

Middle Leader Development Programme (2021-22)

Background

Over the past ten years, in excess of 1000 primary & secondary school middle leaders have successfully completed variations of this Middle Leader Development Programme (MLDP) with many participants going on to attain assistant / deputy / headship in schools locally, nationally and internationally. Research and inspection evidence constantly re-emphasises the significance of the role of the middle leader in driving forward the schools' improvement agenda and as such the enhanced importance of high quality professional development to support colleagues as they progress in their careers.

"Middle leaders have more day-to-day impact on standards than head teachers. Middle leaders are, simply, closer to the action. Teachers' and pupils' experience of leadership comes most frequently from their middle leaders. And the essential work of curriculum planning, monitoring and developing teaching belongs with middle leaders." **Russell Hobby, General Secretary National Association of Head Teachers (2014)**

Course structure

This course will take place over two terms and will involve participants in attending a series of half-day and twi-light sessions as well as a half-day school-based working with the course tutor on their respective school improvement project.

Aims:

- To develop highly developed *strategic* middle leaders;
- To enhance middle leaders understanding of leadership, management and holding others to account;
- To develop middle leaders professional skills in review and self-evaluation, making and recording judgements, and planning for improvement (with an enhanced foci on the impact and outcome of all that we do as leaders in schools);
- To consider the latest research into the effectiveness of leaders on pupils' standards of attainment and attainment;
- To lead a school improvement project and report on it during the final session.

Themes to be included:

- the changing national (and international) context, including the latest research into highly effective school leadership;
- how the role of a Middle Leader supports the strategic vision and direction of the school;
- leading your subject / curriculum area – high quality teaching & learning;
- observing learning & teaching; analysing and interpreting pupils performance data; book looks / work scrutiny and the views and voices of pupils, parents and other stakeholders);
- inspection arrangements and the role of the middle leader;
- managing and leading others: roles, responsibilities, line management and accountability.

Participant expectations

In order to successfully complete the course, participants will engage in a school-based, school-improvement project related to an area (subject / aspect / whole school) of the school for which they have responsibility, and which they will present the findings of during the final day's sessions.

School-based coaches

It is recommended that each participating school nominates a 'senior' colleague (in many instances, these have been colleagues who attended an earlier version of this programme) and who are there to provide in-school support and encouragement to the work of the ML. The commitment for each coach is to attend the opening and final sessions as well as a dedicated session (2) which explores the use of coaching to promoting teacher development. In addition, we ask that they meet with the ML before / after each of the course sessions to ensure the ML are fully prepared / address any queries / issues.

Tutor

Andy Phillips (*Director, AP Associates*) has extensive teaching experience gained in multi-cultural secondary schools in West London. Andy specialises in leadership development; school inspection & school self-evaluation - including report writing / reading; training and coaching of middle & senior leaders in both primary & secondary schools. Andy has worked as a consultant to the British Council running their Headteacher Leadership Development Programme in both Europe and the Middle East. He also acts as a consultant to International Schools and has undertaken many consultancies in North America, Asia, Africa and Europe.

Andy works as an attached advisor to several London authorities and also conducts headteacher performance management reviews. In addition, he is a Lead Reviewer for Challenge Partners and for many years was both a team and lead Ofsted inspector for both Primary & Secondary schools.

Head Teacher feedback from 2018-19

- Through data analysis as well as staff and pupil surveys, both colleagues were able to successfully evaluate the impact/outcomes of their projects. The course has supported this with both middle leaders.
- The Middle Leader demonstrates an increased confidence in driving standards in her areas of responsibility by particularly enhancing her skills in monitoring and reviewing teaching and learning e.g. through the joint learning walks. ML was very keen to use the recommended research resources to relate it to her own practices.
- The course encouraged both colleagues to step out of their phases and work with a wider range of professionals from across the school community. In doing so, this has raised the profile of their respective roles.

Participant feedback from 2018-19

- *Personally I found this course to be one of the best I have attended and everything discussed was of relevance for the position I hold in school.*
- *A wonderful opportunity for constructive, positive time out of class. Sharing good practice, ideas, and meeting like-minded colleagues. The last session sharing our projects I got so much from. It really is incredibly beneficial to allow teachers who are experienced but not middle leaders yet to share best practise and build their confidence, this course did that. Thank you Andy!*
- *I really enjoyed the Middle Leaders course and for me it came at a good time as I took over as Early Years Manager during the course. I have since found that as a senior leader life certainly is different and this course has supported me in managing the team and finding ways to improving children's learning. Thank you Andy and any details which you have on the Middle Leaders plus course would be appreciated.*
- *It was a fantastic course and the skills and knowledge that I have learned over the sessions have been invaluable not only to my professional development but also my teaching. I would have liked a few more sessions/practice on observation sessions on providing feedback especially in difficult situations.*
- *I found this course extremely helpful in enabling me to focus my priorities as a subject leader and to implement strategies for improvement in a manageable and realistic way! Thank you.*



- Session 1** **(1:00 – 4:00) for middle leader participants & coaches**
National context; roles & responsibilities, leadership / management, vision, accountability, working pattern / relationships during the programme; professional learning with impact – disciplined collaboration
- Session 2** **(4:00 – 5:15) for middle leaders**
Analysing and interpreting data – interpreting performance data / how well are pupils taught / how high are standards in my subject / are we inclusive / how well is the subject led and managed? (Presentation by serving deputy / headteacher on use of data by all teachers / leaders).
- Session 3** **(4:00 – 5:15) for Coaches only**
The use of coaching strategies for supporting middle leaders
- Session 4** **(3:00 – 5:00) for middle leaders**
Observing learning & teaching: developing colleagues' professional skills in applying the current Ofsted grade criteria as part of the middle leaders role in supporting school review and self-evaluation. Ensuring consistency amongst colleagues over making judgements (the balance between evidence and judgement) and working in paired observation situations. Developing a series of protocols for: providing feedback and what would an 'outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate' lesson look like.
- Session 5** **(3:00 – 5:00) for middle leaders**
Work scrutiny / pupils work. Pupils' and parents' *views and voices* – current procedures and future developments - what do they tell us?
What do the school's stakeholders tell us about how well we are doing? How can we enhance the importance of this work?

School-based sessions to take place between sessions 5 and 7

- Session 6** **(4:00 – 5:15) for middle leaders**
To understand a model for accelerating teacher development through coaching. Working with and not to others. Having difficult conversations.
- Session 7** **(1:00 – 5:00) for everyone for final presentations**
Presenting the findings of the school based 'school improvement' projects. evidence and evaluation judgements; managing change; Q&A with a serving Deputy / Head. Next steps.

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Key texts highlighted in yellow