



Issue 5

# NAPTA Headlines

November 2006

## Performance management for support staff

All schools should have a performance management process for support staff built into their annual review cycle. This can be used to agree and review an individual's priorities in relation to the school's development plan and the self-evaluation form (SEF) for Ofsted. Tasks undertaken by support staff are part of the wider improvement plan – an effective performance management process enables schools to measure their successes and to suggest further development to increase effectiveness. Schools need to make clear their expectations for all staff and pupils, and how they can all help standards to rise.

The NAPTA **Workforce Development Programme** (WDP) can help any school to establish or improve a sustainable, ongoing review process for their support staff, with positive development outcomes.



### Core principles

The success of the **WDP** in schools as a solution to a full review process depends on five core principles:

#### 1 Performance management is inclusive –

The performance management cycle involves opportunities for all staff, within the context of the contribution they make to the school.

#### 2 Performance management is based on an ongoing professional dialogue –

The **WDP** offers each party the chance to talk and listen. The process is thus seen as being led by an agreement, not an imposition.

#### 3 There should be no surprises –

The cycle follows a clear path, starting with an opportunity for support staff to self-review, and leading into a positive process of discussion and development. This enables everyone to be aware of what is going on at each stage of the process and not simply to focus on the past and present, but also to look to the future.

#### 4 The cycle addresses the needs of individuals and the institution –

There should be a balance between the needs of the school and

the individual aspirations of the reviewees, where both are given equal weighting and solutions aim to meet the needs of both.

#### 5 The cycle is manageable for all –

The use of mixed modes of review can help to ensure that a professional development programme adapts to the particular circumstances of the school and needs of its staff. In the **WDP**, schools might use an initial self-evaluation with ongoing, individually-managed portfolios and collection of evidence coupled to an annual face-to-face discussion.

In planning their performance management, schools using the NAPTA **WDP** should take care to consider the demands on time and resources of those involved in the review process. Depending on the school's particular circumstances, it may be most efficient to complete all performance management at the same time or to stagger it through the year. Whichever is the case, all involved should view it as part of an ongoing, year-round process.

## Improving intervention, PPA and cover strategies

It is important to demonstrate that deploying staff without qualified teacher status (QTS) in certain teaching, learning and support tasks is both appropriate and justified by their knowledge, skills and understanding. This applies to staff who:

- support individual or group work in the classroom
- direct learning to enable PPA time
- provide cover supervision
- work with pupils in extended school activities at the school's recommendation.

Schools are often deemed (and deem themselves) responsible for the quality assurance of such staff. Most schools want to know that these individuals are capable of providing benefits to the pupils in their care, reinforcing the core values and principles of the institution, and communicating well with the school to report any concerns, for example, regarding child protection.

Even when the school is confident that these staff give excellent provision in and out of school, it is important to recognise that external agencies (eg Ofsted) and stakeholders (eg parents/carers and governors) will require evidence that justifies the responsibilities given to members of staff. The NAPTA **Workforce Development Programme** gives schools comprehensive and reassuring evidence in the form of detailed reports of staff competence and confidence, which can be used to inform any support staff deployment decisions.

### Provision for vulnerable pupils

Because of the brevity of Section 5 inspections, inspectors will focus their inspection and gathering of evidence on your most vulnerable groups of pupils, as defined through an analysis of your PANADA and SEF.

You probably already have mechanisms in place to ensure that these pupils receive additional support through appropriate intervention strategies, including additional help from support staff. As a consequence, the teaching (whether one-to-one, or in small or large groups) provided by these members of support staff may well be scrutinised during inspection.

### Further support

Whatever their additional responsibilities, support staff should feel confident that there is someone to go to if they have any worries or encounter any problems. Line managers and supervisors should be approachable and accessible in order to encourage good communication and on-the-job development. Staff should be given the opportunity to consider how they could develop via ongoing professional development and to voice their needs through regular one-to-one reviews.

## News in brief

### Sunflower competition

A big thank you to all schools who sent in photos of their wonderful sunflowers. We hope you all enjoyed our summer competition. We are pleased to announce that Saltersgate Junior School in Scawsby, Doncaster is the winner with the tallest sunflowers at over three metres high! The school was presented with a gardening and outdoor activity kit plus a pack of science resources. See the NAPTA Web site at [www.napta.org.uk](http://www.napta.org.uk) for photos of the winning sunflower.

### Winter competition

We would like to see your best photos from the bird-watching project that we launched in the spring. Have you taken a perfect picture, seen an unusual bird, or snapped birds behaving in an interesting way? Send your photos to [birds@napta.org.uk](mailto:birds@napta.org.uk) or Winter Birds Competition, NAPTA, PO Box 210, Cambridge CB4 3ZW. The winner will be announced on the NAPTA Web site at [www.napta.org.uk](http://www.napta.org.uk).

If you have any suggestions for future topics or questions, please email [info@napta.org.uk](mailto:info@napta.org.uk).

**napta**

[www.napta.org.uk](http://www.napta.org.uk)