

Frequently Asked Questions: System Leadership

What is System leadership?

System Leadership is schools taking collective responsibility for their own improvement in a collaborative way.

Who is involved?

Any member of the staff or team or group of staff. It is not necessarily only the Headteacher who is involved.

How much time is involved?

This depends on how 'formal' the work is and how much grant money is involved. Simply, more money equals more time but remember, if more than one person is involved on any one day; that counts as that number of days e.g. SLT out for one day could equal 2/3/4 days dependent on size.

What do System Leaders do?

Agree to organise support for/with other schools or people. Currently, this could include:

- Supporting governors when appointing headteachers
- Supporting new headteachers
- Helping carry out Pupil Premium reviews and provision
- Preparation for Ofsted inspections (if Ofsted trained)
- Speaking and sharing information on school collaborations e.g. partnerships, etc.
- Helping with placements for aspiring leaders
- Working as a Norfolk Challenge Partner alongside existing ECP
- Being seconded to another school
- Assisting schools with data interrogation and helping schools improve their current judgements or standards ('formal' work)

Other areas will evolve as headteachers feel the need.

What are the benefits to our school?

As an Ofsted 'Good or Outstanding' school, the DfE expects the school to be 'outward facing'. System Leadership does this. When measurable, there has been evidence to show that over recent years both supported and supporting parties gain.

Both demonstrating good practice to visitors and seeing different practice (either good or not) is also beneficial. Teachers are magpies; they steal ideas! Many of these aspects are non-measurable.

Are there disadvantages?

If the school does not have the capacity at a particular time, they need to consider impact on their own school. In 2014/15 some schools did not appear to make measurable gains by giving support. Impact in one's own school always needs to be monitored.

Should we do it?

- Your school probably does already!
- What is the impact of their cluster working?
- How well does your school work with local partners and agencies?
- Does your school communicate well with its feeder/feeding schools?
- Is your Headteacher linked to other schools perhaps through professional associations e.g. NPHA/NSEL/NASSH?
- Does your Headteacher seek out network opportunities?

Any of these are aspects of System Leadership, even though they may be both informal and not necessarily known about.

How do we start?

Encourage your school to be outward facing. Encourage your Headteacher (if Ofsted good or outstanding) to undertake Norfolk System Leader (NSL) training. Encourage both your school and Headteacher (or Senior Leadership Team) to identify their strengths which they could share with others.

But finally.....

If there is a particular situation in your school which limits capacity, do not go any further at this time. Your school knows its own situation and the associated risks.

And remember.....

Your Headteacher will be involved in some System Leadership, the question is, 'How Much?

System Leadership In Norfolk

