

Models of school leadership

1. Traditional model

The leadership team is comprised exclusively of qualified teaching staff and typically includes a Head Teacher supported by Deputy and/or Assistant Heads. This model predominates in the primary sector, but is also common, albeit to a lesser extent, in secondary schools.

2. Managed model

This model has a flatter management style structure in which specific roles are allocated on the senior leadership team for senior support staff, for example, directors of finance and/or Human Resources. This model tends to be found more often in the secondary sector with almost half of Head Teachers supported by one senior staff member on the leadership team.

3. Multi-agency managed model

This model is a natural progression from the managed model and is, in a sense, borne out of the imperatives of the Every Child Matters (ECM) and 14-19 agendas. Like the managed model it involves a flatter, management-style structure, but is more outward looking and inter-agency focused. It can manifest itself in a wide variety of ways, but generally will involve teaching staff and professionals from other agencies working together as part of school leadership teams. This model remains the exception rather than the rule but, as outlined above, the expectation is that more schools are likely to move in this direction as a key way of responding to the ECM and 14-19 agendas.

4. Federated model

This model is characterised by varying degrees of collaboration between schools and sometimes between schools and other providers, for example: “whole town” approaches to schooling; shared strategic governing bodies, with executive heads overseeing several schools; and federations between schools, Further Education and work based learning providers. Approximately 10% of Head Teachers have some sort of federation arrangement, and the majority of schools have informal collaborations with other schools.

5. System leadership model

This model embraces all the different roles that Head Teachers can assume beyond the boundaries of their own school ie those that contribute to the wider educational system at a local, regional or national level. It includes, for example National Leaders of Education assuming roles that include providing advice to Government and “virtual Heads” responding to schools facing specific challenging circumstances.

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