**Middle Leaders Leading Change 2024-15**

**Introductory session transcript**

Slide 1 Middle Leaders Leading Change

**Lesley Walker** 0:09  
Welcome everybody to this Middle Leaders Leading Change introductory session for 2024 to 25. We're delighted to have you here today to watch this recording. My name's Lesley Walker. I'm a Lead Specialist with the Professional Learning and Leadership team at Education Scotland.

Slides 1-2 In today’s session we will

**Iain McDermott** 0:25  
Hi everyone. My name is Iain McDermott and it's lovely to be here as well on this Middle Leaders Leading Change Introductory session and my name is Iain McDermott and alongside Lesley, I'm also one of the Lead Specialists.

So it's lovely to have you with us for this session. Here are our aims for you. We're going to introduce the MLLC programme from Education Scotland. We're going to take a look at the four pillars that are explored through MLLC. We're going to familiarise with the programme ahead and that will include using the PLAs, (the Professional Learning Activities), and undertaking a change initiative. We'll consider the benefits of sharing our learning with our teams, and we’ll also think about our next steps too.

Slide 3 Programme aims

**Iain McDermott** 1:17

And here are the programme aims broken down, and you can see these. So we're going to be looking at these four themes across the whole programme:

Self-awareness- that developing awareness of individual areas of strength and development and the needs and how this awareness can inform improvements to leadership.  
A very important one is diversity and anti-racism and how we develop an understanding of identity, privilege and power, and how to actively encourage and celebrate diversity.

Leadership of change will look at how we develop knowledge and understanding and confidence in the use of different models to lead and scaffold change.

And coaching as a model of practice too- how we enhance awareness and knowledge of coaching approaches for leadership and increased confidence in practising with these.

Slide 4 National Model of Professional Learning

**Lesley Walker** 2:03  
We're going to take a quick look at the national model for professional learning now, and this describes the main principles and features of effective professional learning, and we use this model to build our programmes, so the aspects you see here can help to build capacity and promote collaborative practices. And Middle Leaders Leading Change has been designed using this model, with the principles of adult learning, or what we call andragogy. And if you want to explore this model further, there's a QR code there for you to use, and you'll be able to see a more detailed model that explains all the different aspects, but quite briefly, we'll just run through it, so you have a good sense of why we use it. So the centre of the model or what we call the heart of the model- this is the part that shows how professional learning in this programme should obviously impact on you as educators, and that in turn should have an impact on your learners, and all effective professional learning links your learning directly with that of the children, young people or adult learners that you work with.  
Don't forget that as part of this programme, you'll be in the role of learner and it's always great to tell your younger learners that you're being a learner too. It's great role modelling. And do reflect throughout the programme on the potential of what you're learning to impact on your learners. That's key.

So the next three parts of the model, the green ones, tell us that the programme involves enquiry, or learning by enquiring. Learning as collaborative- and it may be that you're working through this programme on your own, but there are always opportunities to build collaboration into the programme as you go.  
And learning that deepens your knowledge and understanding, so isn't just a quick skate over the surface, it's something that really has the potential to be transformative. And we know that these approaches support effective learning that can really, you know, bring about real change.  
Now the programme is also linked to the professional standards, whichever ones it is that you use, whether it's the GTCS Standard for Middle Leadership, the Scottish Social Services Codes of Practice or Standard for Childhood Practice, or the Community Learning and Development Competent Practitioner Framework- it links into all of these.  
And these should obviously shape your learning and you should try to reflect on these and perhaps visit them at points during the programme. And then finally, I'd say that the outside edge of the model is what we call leadership of and for learning, and this is about how we all have a part in creating a culture of learning within our settings, with everyone playing a part in that, and creating that ethos, not just- it's not just the role of leadership teams - it's the role of all of you. So there's something for you here about sharing the learning that you're doing and, you know, bringing your colleagues in wherever possible.  
Is there anything that resonates with you about the model? And if you want to pause the recording here for a moment or two, to make some notes, you're very welcome.

Slide 5 Connector

**Lesley Walker** 5:15  
Now we'll take a look at what we call a connector activity. Now if you're working as part of a group, it might be something that you do together, but if you're working on your own, this activity is really to connect you into the learning and get you into that headspace, maybe after a busy day where you can start thinking about change and improvement. It'll hopefully help to prepare you for a bit of the learning that's to come and motivate you to engage with it as well.  
So the questions are to think of a time when you've led change in your setting or an improvement, and what happened? How did that work? What did you do in advance of it? What did you do during it? What happened afterwards?  
And then after that, to think about your top three strategies in how you lead a team through change?  
So you can take as long or short a time for this, if you want to, you can pause the recording again, make a few notes. It's always helpful to perhaps have a Reflective Journal. You might be using that and you can look back at your notes in in the months to come, but this should hopefully get you thinking about what's to come next.

