



Department
for Education

Review of headteacher standards

Government call for evidence response

January 2015

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Executive summary

The headteacher standards review group and their Department for Education secretariat carefully considered all of the responses received in the call for evidence. These responses informed the review group's drafting of the revised set of headteacher standards. The standards have now been published on www.GOV.UK

Introduction

1. The review of the 2004 National Headteacher Standards was launched on 17 April 2014. The aim of the review was to define standards that are applicable to all headteacher roles in the current educational landscape and a self-improving school system. The review group intended that these standards would inspire public confidence in headteachers, drive aspiration and excellence, and empower the profession.
2. The review group was made up of a small group of respected professionals, including headteachers, middle leaders and a National Leader of Governance. A list of the review group members is available in Annex A.
3. The call for evidence was open from 16 May 2014 to 16 June 2014. The call for evidence was available on the Department for Education's website and responses could be returned by email, by post or via an online form. Details of the call for evidence were sent to all key stakeholder groups and representative bodies and tweeted via the Department for Education's Twitter account.
4. The review group saw the call for evidence as an important opportunity to engage with front line professionals and experts in order to gain useful insight to support the drafting process and ensure that the revised standards are as useful as possible for the profession.
5. The call for evidence sought views on what was useful in the current standards, what was missing, and what respondents would use them for in the future.
6. The review group and the Department for Education have considered each response. A summary of the main points raised is set out in this report.
7. The table below shows the numbers of and types of respondents to the call for evidence:

Table 1: Respondent Information

Options	Responses from online portal		Responses to the review inbox	
Headteacher	37	54%	0	0
Local authority	15	22%	2	22%
Other¹	11	16%	2	22%
Union representative	2	3%	4	45%
Governor	2	3%	1	11%
Academy Trust	1	1%	0	0
Education Establishment	1	1%	0	0
Total	69	100%	9	100%

¹ Source: Other included: deputy headteachers, associate headteacher, school business manager, retired National Leader of Education and the Catholic Education Service

Background

8. The government is committed to raising the quality of school leadership. Recent data shows that 84% of leadership and management is now good or outstanding in primary schools, and 77% of leadership and management is now good or outstanding in secondary schools². There is a strong link between school leadership, quality of teaching, and outcomes for pupils.
9. The current national standards for headteachers were last reviewed in 2004. A nine month research project into the effective management of headteacher performance was commissioned by the Department for Education and carried out by the Institute of Education, University of London, the University of Bath and the University of Cambridge. It was published on 29th April 2014 and showed that out of 147 headteachers who responded, 67 used the current standards for their objective setting. Out of 1,069 governors who responded, 616 used the standards to inform their judgements on headteacher performance. Research suggests that they are being used by some but not all headteachers and governing bodies.
10. It was therefore timely to review the 2004 standards and establish new standards for headteachers that reflect the diversity of the existing schools landscape and encompass school and system leadership³ responsibilities in a self-improving, school led system.

² Source: The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2013/2014, Ofsted, December 2014

³ System leadership- the DfE drive over the past 4 years has been to devolve as much power as possible from central and local government and towards schools themselves. We recognise that individual schools and teachers are far better placed to decide what works and what does not. One of the most significant aspects of our move towards a school-led system has been the decision to place responsibility for developing our teaching workforce and sharing best practice back in the hands of schools themselves.

Summary of responses received

1. Sixty-nine responses were received in the call for evidence format and 9 general reports were submitted. Overall, respondents generally noted that while there was valuable content in the 2004 standards, they need to be updated to reflect the changing education landscape, including changes to the headteacher role and a move towards greater system leadership.

Findings for each question

2. The figures relate to the 69 responses received in the call for evidence format unless otherwise stated.

Question 1: Which of the key areas of current standards do you find useful?

Question 1a (Shaping the Future)

3. There were 67 responses to this question. 93% of respondents said that they felt this standard was useful. 34 of those who responded to this question submitted comments on this question.
4. Twelve comments related to the importance of headteachers having a focus on planning for the future, and noted that the standards should reflect this.
5. A further 12 comments stated that the need to secure a key vision of the school's future is an important aspect of a headteacher's role.
6. Ten respondents highlighted the fact that the standards need to be suitable for all headteachers who are working in a changing educational landscape. For example, one comment stated that *"This area seems to require significant expansion to absorb the changes in both school settings and collaborative systems."*

Question 1b (Leading Learning and Teaching)

7. There were 66 responses to this question. 95% found this standard useful. 15 of those who responded to this question submitted comments on this question.
8. Twelve comments recognised the importance of having specific outcomes on pupil performance and felt that having a focus on outcomes was an important part of a headteacher's role.

9. A further seven comments stated that this standard is the core focus for headteachers and should be seen as a key part of the headteacher role. For example one comment stated *“This section is very important, not least as it is the sole reference to the preferred notion that a Headteacher should be the leader of one school. This ideal should be re-iterated.”*
10. A specific point from one of the responses said *“the starting point for all headteachers is to be leading and teaching.”*
11. Six comments highlighted the importance of the development of staff.

Question 1c (Developing Self and Working with Others)

12. There were 66 responses to this question. 89% found this standard useful. 30 of those who responded to this question submitted comments on this question.
13. Six of the comments received stated that having effective partnerships within the school, with other schools and the wider community are a critical part of a headteacher’s role.
14. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was referenced in 10 comments. A respondent felt that CPD should be linked to school improvement: *“Effective CPD must be integrally linked to school improvement and the new standards must reflect this requirement.”*
15. Nine comments suggested school-to-school support and collaboration was important. For example, one comment was *“I suggest that this is worded to show that there is an expectation to aim to work in partnership with other schools in the system for mutual benefit.”*
16. Four comments recognised the need for effective school improvement in meeting this standard.

