



Principles of effective review

While performance management reviews are an essential way to support and develop staff, they can lead to feelings of vulnerability and worries that the process is all about finding fault. However, we know from the tens of thousands of school support staff who have benefited from the **Workforce Development Programme** that the system works for both the reviewer and those reviewed. Indeed, staff appreciate the greater respect they receive for their contribution and professional aspirations. The success of the **Workforce Development Programme** in schools depends on five core principles, which form the basis of NAPTA's performance management process.

- 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 **Workforce Development Programme** offers each party the chance to talk and listen. The process is thus seen as 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 **Workforce Development Programme**, schools might use an initial self-evaluation with ongoing, individually-managed portfolios and collection of evidence coupled to an annual face-to-face discussion.

These principles should be central to any process of development and review, in order to ensure the best possible experience for staff and the best possible results for the school. Because these principles are integral to the **Workforce Development Programme**, any system of professional review that incorporates the programme will include them. However, it is important for senior management to bear them in mind at every step of the process, especially when tailoring it to the school's needs or when working directly with staff.