Slide 6 Our why **Iain McDermott** 6:30  
Simon Sinek is an educational writer and he says that we should be the leader you wish you had. Now for the purposes of this activity, think about this as being the *educator* you wish you had, because this will focus your mind on the learners and of course that is our reason for educating. So with that in mind, have a think about the following questions. What is your why? And by that we mean why do we do what we do?  
Simon Sinek often says, as well, what is it that gets us out of our beds in the morning? What is it that actually gets us to propel ourselves into the day? And I suppose for us as educators, that question is, why educate? What is education for?

In the 21st century, what is it that we're actually preparing our young people and learners to do and to be, and why aspire to lead as well as we're moving through our own leadership journeys? Now in the last task, Lesley asked you to use the pause button if you want to as well, and hopefully you'll maybe also be taking some notes. So again, take a moment either to pause the video here or just to note down any reflections around those four bullet points. What is your why? Why educate? What is education for and why aspire to lead? Take a pause to do that just now.

Slide 7 Our how **Iain McDermott** 8:00

Now our how is also very important. Our skills, experiences, knowledges, abilities, the attitudes, values, and unique qualities all matter, when we're doing what we do. Now, here's another quote from Andy Hargreaves and Alma Harris that might tell us something about how to effect real change in education through our leadership roles. It says middle leaders are the crucial conduits of change; they interpret and implement policy, influence their peers and translate school wide priorities into classroom practice. Now your professional standards and values also help with the why and the how. So it'll be useful to check in with them from time to time as you proceed through this programme.

Slide 8 The learning ahead: 1. Registering an account

**Lesley Walker** 8:53  
OK, now we're going to spend a little bit of time thinking about how you can get started on Middle Leaders Leading Change. Now the first thing that you will need to do is visit the Education Scotland website, and you will need to register an account, that's the first thing. So you can see a screenshot of the page on this slide here, and that's showing the Professional Learning home page there. Part of our site that is quite important to the programme is the area where we have the self-directed professional learning activities that Iain mentioned earlier, or the PLAs as we call them for short, and these are interactive learning materials that allow you to write responses and your reflections, and to save your progress as you go along. So you can you can do a bit of work, you can save it, stop, go away, come back. And the Middle Leaders Leading Change programme uses specific ones of these PLAs, because we have a whole range of them. Because you're learning is specific to you, that's why you need to register an account, so that you are the only one that can see the work that you're doing. Hope that makes sense. So it's only accessed by you. Now to register an account, if you haven't got one already, you can see the slide is showing you the purple register button on the top right hand side, and if you go into this you can make your own account up, and you can use either a work e-mail or a personal e-mail- it's up to you. And it will bring up a kind of pop up registration form for you to fill in that's got a few basic details for you to complete. And once you've done that and created a password for your account, you will then have access to the professional learning activities – PLAS - that you need to be able to complete Middle Leaders Leading Change.

Slide 9 The learning ahead: 2 Engaging with the programme

**Lesley Walker** 10:45

OK, so the programme is self-directed through the Education Scotland website and you can find out more and get started with the learning at the page shown on the slide. You don't need to have an account to engage with this part.  
This is open to everybody. It's only when you get into those PLAs that you need to actually open your account and start on the learning.  
So if you, again, go to education.gov.scot, sorry, that's our website, and into the Professional Learning tab, click on Professional Learning Programmes. You'll be able to find MLLC - Middle Leaders Leading Change - in the list there, as you can see, under Leading CLD, as it happens at the moment, and you can read all about the programme there. That'll give you full details on exactly what you're expected to do as you progress through the programme.

Slide 10 The learning ahead: The PLAs

**Lesley Walker** 11:44  
Now, those specific PLAs that I mentioned before, so there are seven areas, and these link, you'll probably remember, into the aims of the programme that Iain mentioned at the beginning, those four important pillars of middle leaders leading change, and the first PLA that you will do, number one, is about self-awareness for middle leaders. And then we've got understanding middle leadership and that goes into some of the underpinning evidence behind the programme, looks at some of the research.  
There are a couple of PLAs on change, how to lead change, some of the change models that might be helpful to you, how to use data to plan and lead your change. And then very importantly, the 5th PLA is around engaging others in change because clearly you need to be able to take others with you when you're undertaking any improvement programme, so how to engage others, and then the final two are slightly different because you have some options here. So when you come to do your 6th PLA on anti-racism and diversity, you have some options because there are three different PLAs that you might choose from here. And it's the same with coaching. There are three or four different PLAs on coaching that you might choose and the reason for this is that we recognise you may be at different places in your learning with both anti racism and coaching. You may be new to both of these or you may already have done some learning so you have some options there to best meet your needs, I suppose.  
And this is the order of PLAs that we recommend, but you don't have to do them in that order. You can plan your learning as you see fit.  
Now each PLA takes about two to three hours and is in bite sized steps that you can save as you go along with reflective questions in each step and space to record your reflections. And every PLA in ends with the same step. It's an impact step, and it asks you to think about what the impact of your learning has been.  
You can download the PLAs once you've finished them, which is great to have them as a record of your learning, and there's also a reflective journal that you'll find in the Middle Leaders Leading Change pages that, if you want to use, you can record additional thoughts in there as well.  
Now, time frames. So we suggest perhaps two PLAs a term might be realistic. It might not. But again this is about planning your time, being realistic about what you can achieve, and perhaps being quite strong about setting aside some time every week to work on your programme. And if you're working as part of a group, you might want to negotiate your finishing time collectively and work through it together.  
So how are you feeling about the learning now?  
It might be helpful to note down any hopes for the learning, any questions that you need answering at this point, any concerns you have, anything you're excited about, and take a moment to note any of those down. Hopefully, any questions you have will be answered when you get stuck into the pages and the learning.

