

AGREED DRAFT

A HEADTEACHERS' CHARTER FOR SCHOOL EMPOWERMENT

Introduction

An empowered system is built on mutual trust, cooperation and highly effective communication. In an empowered system headteachers and Local Authorities are partners, each contributing and supporting each other and respecting the different role each plays.

The role of headteacher is recognised as a distinct leadership position in the General Teaching Council for Scotland's Professional Standards and in national conditions of service. As senior officers of the Local Authority, responsible for the leadership and management of the service provided to children, young people and their families, headteachers are accountable to both their employer and to their learning community for the leadership and management of education within their setting.

The Local Authority has statutory responsibility for the provision and improvement of education in the area. This includes contractual and financial obligations that interact with, and can be dependent upon, decisions made at school level. The Local Authority can intervene in a school-level decision if a statutory, contractual or financial obligation would be breached. Clear processes and mutually respectful and supportive relationships should be in place to minimise the need for such intervention.

In an empowered system Local Authorities add value by enabling key decisions to be made by those who are closest to the educational experience of children and young people, and who best understand the particular context of the learning community. The headteacher is responsible for making such decisions in partnership with their learning community – staff, learners, parents and other partners.

In all localities headteachers and Local Authorities should work in partnership with children, young people and their families to take decisions which reflect the local context. Mutually supportive and respectful relationships should be in place and maintained in order to maximise effective collaboration. Headteachers should lead collaborative, evidence-based decision-making while recognising that they are an integral part of a wider education and children's services system and open to constructive support and challenge by the Local Authority and their colleagues.

In an empowered system, headteachers should lead learning communities to determine the most appropriate approach in the following key areas:

In relation to **leading learning and teaching**, headteachers should:

- Lead collaborative work to co-design and develop the curriculum and learner pathways, including transitions, which best meet the needs of all children and young people. This should take account of the national framework for Scotland's curriculum along with the needs of local context, as agreed between schools and the Local Authority.
- Empower staff to continually improve practice, encouraging professional dialogue, supporting career-long professional learning and collaborative enquiry, and the use of research and evidence-informed practice. Headteachers should model a commitment to lifelong learning through their own practice.

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- Lead change and improvement, making decisions in partnership with their learning community about the improvement priorities and plan for their school, reflecting and informing the local improvement plan and the National Improvement Framework.

In relation to **empowering the learning community**, headteachers should:

- Be collaborative and collegiate, enabling staff to lead and co-creating a supportive and empowered culture.
- Work collaboratively with their Parent Council and wider parent forum, encouraging and supporting parents to be involved in the life of the school and in decision-making.
- Support and encourage children and young people to participate in decisions about their own learning and the life of the learning community.
- Promote collaboration for improvement, seeking and building relationships with other schools and partners in order to improve outcomes.
- Be active partners in multi-agency working to get it right for every child and family, working with the Local Authority and other services.
- Champion high quality professional learning for all staff, including supporting students and probationers, and lead by example.
- Actively participate in the wider corporate work of the Local Authority, consistent with their role as leaders of learning and contribute to the Regional Improvement Collaborative – accessing support and working collaboratively to lead improvement.

In relation to **making best use of the school's resources**, headteachers should:

- Manage a delegated budget in a fair, equitable and transparent way, supported by the Local Authority and a fair, transparent and equitable local Devolved School Management Scheme.
- Deploy the school's budget in accordance with best value principles and Local Authority procurement arrangements, with appropriate support and guidance from their Local Authority.
- Play an active role in designing and reviewing recruitment and staffing approaches, both for their own school/s and for the wider Authority.
- Be empowered to design a staffing structure which best supports the school's curriculum and leadership requirements, working within their delegated staffing budget and supported by their Local Authority and SNCT/LNCT agreements and guidance.
- Be integral to the appointment of staff in accordance with the best interests of children and young people and work in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure good practice in recruitment and appointment, in line with SNCT/LNCT agreements and guidance.
- Work in partnership with the Local Authority, and within clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, to ensure a highly professional school team is built and sustained to meet the needs of the learning community.