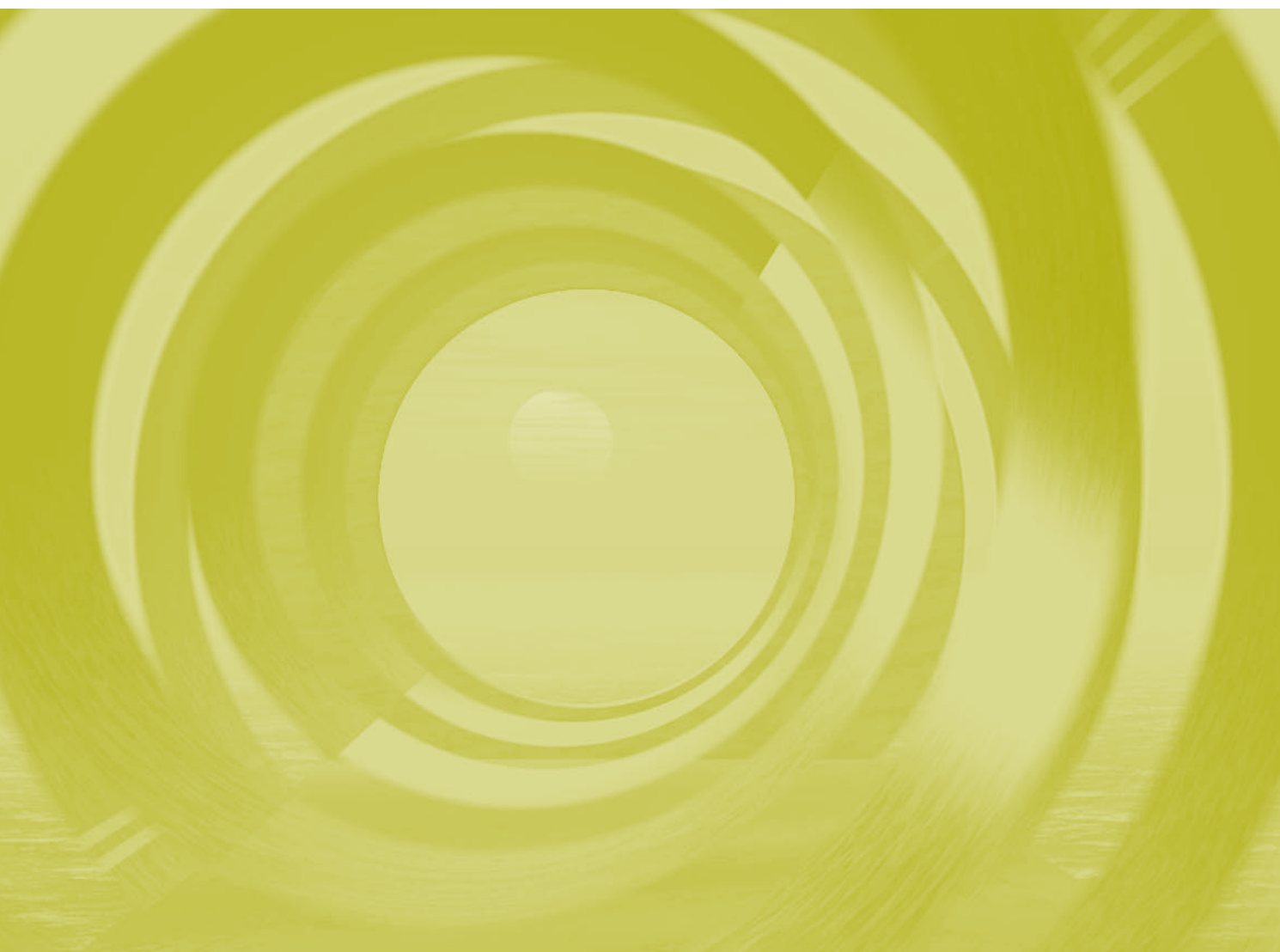




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# National model for regional working: revitalising people management in schools



## Guidance

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# National model for regional working: revitalising people management in schools

<b>Audience</b>	Regional consortia, chief executives and directors of education in county and county borough councils in Wales; diocesan authorities; headteachers and governing bodies of maintained schools in Wales; other national and local bodies concerned with education in Wales.
<b>Overview</b>	This document, which is an integral part of the National Model for Regional Working, provides a framework for the provision of specialist human resource management advice to support headteachers and governing bodies in dealing with 'performance management and capability' issues.
<b>Action required</b>	None – for information only.
<b>Further information</b>	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Workforce Strategy Unit Department for Education and Skills Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ Tel: 029 2082 6977 e-mail: <a href="mailto:WorkforceTeamMailbox@wales.gsi.gov.uk">WorkforceTeamMailbox@wales.gsi.gov.uk</a>
<b>Additional copies</b>	This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at <a href="http://www.gov.wales/educationandskills">www.gov.wales/educationandskills</a>
<b>Related documents</b>	<i>National model for regional working</i> (2014)

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## Introduction

The National Model for Regional Working, adopted in April 2014, states that Wales needs for its future success in the world young people who are clever, skilled, happy and healthy and an education system that helps to produce them. The proposals within the agreement are designed to support reform in the way that local authorities, regional consortia and the Welsh Government work together to support school leaders, governors and teachers and, through this process, help create excellent learning, in excellent classrooms in excellent schools.