Slide 11 Applying your learning

**Iain McDermott** 15:10  
So once the seven PLAs are complete, you are encouraged to apply your learning through a change initiative you've started, are currently leading or are planning for the future. Now suggested time frame for completing the seven PLAs and the change initiative is approximately 12 to 18 months. Now again, if you're working as part of a group, this needs to be negotiated and agreed with flexibility built in. So have a think about which existing or planned change initiative might provide a good context?  
For you to apply your learning. Again, you might want to pause, make some notes about your initial thoughts on what that could be.

Slide 12 Completing the programme

**Iain McDermott** 15:59

Now, you also have the option of submitting a completed Change Initiative template to Education Scotland for certification. Now, further information on this, including the template that's used and how that should be submitted, is included within the programme web pages.

Slide 13 Reflective Journal

**Lesley Walker** 16:21  
A further support for your learning is the Reflective Journal, and there's a digital template of that within the MLLC pages as well, to support you and your learning, and you're encouraged to download this and populate it as you go through the programme. It helps give you a structure for your learning as well.  
Now just take note, that this is only for you. You don't need to share it with anyone else, unless you choose to. It's not to be submitted to Education Scotland.  
It's really just for you. We hope that journaling brings quite a number of benefits. It can really help you to work through issues. It can help you to crystallise your thinking, and it can provide a really useful resource to revisit when you're considering how effective changes might have been over time. So something to perhaps support you through your learning, but help you when you're coming to decide about your next steps and where you're going next. And speaking of next steps…

Slide 14 Next steps

**Lesley Walker** 17:23

We hope that you're now ready to get started with the learning. You've got everything you need, so if you haven't already done this, you can use the QR code that you see here on the slide or the link there to access the Education Scotland website, find the professional learning tab and make a start.  
If you want to, or if this has been agreed as part of a group, you might want to also sign up for the Middle Leadership Sharing the Learning event in May. That's going to be a live event, online, and that's going to bring together middle leaders from right across Scotland to talk about their experiences on the programme. An important note though, is that this doesn't mean that all your learning needs to be completed by May. In fact, we might not even expect that. Whatever part of the programme you've reached by May it's absolutely fine to attend, and share wherever you've got to by that point. And we appreciate that May might fall at any point during your learning, so we look forward to hopefully seeing you then.  
Maybe have a think about how you might use that option of attending the Sharing the Learning event to support your engagement on the programme, because it may give you something to work towards as well, but all the information you need, as it says on the slide, including how you sign up for this event, is available in the programme pages.

Slide 15 Reflection activity

**Iain McDermott** 18:57  
So we’re almost at the end of this introduction session, which is a good time to consider your thoughts as you embark on this professional learning journey and taking a wee bit of time for reflection. So questions to think about and you may want to do this after this introduction session. You may want to take some time to begin thinking about these questions. What do you hope to gain from engaging in the Middle Leaders Leading Change? What are the possible blockers and how you might you overcome these? So in other words the barriers -those things that potentially could get in the way, how are you going to try to remove them? And what is the potential for those you work with as well? We think about the growth, the challenge and the potential the professional learning can bring. The focus should be on the potential for impact on both you and your learners that professional learning and how it can bring these things to those people around you and most importantly yourself as well. So, make some notes. You may want to pause before we finish off, or you may want to continue with that reflection after we finished. These will be helpful to you as well as part of that journaling process that Lesley’s mentioned as you progress through your learning.

Slide 16 Carol CC Miller

**Iain McDermott** 20:15

So this is something that we often say to our learners, a quote here from Carol, CC Miller. The importance isn't how high you fly. The importance is that you take off and give it your all. And we say that for learners, but it's equally important for us as professional learners too.  
We're all very, very busy, but we must ring fence time for our own professional learning because it has the potential to bring about transformation in our thinking and practice, which ultimately in turn impacts positively on our learners. So this is the start of an exciting flight and who knows where it could lead, perhaps anywhere!

Slide 17 Thank you

**Lesley Walker** 20:57  
So thank you. A huge thank you from Iain and I for joining this recorded session and we wish you all the very best of luck as you get started on middle leaders leading change and who knows, we might even see you at the sharing the learning event in May.

**Iain McDermott**   
Yep. Thank you so much. We hope that's been useful. Please feel free to watch again and to take some notes as you're going through and we really very much look forward to following your professional learning journey. Thank you.