

AGREED DRAFT

EMPOWERING SCHOOL LEADERS

Introduction

Scotland has started a collective endeavour to build an empowered, connected, self-improving education system to achieve excellence and equity for all children and young people as set out in the National Improvement Framework (NIF).

School leadership is a key driver for improvement. Evidence from the OECD and elsewhere demonstrates that leaders, at all levels, who are empowered and collaborative, and who empower others, are well placed to ensure the highest quality of learning and teaching.

In an empowered school-led system, school leaders should be part of the collective leadership of the system, as well as leaders within their own organisation. The leadership skills required include: working across organisational boundaries; building shared values and trust; drawing on a wide range of perspectives and resources across systems to design local solutions; and reflecting local context, communities and aspirations.

Effective school leaders support cultures that welcome and foster teacher agency, supporting and enabling collaborative professionalism, including teacher-led professional learning.

As school leaders build upon and extend the foundations already in place, our system will move towards the shared ambition of excellence and equity for all Scotland's children and young people.

Principles

The following principles support the culture of empowering school leaders.

School leaders should:

- Be adaptive and creative in their approach to leading learning and teaching and developing learner pathways that meet the needs of all learners.
- Be collaborative and collegiate in their approach, encouraging and seeking views from across the learning community – from parents, children and young people, teachers and support staff, partners, other schools and the Local Authority.
- Be active partners in multi-agency working to get it right for every child.
- Support, encourage and facilitate children and young people's participation in decisions about their own learning and the life of the learning community.
- Seek to develop trusting relationships with parents and carers and help to foster the home learning environment.

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- Be lifelong learners, committed to improving their practice by engaging in professional learning, enquiring collaboratively, engaging in and with research and using evidence-informed practice.
- Make an active and valued contribution to local, regional and national education policy.

The wider education system – including the Scottish Government and Local Authorities – should provide school leaders with the necessary freedom and support to embed these principles in their practice.