



Autism  
Education  
Trust

Schools

# Developing Inclusive Leadership in Schools – Activities

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2023/24 Award Winner  
Autism Programme of the Year



## Introduction

The activities in this document will be used in the module. This document provides information for trainers about when and how to use each of the activities.

The activities have been linked to tools found in the Practical Support Pack which trainers will share electronically with delegates before the training takes place.

Trainers may like to refer delegates to the tools throughout the training. Any additional resources that are also required can be found in the appendices to this document.

Trainers are not expected to deliver all of the activities featured – instead, they are intended to be used flexibly alongside the content. Some activities may offer multiple formats depending on the prior knowledge of the delegates and how the training is being delivered. Some activities will not be suitable if the training is being delivered virtually. Trainers are also welcome to use their own activities.

As an experienced trainer, your ability to draw on your own wealth of experience will bring this training to life and exemplify its messages.



## Activity 1 (which leads into a further discussion as outlined on the slides):

### Purpose:

- To discuss different qualities of leadership.
- To begin to understand delegates' own areas of strength and areas for development in relation to leadership competencies.
- To understand that all leadership competencies are important and that competency in any area of leadership can be developed.
- To understand that good leaders should draw on different leadership qualities in different situations.
- To appreciate that good leadership also means drawing on the strengths of other members of the school leadership team, as well as those of other staff who lead across the school.

### Resources:

- **Appendix A: Nine Leadership Characteristics Summary Cards** - Each card has a summary of each of the 'Nine Pillars of Great Schools' as outlined by Woods, MacFarlane and Macbeath (2018), and how they might relate to leadership.
- The cards will need to be duplicated and cut up in advance of an **in-situ training session** so that delegates can sort them, in pairs / small groups. If the training is being delivered virtually, there is a slide showing the 'cards' in the presentation, that can be shared on screen.

### Instructions:

- In pairs or small groups, **virtually or in situ**, delegates should be encouraged to discuss the leadership characteristics associated with the 'nine pillars of great schools,' summarised on the cards.
- Delegates should then work together to arrange the nine cards into a 'diamond nine' formation to show which of the characteristics, on the cards, they think are most important in creating a culture of inclusion.
- If training is being held **virtually**, trainers can display the 'cards' on the screen and ask delegates to rank the characteristics described through discussion in break out rooms, from most important in helping to create an inclusive culture to least important - in their opinion.



## Activity 1 (which leads into a further discussion as outlined on the slides):

### Ask delegates to consider:

- Which of the leadership characteristics they most identify with.
- Which they would view as personal strengths.
- Which they should aim to develop to make them a more inclusive leader, and how they could do this.
- How members of a Senior Leadership Team, and also other staff across school, can complement each other's leadership competencies.

### Reflection:

- It is likely that delegates may have leadership styles that align with one or other of the summaries on the cards, meaning they may think that particular aspect is most important.
- There may be differences of opinion because all of the aspects of leadership are important.
- Delegates are likely to have strengths in different areas of leadership. Use this to draw out the importance of having a Senior Leadership Team with a diverse range of leadership skills, that complement each other.
- Draw out the fact that competency in different leadership characteristics can be developed – encourage delegates to think about how.
- Suggest to delegates that it may be interesting for them to ask colleagues in school which leadership characteristics they believe are delegates' strengths / areas for improvement. Might there be a difference? Why is it important to consider how our perceptions of ourselves may not always be how others see us?

### Learning:

- Good leaders require various different qualities, and they are all important.
- Different leaders may find certain aspects of leadership easier to embody than others - they may come more naturally to them. Other qualities of leadership they may find more challenging.
- Effective leaders should aim to strengthen their competency in the aspects of leadership they find more challenging.
- A good leader will aim to employ different leadership styles in different situations.
- In practice, effective leaders are able to segue between different leadership styles and display different leadership characteristics according to the situation - **or have other members of the Senior Leadership Team who can.**

## Appendix A: Nine Leadership Characteristics Summary Cards.

## Activity 2:

### Purpose:

- To consider the importance of being an inclusive leader.
- To make a commitment to being an effective inclusive leader.

