

Managing supportive and challenging Quality Improvement in schools

Issue

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Headline position

AHDS believe that clear quality assurance processes in schools should match with processes in LEAs in a supportive climate and deliver effective engagement with Education Scotland.

Full position

AHDS acknowledges that a system of 'support and challenge' at all levels is crucial for developing successful, learning communities.

Quality Improvement must start at school level with self-evaluation and reflection. All staff and indeed pupils and parents must have ownership of this self-evaluation and be involved in the process. The PRD process and the on-going CPD experiences of staff must also be embedded.

This should result in a clear cycle of improvement captured in the School Improvement Plan with a focus on measureable impact.

AHDS believes that local authorities must take responsibility for supporting school leaders and demonstrating this through consultation, advice and partnership working. Line managers of head teachers must be able to demonstrate high leadership characteristics and know their head teachers and schools well. Proportionate and supportive challenge is key and a culture of support and sharing between schools should be fostered. Schools should be proactive with head teachers seeking involvement in local authority initiatives and systems of peer support.

Education Scotland, when engaged in school inspections, should be similarly supportive and the school's own self-evaluation should be the starting point. Professional dialogue should take place throughout and support should also be provided by the local authority.

Quite simply, leadership of quality assurance cannot be developed in isolation through procedures alone. A collaborative approach to leadership must be taken by schools, LEAs and Education Scotland. Effective self-evaluation and collegiality with open and transparent communication between these three key players is crucial and will help develop mutual respect. This will in turn impact positively on Scotland's children.