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improve children's lives



National College
for School Leadership

Schools and academies

Self-assessment questionnaire for leaders in church schools and academies

**A framework for excellence in the leadership of church schools and
academies**

Resource

Introduction

This self-assessment questionnaire is linked to the document, [A framework for excellence in the leadership of church schools and academies: qualities and behaviours](#), developed by the Diocesan Education Officers in the south-east regional group, with the support of the National College. You should have this document to refer to while you complete the questionnaire.

Target group

The questionnaire has been designed for potential senior leaders in church schools and academies. You are likely to be an experienced middle leader, or a teacher with significant responsibilities in a primary school, and want to access appropriate leadership development opportunities. As the framework of qualities and behaviours is for excellence in senior leadership, and ultimately headship, you may find the self-assessment process challenging, and in some sections, have little experience to draw on from your current role. Remember this is the start of a developmental process for excellence in senior leadership that may take several years.

Purpose and process

It is suggested that you work through the questionnaire on your own and then arrange an interview with your headteacher, principal or a diocesan officer to discuss how you have rated yourself on each of the qualities and behaviours, the evidence you have assembled to justify your decisions and your readiness for senior leadership.

The following four points need to be noted:

- The rating and evidence gathering will set the scene for an open and honest evaluation of whether or not you have the experience, ambition and potential to become a successful leader at a more senior level, and possibly a headteacher.
- It is not based on a heroic model of senior leadership or the expectation that those in senior leadership roles will always demonstrate the full range of identified qualities and behaviours. An understanding of them is important, but this must be combined with growing experience of more senior roles and a range of personal qualities that allow for learning and development throughout your career.
- As background information before completing the questionnaire, you may find it helpful to read through any relevant documents and statements that describe the view of your diocese about the beliefs, values, vision and purposes of church schools and academies.
- The completion of the questionnaire and the subsequent interview should be an affirming and developmental process as well as a challenging experience.

Having completed the self-assessment and the interview, you are invited to list up to three priority areas for professional development and then to seek appropriate opportunities to meet these needs.

The questionnaire, plus any related documentation, remains your property throughout the process and will not be shared further without your permission.

Evidence gathering

The evidence gathering in preparation for the interview with a senior colleague should not be an onerous process. Where appropriate, you should draw on the evidence already assembled for your most recent performance management review, plus contributions that you have made to whole-school or academy self-evaluation and development. The evidence should be based on activities that you have either led or been directly involved in and, wherever possible, you should demonstrate the impact that these activities have had on pupil achievement, raising standards and developing positive relationships between children and adults.

Next steps

Having completed this review process, you should have access to relevant professional development. For a variety of reasons, now may not be the right time for you to progress to a position of senior leadership in a church school or academy. Also, completing the process does not mean that you will automatically be offered a senior post in your own or any other diocese. We hope that the experience will help to prepare you for such a role in the future, wherever this may be.

Section 1: Securing and maintaining transformational change

Section 2: Being outward-looking and having a positive impact on the wider community

Section 3: Establishing sustainable and accountable systems of organisation and governance

Section 4: Personal characteristics

For all four sections, rate each of these qualities and behaviours using one of the following:

A: This aspect of my work is **well-established** in principle and in practice.

B: This aspect of my work is **emerging** in principle and in practice.

C: This aspect of my work is **not yet evident** in principle or in practice.

You may want to score the two columns differently for a particular quality or behaviour, if you understand the importance of it in principle but do not yet show evidence of it in practice.

As you complete each section, look for aspects where further development might be desirable and make notes that will help you complete section 6, your leadership development action plan.

Section 1: Securing and maintaining transformational change

Qualities and behaviours	Overall rating: A, B or C	In principle Do you understand and value the importance of this quality and/or behaviour?	In practice How do you demonstrate this quality and/or behaviour? Give best evidence and impact.
<p>1.1 I have a passion for learning and leadership in a Christian context.</p> <p>Do I have a sense of vocation for my work? Do I demonstrate the qualities of a spiritually intelligent person?</p>			
<p>1.2 I express with conviction and clarity the educational aims and purposes of the school/academy, including everyone achieving their God-given potential.</p> <p>Do I know what future success might look like for my school or academy? How do I know what more my pupils and adult team members could achieve? What evidence can I present of closing achievement gaps for pupils and raising the performance level of staff?</p>			
<p>1.3 I bring depth to the thinking and practice of staff and pupils about how we learn as well as what we learn.</p> <p>Do I understand the nature of learning? Is my work focused on both short-term action to raise standards and long-term capacity-building for sustainable improvement? Am I a reflective practitioner, bringing a Christian perspective to my thought and practice as a teacher?</p>			
<p>1.4 My work with pupils and staff creates opportunities for learning academically, physically, emotionally, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.</p> <p>Do I plan to support as many of these aspects of learning as possible, whatever I am teaching? Do I care about my pupils and colleagues? Do I bring a distinctively Christian perspective to my lesson planning and delivery and when preparing continuing professional development (CPD) for staff?</p>			