### Resources:

- Questions on the slide.
- **Appendix B: Commitment to Inclusive Leadership Statement** examples, printed off to be used **in-situ** or shown on the screen if training is being held **virtually**.  
(Please note that this approach relates to the work of Devi, A with Bowers, J (2021). Continuation/ending of the sentence here?)

### Instructions:

- Ask delegates to take some time to think about how important inclusion is to them as a leader in their setting.
- Ask them to consider their answers to the following questions (which are also on the slide in the presentation):
  1. What kind of inclusive leader do you want to be?
  2. What kind of inclusive culture do you want to create?
  3. How do you envisage your entire workforce collectively contributing to make that inclusive culture a reality?
  4. What will it mean for the education and success of all children and young people in your setting – and for autistic children and young people in particular – if you succeed in implementing your vision for inclusion?
- Then, delegates should write their own **Commitment to Inclusive Leadership Statement**, using the exemplars provided in the appendices and on the slides as a starting point. If training is being held **in-situ**, give exemplars out on handouts. If training is being held **virtually**, display the exemplars on the screen.
- Delegates should begin their inclusive statements:

***I am an inclusive leader ...***

### Reflection:

- Encourage delegates to reflect on the importance of inclusive leadership and the transformational impact it can have in their settings.
- Getting them to reflect and affirm their commitment is very powerful and should mean they align themselves with this vision and begin to think about how it can be achieved.

## Activity 2:

### Learning:

- Inclusive leadership is necessary to create inclusive school cultures.
- Inclusive cultures can have a transformational impact in schools - improving the education and wellbeing of all learners, and autistic learners in particular. Inclusive cultures can also improve the wellbeing and working conditions of the whole staff.

### Appendix B: Examples of Commitment to Inclusive Leadership Statements as models.



## Activity 3:

### Purpose:

- To consider the roles and responsibilities of different members of staff in creating an inclusive culture.

### Resources:

- **Appendix C: Exemplar Descriptions of Roles and Responsibilities** in schools, printed off to be used **in-situ** or shown on the screen if training is being held **virtually**.

### Instructions:

- Delegates should discuss the roles of different stakeholders in school (according to the Senior Leader who has created the exemplar role outlines on the handout).
- Delegates should discuss how different staff members might contribute to creating an inclusive culture, through carrying out their various different roles and responsibilities.
- Ask delegates to consider whether they agree with the roles identified by this Senior Leader, or whether they would change, add or take away any responsibilities.
- Ask delegates to consider how members of staff with different roles might work together efficiently to avoid duplication and unnecessary workload.

### Reflection:

- Encourage delegates to reflect on the different roles and responsibilities of staff as outlined by this Senior Leader.
- Delegates should reflect on whether roles and responsibilities are similar or different in their school and perhaps whether any roles and responsibilities could be changed so operations could be more effective.
- Encourage the delegates to consider how the whole staff can work together to create an inclusive and supportive culture.

### Learning:

- Inclusive cultures are created by strong, effective strategic leaders who carefully define the roles and responsibilities of the whole staff.
- All staff have a role to play in creating inclusive and supportive cultures, not just the Head Teacher or members of the Senior Leadership Team.

## Appendix C: Exemplar Descriptions of Roles and Responsibilities in schools.

## Activity 4:

### Purpose:

- To consider the importance of being an inclusive leader.
- To make a commitment to being an effective inclusive leader.

### Resources:

- **Tool 2: Stakeholder Mapping Tool.**
- Questions on slide.

### Instructions:

- **Ask delegates to consider their answers to the following questions and to discuss their responses in pairs or small groups:**
  1. Who are your stakeholders?
  2. How do you involve your stakeholders in school life?
  3. How are they kept up to date with whole school developments?
  4. Have you – as school leaders – your governors and whole staff created a culture and ethos that actively welcomes and engages parents and carers of pupils with SEND, including those who are autistic?
  5. What could you stop, do more of or add to improve in this area?
- Delegates should then use the **Stakeholder Mapping Tool** to consider how they can include stakeholders going forwards.

### Reflection:

- Delegates should reflect on the fact that the culture of the school is created by all of its stakeholders.
- Delegates should be encouraged to consider how involving stakeholders is not only the most effective way of creating a supportive inclusive climate for learning, but also a statutory obligation (Code of Practice and other legislation as outlined in the training materials).
- Delegates should consider how different stakeholders will have different buy in points and how communication with them must be pitched successfully so that a cohesive inclusive culture is the result.