The *National Model for Regional Working* (Guidance document 126/2014) sets out the responsibilities of each partner in the education system and in particular the scope of consortia services. Within the range of functions highlighted to support these aims and bring about the required improvements is the provision of specialist human resource management advice to support headteachers and governing bodies in dealing with “performance management and capability” issues.

This document provides a framework which supports the National Model for Regional Working to create a working environment that will contribute to the provision of better schools and higher quality teaching and learning.

The school is at the heart of the National Model and this people management framework recognises that governors, head teachers, other school leaders and teachers must set high expectations of themselves and each other. However, it is underpinned by a shared commitment by local authorities, regional school improvement consortia and Welsh Government to support schools in their delivery of improvements in education through good people management.

The key principles adopted in this framework are based on the same principles for improvement within the National Model:

- **School Self-Evaluation:** The more that schools ‘own’ this process, with help as necessary, the better it will work.

People management should be integrated into the overall management of a school. The raising of standards in schools requires proficiency in people management by governors, head teachers and other school leaders

- **Planning Improvement:** Schools should set targets by which they can measure their improvement.

Sickness absence and matching pay progression to improved performance are good examples.

- **Making Improvement:** Enabling and supporting schools to access, share and use a range of proven and new approaches should be at the heart of securing improvements that schools need to make.

Key to this will be the provision of personal development programmes for Governors and school leaders on the understanding and application of people management procedures and policies.

- **The delivery of services** should be based on co-construction with schools.

Schools will have differing needs for HR support at different times. A HR Service Level Agreement (SLA) will allow schools to access the HR support required when it is needed. Co-constructed school employment policies will lead to a more consistent approach being taken to people management.

- **Relationships and lines of accountability** should be clear so that everyone in the education system understands who is responsible.

This framework identifies the key responsibilities of schools, local authorities, regional consortia and Welsh Government, respectively, for discharging their respective people management roles.

- **The implementation of this model may change over time.**

Within the current legislative structure, employer responsibilities will remain the same but this framework will allow the necessary aspects of people management activity and HR support to be developed in a manner which is compatible with evolving school improvement activity across the region. For example, the development of a single consortia-wide employment policy will lend itself to a unified training programme for schools which may be delivered in different ways over time.

People management in schools is not new and this framework recognises that there is already much good practice in schools and local authorities. However, if continuously improving outcomes for learners are to be delivered, all elements of the education system will require continuous improvement including all aspects of people management activity.

## **Delivery of human resources (HR) support**

Within the National Model it is expressly stated that the provision of specialist human resource advice to support headteachers and governing bodies in dealing with performance management and capability issues is a function of regional consortia.

There are a number of other aspects of managing people which typically impact upon performance management and capability issues and, therefore, this framework seeks to address a much wider range of people management activity and to clarify who is responsible for discharging different elements of such people management activity.

It is wholly appropriate that the collaborative approach to school improvement activity as advocated by the National Model should be similarly adopted in relation to securing improvements in people management in schools, always having regard to the provisions of relevant education workforce-related legislation and associated guidance. There should be a shared vision, articulated in school development plans, of what is expected to happen to make the workforce-related improvements necessary to deliver better teaching and learning in all of our schools.

The provision of HR support to schools has traditionally been a local authority function, based on Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

With the movement of school improvement services to regional consortia, the HR service has an important role to play in supporting the development and delivery of a more consistent and more effective approach to people management activity in all schools. This will include the co-ordination of the development and implementation of key region-wide schools employment policies such as, for example, performance management, appraisal and discipline.

This will also require a collaborative and co-ordinated approach by constituent local authorities to supporting schools in each consortia. Local authorities will need to ensure that designated and adequate resources are identified for this purpose.

Local authorities should also ensure that sufficient training and development is provided for key HR staff to enable specialist HR advice to be made available to support school improvement activity.

Schools should ensure that they appropriately access such HR support to fulfil their obligation of being a self-improving school and to ensure that their people management practice is also continuously improving.

Consortia business plans from April 2015 will detail how local authority HR support will be provided to schools. Individual school development plans will identify how personal and professional development will be provided for each school's teaching and support staff.

## **Specific partner responsibilities**

### **Regional consortia and school improvement services**

Regional consortia will, in future, have a broader and more strategic role to play in people management issues, working with constituent local authorities and Welsh Government to develop and co-construct employment policies for schools that will ensure that the appropriate workforce advice, support and challenge is provided to schools consistently and robustly in relation to school improvement issues.

The consortia are also well placed to assist local authorities with other people management activities such as workforce data and intelligence to support, for example, workforce planning.