Qualities and behaviours	Overall rating: A, B or C	In principle Do you understand and value the importance of this quality and/or behaviour?	In practice How do you demonstrate this quality and/or behaviour? Give best evidence and impact.
<p>1.5 I know that transformational change is a complex process that demands creativity, open-mindedness and flexibility.</p> <p>Do I know the main contributing factors for an outstanding school/academy? Do I have a broader view of issues, looking beyond my immediate area of responsibility to the needs of the whole school/academy? Do I understand some of the politics in my school/academy? Can I simplify complex issues for others? Do I take risks and encourage others to take risks for improvement? Do I change direction on a project if a different course of action seems appropriate?</p>			
<p>1.6 I build strong, caring and effective relationships with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Am I equally effective at building relationships with a wide range of pupils, staff, parents and governors? Do I manage situations of poor performance or conflict well?</p>			
<p>1.7 I motivate pupils and staff and secure the long-term success of my area by a both/and approach to change and development.</p> <p>Do I know what needs to be in place for the long-term success of my area? Am I equally effective strategically and operationally? Am I a good team leader and a good team player, as well as being self-motivated?</p>			
<p>1.8 I celebrate the successes of others and contribute to the worship and prayer life of the school or academy.</p> <p>Do I regularly find opportunities to reward the successes of pupils and thank staff for their efforts? Have I made contributions to the worship and prayer life of the school/academy?</p>			
<p>1.9 I hold Christian beliefs and I can articulate values based on the life of Jesus Christ and a vision for Christian education.</p> <p>Am I comfortable doing this with pupils and staff? Am I working with governors, the diocese and/or the local church to promote this vision? Does the way that I live support these beliefs and values?</p>			

Section 2: Being outward-looking and having a positive impact on the wider community

Qualities and behaviours	Overall rating: A, B or C	In principle Do you understand and value the importance of this quality and/or behaviour?	In practice How do you demonstrate this quality and/or behaviour? Give best evidence and impact.
<p>2.1 I have helped to set up and actively contribute to collaborative projects with external partners.</p> <p>Have I been directly involved with projects undertaken in partnership with, for example, local primary or secondary schools and/or local businesses? When contributing to collaborative projects, am I looking to see how they will help to raise standards in my own school/academy?</p>			
<p>2.2 I understand and value the cultural, social and political diversity in our local community, using this awareness to enhance my work.</p> <p>How do I show that I value this diversity? Although ours is a school/academy with a Christian ethos, how do I include the needs of pupils of other faiths and no religious faith in my teaching?</p>			
<p>2.3 I have established support groups in the community to raise standards of achievement.</p> <p>What projects have I set up or contributed to, working with groups in the community, eg parents/carers, church/diocese, businesses, voluntary groups? How have these projects helped to raise standards? What evidence can I produce about my effectiveness in communicating with a wide range of audiences, orally and in written form?</p>			
<p>2.4 I actively promote the importance of service to the community and the development of leadership at all levels.</p> <p>How have I developed the principle of service to others within the curriculum, the classroom and/or my team? In what ways have I helped others (pupils and/or adults) to develop leadership skills and to take on leadership roles? Has any of my work got an international dimension?</p>			
<p>2.5 I aim to bring a Christian ethical viewpoint to my entrepreneurial activities.</p> <p>What do I understand by a Christian ethical viewpoint? What are my current entrepreneurial activities? Are there limits to the types of organisation that I would be prepared to work with to raise standards and, if so, why?</p>			

Section 3: Establishing sustainable and accountable systems of organisation and governance