## Activity 4:

### Learning:

- All stakeholders need to buy in to create a cohesive inclusive culture. Not only is stakeholder involvement desirable and evidence based best practice, but it is also a statutory obligation.
- Leaders should consider the different buy in points of stakeholders and consider how to communicate with them to achieve an inclusive culture, using the **Stakeholder Mapping Tool**.

### Tool 2: Stakeholder Mapping Tool.



## Activity 5:

### Purpose:

- To consider the next steps to embedding an inclusive culture in schools.

### Resources:

- **Autism Education Trust (AET) School Standards Frameworks**, which can be accessed via the links in **Tool 5** in the **Practical Support Pack**.
- Handouts showing the different **AET Professional Development Offers (Tool 6)**.
- **Next Steps Reflection Template (Tool 7)**

### Instructions:

- Delegates to be shown the **AET School Standards Frameworks** and asked to begin to consider school strengths and areas for improvement (this can also be completed back in school as a full audit of autism practice).
- Delegates asked to identify these strengths and improvement areas in the **Next Steps Reflection Template**.
- Delegates asked to then consider next steps using the outlines of the different professional development opportunities offered by the AET.
- Delegates should identify which of the offers they think would best suit their needs going forwards.
- Delegates should identify their preferred option for continued professional development and what they will need to do when back at school to arrange this.

### Reflection:

- It is important to start identifying areas of strength according to the **AET Schools Standards Framework** in order to improve leadership and good autism practice in schools.
- It is vital that delegates start thinking about how they will action what they have learned - this is the only way change will occur.
- Delegates need to consider how culture change must be embedded consistently and sustained across the whole school - pockets of improvement will not deliver transformational change.
- Delegates should be asked to begin to plan their next steps, so they are thinking about actions after the training session.



## Activity 5:

### Learning:

- Training without a next steps plan won't result in change.
- Schools should consider what support they need from the AET going forwards to embed the approaches across their whole school and deliver transformational change.
- The AET has different options for supporting this culture change in schools as outlined on the **AET Professional Development Offers** Handout. This can be found in the **Practical Support Pack** for reference (tool 6).

**Tool 5: School Standards Framework.**

**Tool 6: AET Professional Development Offers.**

**Tool 7: Next Steps Reflection Template.**



## Appendix A: Leadership Characteristics Cards for Sorting Activity

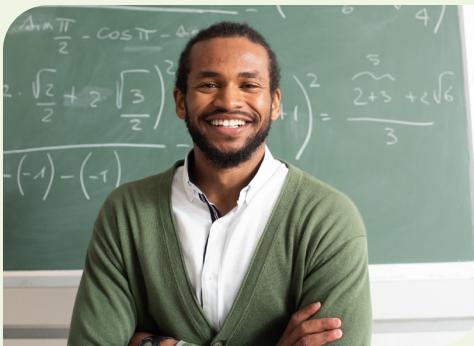
<p> <b>Moral, Ethical, Compassionate Leadership</b> Values, equity, social justice, humility, self-control, integrity, authenticity</p>	<p><b>Inspirational and Transformational Leadership</b> Visionary, values based, inspiring, positive, ambitious</p>	<p><b>Strategic and Operational Leadership</b> Future focused, evaluative, structures, processes, unity of purpose</p>
<p><b>Learning Focused Leadership</b> Quality teaching and learning, ambitious standards, knowledge</p>	<p><b>Student Centred Leadership</b> Involving students, quality first teaching, safe, secure, well ordered learning environments</p>	<p><b>Distributed and Invitational Leadership</b> Developing others, sharing leadership, trust, communication, empowering, delegating</p>
<p><b>Leadership Accountability for Performance</b> Self-evaluation, performance culture, reflection</p>	<p><b>System Leadership</b> Outward looking, connected, forward thinking, creating collective moral purpose and shared values</p>	<p><b>Leadership for Well-Being</b> Meeting personal needs, creating a sense of belonging, considering mental health, emotional intelligence</p>

Woods, D. Macfarlane, R. McBeath D. (2018), The Nine Pillars of Great Schools, John Catt Educational Ltd.

