



Performance management

Despite the delays to the new performance management arrangements for teachers, schools have been putting significant demands on authorities to provide a suitable approach to support staff review that meets the needs of all parties. This often represents a change in management of school

support staff, moving away from a one-off training needs analysis to a sustainable, ongoing review process with positive development outcomes.

The NAPTA **Workforce Development Programme** has become the preferred approach to support staff

performance management in many authorities across the country. Critically, the programme includes a training plan, which links directly to both in-school opportunities and local authority training, and a growing package of development resources. 65 000 support staff are now involved in the programme.

Synchronising performance management

Schools are increasingly relying on a wide range of staff to provide services to pupils. This has been driven by a number of initiatives including workforce remodelling and the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda. A recent Ofsted brief for inspectors said that:

“it is entirely acceptable to observe lessons that are managed by teaching assistants... It may be important to gather evidence about them if the pupils are taught on a regular basis by teaching assistants while their teachers have non-contact time for planning, preparation and assessment”



Because of this increased responsibility, many schools are taking the logical step of synchronising the performance management of support staff and qualified teachers. This maximises the efficiency of the performance management process and allows the school to react collectively as well as individually to the results.

In helping their schools to plan performance management, partner authorities are considering the demands on resources and the time of both those being reviewed and the reviewers. Depending on the school's circumstances, it may be most efficient to complete all performance management at the same time or to stagger it throughout the year. Whichever is the case, all involved should view it as part of an ongoing, year-round process.

NAPTA's Performance Management Charter

While 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. This, in turn, can lead to concerns being raised by the local Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) and other representative bodies.

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 the new **NAPTA Performance Management Charter**.

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 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.

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 interviewees, 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.

Partner authorities are experiencing great success in embedding performance management by making these principles central to their processes of development and review. The principles ensure the best possible experience for staff and the best possible results for schools. Because these principles are integral to the **Workforce Development Programme**, any system of professional review that incorporates the programme will include them.

Best practice seminars

At the request of partner authorities, NAPTA is running headteacher seminars to help encourage best practice in support staff performance management. Attendees are briefed on the latest approaches to workforce development and how these can be used

to support important school priorities such as self-assessment, ECM compliance, affordable CPD and effective classroom practice.

They will also receive a free CD-ROM that offers comprehensive and tried-and-tested solutions to these key challenges.

To find out more about these seminars and how they could help both you and your schools, call NAPTA on 01223 224930.