Qualities and behaviours	Overall rating: A, B or C	In principle Do you understand and value the importance of this quality and/or behaviour?	In practice How do you demonstrate this quality and/or behaviour? Give best evidence and impact.
<p>3.1 I have set up rigorous systems and structures of accountability in my area and I understand the way in which they contribute to accountability across the school or academy.</p> <p>For both pupils and staff, are the systems and structures for accountability in my area rigorous? Do I model this rigour in giving accounts of my own work? How effectively are staff in my area monitoring progress and giving feedback that will enable pupils to make more rapid progress? How do I monitor and review the arrangements for accountability in my area? Do I have any experience of giving accounts of my work to the governing body and/or the diocese?</p>			
<p>3.2 I have knowledge of newer forms of school organisation, including federated groups of schools and academies, and the implications for senior leadership.</p> <p>If I work in a federation or an academy, what difference does this seem to make to the demands on senior leaders?</p>			
<p>3.3 I am confident about financial planning and the management of budgets.</p> <p>What experience do I have of financial planning and budget management?</p>			
<p>3.4 I use performance data honestly and effectively to raise standards and I have trained other teachers or members of staff in these skills.</p> <p>Do I have a confident grasp of whole-school datasets and the implications of the data for raising standards? How effective is assessment for learning in my work/area? Have I led relevant CPD with staff and, if so, what has been its impact?</p>			

Qualities and behaviours	Overall rating: A, B or C	In principle Do you understand and value the importance of this quality and/or behaviour?	In practice How do you demonstrate this quality and/or behaviour? Give best evidence and impact.
<p>3.5 I have experience in appointing, inducting, training and developing high-quality staff for my team.</p> <p>In what ways do I challenge and support staff to improve standards of teaching and learning in my area? Do I have good coaching skills? Can I give challenging feedback to support development? How have I tried to share leadership and what have been the results? How have I supported staff in understanding and implementing the Christian ethos of our school/academy?</p>			
<p>3.6 I take great care to ensure that all the resources available for my area, both human and financial, are deployed in efficient and sustainable ways.</p> <p>In what ways do I plan and monitor the use of resources in my area? Are there examples of less efficient and/or sustainable use of resources in my area? If so, what am I doing about them?</p>			
<p>3.7 I have worked with governors to develop our understanding of what it means to be a successful church school or academy.</p> <p>Have I shared my experience with governors of working with a team of staff to improve standards and to implement the Christian ethos in our area? Do I see myself as a role model in this aspect of my work? Do I understand some of the political issues in the governance of my school/academy?</p>			

Section 4: Personal characteristics

Qualities and behaviours	Overall rating: A, B or C	In principle Do you understand and value the importance of this quality and/or behaviour?	In practice How do you demonstrate this quality and/or behaviour? Give best evidence and impact.
<p>4.1 I have a commitment to a Christian world view and Christian beliefs and values are reflected in my life.</p> <p>Do I provide a consistent role model of the fruit of God's Spirit? See Galatians 5: 22-23.</p>			
<p>4.2 I have a passion for excellence in education and the needs of all children and young people.</p> <p>For me, what does excellence look like in education? Do I regularly achieve good to outstanding standards of teaching and learning with my classes? How do I show that I value all children and young people? How do I go about raising aspirations, particular with those from more disadvantaged backgrounds?</p>			
<p>4.3 I show courage.</p> <p>Do I have an appetite for change? Do I challenge poor performance? Do I challenge senior colleagues when a decision goes against my core beliefs? Do I take unpopular decisions for the good of the team or school/academy, if it is in the best interest of students? Do I show unconditional love?</p>			
<p>4.4 I act with honesty and integrity.</p> <p>Am I self-aware? Do I manage my emotions effectively? Am I authentic, by saying what I mean and behaving in ways that are consistent with my beliefs and values? Do other people trust me and, if so, how do I know?</p>			
<p>4.5 I have three-dimensional intelligence (as described in the framework) and can deal with complexity and uncertainty.</p> <p>Am I a good rational/analytical thinker (first dimension)? Do I have a high level of emotional intelligence (second dimension)? Do I show spiritual intelligence (third dimension)? Do I feel comfortable when dealing with complex problems and uncertain situations? Do I make good decisions and show accurate judgement?</p>			

