

LEADING IN PRACTICE: the January 2023 review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63cfb022e90e071bad20162d/CSPL_Leading_in_Practice.pdf

Questions for leaders		<i>Considerations for a school-based response and training</i>
Communicating values and leading by example		
1	How do the people in your organisation know that you care about the Principles of Public Life?	Have you ever used the PPL or the Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education? The FELE values are the PPL for schools, enhanced by seven virtues to enable people to think about their personal characteristics. The original report launching it is here
2	What do you do to help people understand how the Principles of Public Life translate to the standards of behaviour expected in their day-to-day work?	Schools could use the values and the virtues of the FELE in discussion groups: for example when have you had to be accountable? When have you had to show wisdom?
3	How do you address behaviour that is not consistent with the Principles of Public Life?	What kind of behaviour might this be? Could colleagues think of an example for each aspect of the FELE.
4	How do you know that people across your organisation are hearing a consistent tone from their managers in relation to the standards of behaviour expected of them?	When and how do you as Head set the tone for all interactions? What are your quality assurance methods? What is the parent experience? Ask a range of colleagues for feedback over – say – half a term?
Encouraging a 'speak up' culture		
5	Are there clear and well-understood ways that people across your organisation can raise their concerns when things 'just don't feel right'? How do you know these routes are trusted?	Set out your representation and communication methods. How structured are they? If you have, or believe you have, an open door policy, how do you know it works? Do people drop in with worries? What is your relationship with union reps?
6	What do you do to ensure that retaliation is not tolerated in your organisation?	How would you know if retaliation was happening? What tone do you set? Consider your beliefs about leadership in this context. How helpful is the term 'robust' when applied to leadership?
7	How do you ensure you are listening to the concerns and suggestions of people in your organisation? Are you being open and transparent in communicating the outcome to people in your organisation, while respecting confidentiality?	What do you do with the results of complaints or concerns? Who knows what happens as a result? Do you have a 'you said, we did' process? With which stakeholders?
8	How do you know the managers in your organisation are listening and responding well to concerns that are raised directly with them?	What are your quality assurance methods for line leadership? You could devise a set of principles, or a model script for new line leaders.
Training, discussion and decision-making		
9	Is your staff training specific to the ethical risks and challenges faced by your organisation?	Do you ever discuss ethical leadership? Use the suggestion at 1 above to start, and design your own programme from there.

10	How do you encourage leaders at all levels to discuss the practical application of the Principles of Public Life in their teams?	Once that's done, you could set the same challenge for teams – ask them to identify particular areas where ethical decision-making is hardest.
11	Have you considered whether the people in your organisation might benefit from dedicated support for considering ethical issues, such as ethics committees or counsellors?	How could these ideas work in school? Consider the issues that might be presented to an ethics committee.
12	How do you know that people in your organisation are making consistently good decisions that take into account the Principles of Public Life?	How might you check or sample this? You could consider a repeat training session in which people bring decisions they've had to make this year, for wider discussion – or you could gather ethical dilemmas and build a training session around them.
Governance		
13	Is your board clear on their role in relation to the ethical culture of the organisation?	The 2017 Ethical Leadership Pathfinder Project materials are still available to use with boards and trustees here on the NGA site .
14	Does your risk assessment process identify and monitor the key ethical risks for your organisation?	Spend some time with your senior team assessing how to encapsulate ethical risks concerning children, colleagues, outcomes, finance etc.
15	Does your board have access to the range of data needed to assess and monitor the ethical health of your organisation and to identify potential areas of concern?	This would be covered if boards undertook the ethical audit in the Pathfinder materials.
16	How do you ensure that your organisation takes necessary action where the data suggests that changes are needed?	Devise a way in which boards or trustees could return to this regularly, analysing trends and recommending actions.
17	When things have gone wrong in your organisation, could the signs have been spotted and addressed earlier?	Pick three examples brought to you under 13 above to assess. How might you change your processes to avoid their recurrence?
Recruitment and performance management		
18	Does your recruitment and selection process place sufficient weight on the extent to which candidates' personal values align with the Principles of Public Life?	The PPL are not well known. How might you enable candidates to reflect on them? Devise sample interview questions or tasks for all levels of your organisation.
19	How does your organisation's selection process test the ability of candidates to exercise sound judgement when faced with ethical dilemmas?	Explaining choices in an old-fashioned in-tray exercise or drafting emails in response to a complaint are ways of testing this when appointing senior staff. Could those principles be extended to other roles by using case studies or brief dilemmas?
20	Do the performance management processes of your organisation give sufficient weight to how individuals deliver on their objectives, as well as the outcomes that are achieved?	It might be useful to look at the language you use in target-setting. Do you use the language of principled endeavour, professional trust and development, or numerical targets? Does the accountability system within which we work allow a focus on the how and the why as well as the what?