Question 1d (Managing the organisation)

17. There were 65 responses to this question. 89% found this standard useful. 18 of those who responded to this question submitted comments on this question.
18. Ten comments referred to the varying roles of headteachers. The general theme was that the revised standards should reflect the fact that that *“many heads today lead more than one school”*, and that there is wide range of schools and headteachers to be taken into consideration. For example, one comment listed

“Executive Headships, System Leadership, Multi-academy trusts, Academy Chains, Free Schools, Faith Schools, Teaching Schools.”

19. Five comments noted that collaborating with other schools in order to strengthen the school’s organisational capacity and contributing to the development of capacity in other schools is fundamental when considering the new standards.
20. Four comments focussed on the need for the new standards to ensure that the headteacher is committed to distributed leadership and management. One of the responses stated that a headteacher should *“manage employees well, including allocating work and delegating responsibility appropriately.”*

Question 1e (Securing Accountability)

21. There were 67 responses to this question. 92% found this standard useful. 6 of those who responded to this question submitted comments on this question.
22. The general consensus was that the safeguarding of children needs to be explicit. For example, one comment said that the headteacher *“has to have full knowledge of all safeguarding procedures.”*
23. Three responses highlighted holding colleagues to account.
24. Three responses commented on the importance of a self-evaluation process. One was that:
“More needs to be stated here about the self-evaluation process underpinning and driving continuous improvement across the school and community for all groups of pupils including disadvantaged pupils.”

Question 1f (Strengthening Community)

25. There were 67 responses to this question. 79% found this standard useful. 27 of those who responded to this question submitted comments on this question.
26. Six comments referred to headteachers building effective parental engagement. Three comments highlighted the school landscape and engagement within the community. Comments were generally positive.

Question 2: What do you feel is missing from the current standards that could be included in the revised standards?

27. There were 45 responses to this question.

28. Comments on this question revealed a range of views. Nine respondents felt that no change was needed to the current standards, with one respondent commenting that if anything else was to be included it would be overpowering.
29. However, in line with comments in response to the first question, 51% felt that the diversity of headteacher roles and types of schools should be considered for the revised standards:
“The standards do not reflect today’s world of headship where there is a mixed economy of maintained schools, academies, federations, trusts and the role of executive headteachers”.
30. 42% said they would like to see partnership and collaboration included.
31. Twelve respondents felt that system leadership should be recognised.

Question 3: What kind of format would you find it useful for the revised standards to have? (e.g. narrative/bullet) and what should be included in them (e.g. skills, knowledge, values)

32. There were 56 responses to this question.
33. 74% of respondents believed a bullet format would be suitable.
34. 18% were happy with the current format.
35. 17% said they would like some narrative to go with the bullets.
36. 12% said they would like the revised standards to be similar to the Teachers’ Standards 2012 format.
37. 10% said they would find having examples included useful.

Question 4: What purpose would you use the revised standards for?

38. There were 63 responses to this question.
39. 85% of respondents said that they would use the revised standards for performance management.
40. 40% would use them for CPD.

41. 39% would use them for recruitment and job descriptions.
42. 27% said it would help with the development of aspirant headteachers.
43. 29% said they would use them for staff development and coaching.
44. 19% said they would use them to support governors, for example: *“to ensure that the diverse range of skills required in this role are clarified for Governors and heads alike”* and *“To support the governing body in understanding and developing their role”*

Next steps

1. The responses gathered in the call for evidence were very valuable to the review group in their drafting of a revised set of standards.
2. The revised standards have been approved by the Secretary of State and Minister of State for Education and published in January 2015.
3. The review group is now working on ensuring that implementation of the revised standards is successful, and that key users of the standards are confident in using these revised standards.
4. A guidance document has been created by the Department for Education, in discussion with a working group made up of union representatives, members of the review group, the National Employers Organisation for School Leaders and the National Governors Association. The document is to be used alongside the standards to support and give confidence to the practitioners using the standards.

Annex A - Members of the review group

Name	Job role
Dame Dana Ross-Wawrzynski (Chair)	Executive Headteacher of Altrincham Grammar School for Girls and CEO of the Bright Futures Educational Trust
Roy Blatchford (Vice Chair)	Director of the National Education Trust
Ian Bauckham	Headteacher of Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Kent
Anika Collins	Specialist Leader of Education in Key Stage 2 Teaching and Learning at Samworth Enterprise Academy, Leicestershire
Joan Deslandes	Headteacher of Kingsford Community School, Newham
Kay Dimelow OBE	Headteacher of Huntingdon Nursery School, Cambridgeshire
Tony Draper	Headteacher of Water Hall Primary in Bletchley, Milton Keynes
Susan Douglas	Senior Schools Adviser at British Council and CEO of The Eden Academy
Duncan Haworth	National Leader of Governance and Chair of Governors at Woodfall Primary School in Neston, Cheshire
Helen Morgan	Specialist Leader of Education in History and ITT at Harton Technology College, South Shields
Sir Michael Wilkins	Chief Executive of Outwood Grange Academies Trust
Venessa Willms	Director of Primary at ARK Schools



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