Qualities and behaviours	Overall rating: A, B or C	In principle Do you understand and value the importance of this quality and/or behaviour?	In practice How do you demonstrate this quality and/or behaviour? Give best evidence and impact.
<p>4.6 I show humility.</p> <p>Am I a good listener? Do I realise that I don't have all the answers and need to work with others? Do I thank other people, if they point out where I am wrong? Am I a life-long learner in matters of faith, work and life more generally? What have I learned recently?</p>			
<p>4.7 I am resilient.</p> <p>Do I realise that deep and sustained change takes time and am I prepared for the long haul? Do I manage conflict and vulnerability successfully? Do I learn from my mistakes and move on? What difficulties have I overcome in my life?</p>			
<p>4.8 I am optimistic and enthusiastic.</p> <p>Am I a motivator of other people? Do I inspire in others the hope that even the most difficult situations can be improved? Do I want to be on the front foot, even in challenging situations? Do I have a good sense of humour? Do I enjoy my work?</p>			
<p>4.9 I am committed to the wellbeing of myself, my family and other people.</p> <p>Do I understand wellbeing in the sense of physical, rational, emotional and spiritual wholeness, ie the biblical shalom? Do I nurture my own wellbeing? How do I support the wellbeing of my family and other people, particularly those at work?</p>			

Section 5: Reviewing readiness for senior leadership in a church school or academy

For the interview with your headteacher, principal or diocesan officer, you will be sharing evidence of your readiness for senior leadership. Please consider the following questions and use the boxes that follow to note the points that you would like to raise. Please do not write essays; these notes are only for your use during the conversation.

5.1 Having read through the [Framework for excellence in the leadership of church schools and academies](#), what are your views about the particular opportunities and challenges of working at senior level in a church school or academy?

5.2 How do your reactions to 5.1 relate to working with the following stakeholders?

- parents/carers
- the diocese and the local church
- partners that might include other schools and academies, local authorities and education providers/supporters (some of whom might not share a Christian world view)

5.3 How would you evaluate your readiness for the move to senior leadership in a church school or academy, for example:

- How would **you** judge your potential and readiness for senior leadership and on what evidence? How would I judge my potential for senior leadership? To what extent do I have the relevant understanding and experience for such a move in the near future? What would I have to change about my ways of working? Do I understand the differences between school improvement and transformation?
- What have I done already to prepare for this move?

5.4 You have almost completed the main part of the self-assessment process. Are there any questions or concerns that you would like to raise during the conversation?

Section 6: Leadership development action plan

Now jot down some notes in the spaces below about possible areas for further professional development, looking ahead to senior leadership in a church school or academy.

1.

2.

3.

We hope that these will be clarified following the conversation with your headteacher, principal or diocesan officer, and that the whole process will result in opportunities for relevant and helpful training and development.

Name of person completing the self-assessment:

Current school or academy:

Current role and responsibilities:

Name of headteacher, principal or diocesan officer:

Date:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this process. We trust you will have found it illuminating and stimulating as you contemplate the development of your leadership skills.

Annex 1: Relationship between the NPQH competency framework and the qualities and behaviours for excellence in the leadership of church schools and academies

The competencies related to the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) have a different but related focus on the transition to headship.

NPQH competency (strategic leadership)	CSA qualities and behaviours
Self-awareness and self-management	4.4; 4.5; 4.6
Personal drive and accountability	3.1; 4.2; 4.8
Resilience and emotional maturity	1.6; 4.5; 4.7
Conceptual thinking	1.6; 4.5
Future focus	1.3; 1.8; 3.2; 4.3
Impact and influence	1.3; 1.7; 1.8; 1.9; 3.4; 4.4; 4.8

NPQH competency (educational excellence)	CSA qualities and behaviours
Delivering continuous improvement	1.3; 1.6; 1.7; 1.8; 2.1; 2.3; 3.1; 3.4; 3.5; 4.2
Modelling excellence in teaching	3.1; 3.4; 4.2
Learning focus	1.2; 1.4; 1.5; 4.6
Partnership and collaboration	2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4
Organisational and community understanding	1.6; 2.2; 3.7

NPQH competency (operational management)	CSA qualities and behaviours
Efficient and effective	3.1; 3.3; 3.4; 3.6
Analytical thinking	1.4; 3.4; 4.5
Relationship management	1.7; 1.8; 1.9; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 4.9
Holding others to account	1.3; 3.1; 3.5; 4.3
Developing others	1.5; 1.7; 1.8; 1.9; 2.4; 3.5; 4.9

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