## Appendix B: Commitment to Inclusive Leadership Statements

### For Example:

I am an inclusive leader. I believe all teachers have a responsibility to teach all children and young people in their care effectively. I encourage teachers to enable them to give the best they can, and then some. I support families to know about all of the options they have. I am innovative in finding new solutions to implement the right provision to meet the support needs of all our students, including those who are autistic.



### For Example:

I am an inclusive leader and I stand amongst other colleagues who are also passionate about inclusion and SEND. Together we shape and improve the provision for all children, young people and families, including those who are autistic. Together we can make sure children and families receive the support they need in a timely manner.



This approach is taken from the work by:

Devi, A with Bowers, J (2021) *Journeying to the Heart of SENCO Wellbeing: A Guide to Enable and Empower SEND Leaders*, Routledge.

Devi, A (2021): <https://teamadl.wordpress.com/2021/01/> (Accessed: December, 2023).

## Appendix C: Exemplar Descriptions of Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to SEND

Role	Responsibilities
<b>SEND Governor</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic overview, support and challenge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with SENCo on a termly basis.</li> <li>Provide written records for each visit.</li> <li>Provide support and challenge to SLT in relation to SEND.</li> <li>Provide regular updates to the whole Governing Body in relation to SEND.</li> <li>Triangulate sources of evidence in order to understand progress the school is making towards school improvement for SEND.</li> </ul>
<b>Headteacher</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic responsibility of SEND, intent, implementation and impact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold senior leaders and SENCo to account for the quality of SEND provision through routine review meetings.</li> <li>Ensure the SEND Policy and Information Report are current and reflect provision.</li> <li>Ensure effective communication with parents, to keep them informed about inclusive practice within the school and in regard to the individual SEND provision and progress of their child.</li> <li>Act as a role model for all staff in regard to inclusive behaviour and expectations.</li> </ul>
<b>SLT and SENCo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordination of SEND provision and deployment of staff.</li> <li>Monitoring of SEND provision.</li> <li>Data analysis and evaluation of impact.</li> <li>Integral focus on SEND in all lesson observations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all staff comply with school policy and systems for SEND.</li> <li>Ensure accurate and ongoing identification of need to inform provision.</li> <li>Monitor the quality of SEND provision within lessons.</li> <li>Quality assure planning for SEND learners and provide feedback to teachers.</li> <li>Lead pupil progress meetings and support and challenge in relation to pupil progress.</li> <li>Analyse data and use information to inform planning.</li> <li>Lead self-evaluation of provision for SEND.</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: Exemplar Descriptions of Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to SEND

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Class Teachers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of inclusive teaching.</li> <li>Target setting.</li> <li>Monitoring progress of individual students.</li> <li>Monitoring of interventions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for implementing Quality First Teaching that benefits all students.</li> <li>Provide adapted teaching and learning opportunities which meet the individual needs of all learners.</li> <li>Oversee delivery of interventions.</li> <li>Make explicit links to interventions to support pupils in applying learning.</li> <li>Identify pupils' strengths and barriers to learning and record within One Page Profiles or Individual Education Plans.</li> <li>Identify long term outcomes and SMART targets for pupils.</li> <li>Contribute to annual review process (discussion / writing / attendance at meeting).</li> <li>Contribute to statutory assessment where applicable.</li> <li>Liaise with external agencies, including completing any written documentation.</li> <li>Implement provision for pupils with SEND, including appropriate allocation of resources and equipment.</li> <li>Involve support staff with planning and preparation so that they are able to support effectively.</li> <li>Facilitate time for support staff to prepare specific resources.</li> <li>Complete any shared planning in good time for teachers to personalise for their class and individuals within their classes.</li> <li>Identify pupils of concern and contribute to the assess, plan, do and review cycle.</li> </ul>
<b>Support staff</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of interventions.</li> <li>Collation of data against targets/outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver structured interventions following delivery protocols.</li> <li>Record and track delivery of interventions.</li> <li>Record progress towards intervention targets and communicate with class teacher.</li> <li>Support in collating documentation in preparation for SENCo.</li> <li>Read and be familiar with planning in order to be prepared for delivery.</li> <li>Scaffold pupils' learning and encourage independence.</li> </ul>

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