" and enables training and support for development
- In identifying "potential", is mindful of identifying people 'like us' and perpetuating barriers to people who are 'not like us'. The attributes found in the appendix "Growing People Like Us" are useful indicators of leadership potential:
- Regularly reviews and evaluates the leadership structure and its effectiveness with an eye on development of new models of leadership
- Judges it as a success when a member of staff moves onto a leadership position at another school
- Makes appointments to leadership roles which while meeting the needs of the school also provides opportunities for candidates "with potential"
- Ensure appropriate induction and support for all staff, including those in leadership roles
- Promotes the Trust's commitment to leadership development opportunities for candidates "with potential"
- Promotes the school's commitment to leadership development to external candidates
- Supports leadership development opportunities which include:
  - Work shadowing of Headteachers and other Senior Leadership Team members for staff who aspire to senior leadership positions (both within the school and in other schools)
  - Exchanges and visits to other schools
  - Use of mentoring and coaching schemes
  - Providing short, focused leadership opportunities for aspiring leaders.

Monitoring our Workforce Profile:

Through an appropriate Trust/ Governing Body Committee or as a governing body as a whole, we will monitor on an annual basis making use of comparisons with other similar schools where possible and then determine what actions need to be taken to address issues which emerge from our monitoring of:

- The number and deployment of staff
- The age, gender, ethnicity and disability profile of staff
- Teaching and Learning Responsibilities
- Age and Gender profile
- Staff Turnover rate:
  - Number of leavers per annum
  - Length of time working at the school
  - Destinations of leavers
  - Exit questionnaire feedback
- Trends in application rates
- The number of staff engaged on national development programmes (such as: Leading from the Middle, Leadership Pathways, NPQH)

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