Regional Consortia and school improvement services - **key responsibilities:**

- Support individual schools to identify under-performance and wider performance management issues.
- Support schools to address these issues through tailored support programmes.
- Assist schools and the HR service to determine the existence of continued under-performance.
- Provide the focal point for the development of consistent co-constructed region-wide employment policies for schools.
- Provide intelligence and a strategic overview on issues such as workforce planning across the region.
- Work with schools and the HR function to improve people management outcomes through challenge, scrutiny and review.
- Identify people management priorities including gaps in consortia Business Plans.
- Co-ordinate (and avoid duplication of) the delivery of HR advice, guidance and support to Governors.

### **Local authorities**

Local authorities have two separate roles in relation to teachers and support staff in schools.

Firstly, in maintained schools they are the employer in law (for most staff) and whilst the people management function (e.g. appointment, management and dismissal of staff) is delegated to schools, the employer is the local authority.

The second role is that of the provision of HR support and advisory services. These are services which are typically contracted by the school and will be delivered to schools by local authorities under a Service Level Agreement (SLA). These will be a blend of advisory and support services related to an agreed range of people management activities, particularly in relation to the implementation of pay, conditions of service and key employment policies and procedures such as managing change and discipline.

It is this dual role which should be made clear in SLAs so that all parties recognise and fulfil their respective roles.

#### **Local Authorities' key responsibilities:**

- Develop employment policies for adoption by schools in collaboration with regional consortia's other constituent local authorities and ensure that schools are offered of appropriate training in the operation of these policies.
- Offer a menu of HR support services to assist schools with their people management function.
- Develop HR capacity and capability to deliver the required HR service to schools
- Provide named contacts to schools under a HR Business Partner model.
- Support schools to identify their key people management priorities in their school development plan.
- Provide appropriate HR advice, information and support in a timely manner.
- Exercise its 'employer' role where a school has not followed employment good practice that might lead to further legal action.
- Work with Consortia school improvement service to offer challenge and support to schools where people management is deemed to be less than satisfactory
- Collaborate and contribute to a coordinated approach being taken to people management and the provision of HR support within the consortia

Local authorities should ensure that they have the HR capability and capacity to respond to workforce-related issues in schools, as set out in SLA arrangements.

## **Schools**

Schools, and in particular governing bodies, are responsible for the management and leadership of everyone within its teaching and support staff.

It is important for schools to fully understand what is required of them in their role of appointing, managing and leading everyone within their school. This means that governors and/or Headteachers and other senior managers in a school must have a good understanding of their role within all of the school's employment policies and the ability to exercise that role. This will require them to take part in training and development programmes to assist them to meet this responsibility.

Governing bodies and head teachers are not expected to be HR "experts". HR expertise is available within all local authorities to provide specialist HR advice, guidance and support and, in some cases, legal advice that can assist them to meet their people management responsibilities.

#### **Schools' key responsibilities:**

- Adopt and implement all necessary employment policies to support effective people management activity
- Ensure that governors, head teachers and all other relevant school leaders are trained and understand their role in the operation of those policies and de-



velop the necessary skills and experience to meet the requirement of being a self-improving school.

- Use the employment policies and procedures effectively and fairly including monitoring the effectiveness of their use
- Ensure that arrangements are in place to obtain specialist HR advice and support in a timely manner
- Act reasonably and in a timely way upon receipt of HR advice
- Identify key people management improvement areas in their school development plan

## **Welsh Government**

Welsh Government has a key role to play in ensuring that its strategies, policies and guidance support the implementation of good people management in schools.

All guidance should be co-constructed with consortia and local authorities to ensure a consistent approach to people management in schools. Welsh Government can work with local authorities and consortia to help develop capacity and expertise in the implementation of statutory and non-statutory employment provisions through jointly delivered development programmes for all key stakeholders.

Welsh Government **key responsibilities:**

- Co-construct any new statutory guidance for people management with key players from Consortia and local authorities.
- Monitor, review and challenge the effectiveness of people management in schools and the provision of HR support to schools
- Engage effectively with teaching associations and trade unions at a national level to secure positive engagement for key people management strategies and policies.
- Support the co-delivery of national training programmes to support improved HR capacity and expertise.

## **Governance and accountability**

There will be no separate governance and accountability arrangements for the provision of specialist human resource advice as it is within scope of the National Model for Regional Working and will be subject to the same scrutiny as set out in guidance document 126/2014.

## **Relations with Welsh Government**

As part of its role to monitor and scrutinise the delivery and outcomes of education in Wales, the Welsh Government will work with local authorities and consortia to consistently, fairly and robustly challenge the HR service provided to schools. Challenge and Review events will provide the opportunity to support the self-evaluation and review that would be expected of all other stakeholders in improving people management functions and to identify strategic workforce priorities at an all-Wales level.

Welsh Government will also seek to further develop and maintain positive working relations with all key stakeholders at a national level that will assist with the implementation of people management policies and procedures designed to support school improvement.