



Leadership and Management Resilience

There are nuanced variations in the commonly available definitions of ‘resilience’ – for example

- the ability to recover from setbacks, adapt well to change, and keep going in the face of adversity (Harvard Business Review).
 - the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioural flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands (American Psychological Association).
 - the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress, an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune change (Merriam Webster dictionary).
- > Some or all aspects of these examples may resonate with you; effective leaders frequently rely on their individual and collective resilience, to varying degrees. Can you think of a time when you were heartened by the way your leadership group successfully relied on your collective resilience?

What is the purpose of a leadership and management resilience focus?

As part of the Beacon project school improvement visits, we thought it would be useful to support school leadership teams to reflect on themselves as a team. Psychological research demonstrates that the resources and skills associated with more positive adaptation (i.e., greater resilience) can be cultivated and practised.

- > We wondered if a good starting point was to think about the nature and extent of your resilience: we have suggested some prompts and a self-evaluation process below.

What will this focus on?

Some key questions that the process encourages you to think about include:

- How well do leaders plan for the future?
- What leadership styles do you tend to rely on?
- How effective is communication and does it promote open, honest reflective dialogue?
- Are leadership and management roles effectively distributed across the school?
- Are roles and responsibilities clear at all levels?
- How well do you promote innovation and positive risk taking?
- How well do leaders use their emotional awareness to inform their work?
- How well do you include all stakeholders in developing the school’s vision and aims?
- Is there a good balance between accountability and support?

- How well do you build in regular time for reflection?
- Does the school's values and culture result in everyone feeling safe, trusted, included and successful?
- How effective are staff well-being structures?
- How well do leaders encourage collaborative, supportive teamwork?
- How well do you plan for leadership succession?

How will it work?

In preparation for the Beacon school improvement visit in Autumn 2022 we would like all members of the governing body, senior leadership team and middle leadership team to complete the self-evaluation form (below). We suggest that each person completes this on their own.

During the visit day we would then like the school to arrange a series of 1-hour meetings for Andy and Jessica to meet with groups of senior and middle leaders, and governors. The school can arrange who to include in each group. We hope to have as many leaders and governors are included in these groups as possible.

The meetings will be facilitated to encourage all participants to contribute to identify strengths of how the school is currently lead and managed, and how things could be different.

Leadership and Management Resilience Action Plan

After the meetings Andy and Jessica will suggest some areas that the school may wish to focus on. These will be added to the action plan format shared below.

Leadership and Management Resilience Self Evaluation template

Area of focus	Suggested themes and areas to explore	Strengths / evidence	Things we might do differently
Vision and aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these clear? How are they shared? • Does the school revisit these regularly? • How are you supporting all members to engage in the vision? 		

Area of focus	Suggested themes and areas to explore	Strengths / evidence	Things we might do differently
Clarity of roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these clearly defined? How and when are roles and responsibilities revisited? • Is there any muddle around these? • Do all staff understand everyone's roles? • Are there times when personnel and/or events confuse the agreed boundaries? 		

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Distributed leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the leadership workload manageable for individuals? • Could more responsibilities be shared? • How effective are middle leaders - do they really lead? • How do pupils take real leadership responsibility? 		

Area of focus	Suggested themes and areas to explore	Strengths	Things we might do differently
Leadership styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you mindful of matching your style of leaderships with the different situations you are faced with? • Do you think you have a default style individually, and collectively as a 		

	<p>leadership team – if so, how would you describe it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you encourage feedback from others about your leadership styles? • Do you plan in regular time for leaders to reflect together? How is this resourced / supported? 		
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Emotionally aware leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does the school culture support the wellbeing of staff? • What do you believe to be the 'cost', and what are the planned for 'gains' of your whole school culture? • What balance do leaders find between challenge and support? • How well do leaders look after their own wellbeing? • Do staff and pupils feel valued? • Do leaders understand what pupils communicate through their behaviour? 		

Area of focus	Suggested themes and areas to explore	Strengths	Things we might do differently
Strategic leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the milestones during the school year setting aside time for strategic thinking? Is enough time spent thinking and planning strategically? • Is there a clear view of what the school will be like in 5 years' time? • How do you ensure successful change, are changes introduced carefully enough? • Is succession planning thought about? Are all key stakeholders actively involved? 		

Area of focus	Suggested themes and areas to explore	Strengths	Things we might do differently
Building an inclusive community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How well do leaders build community cohesion - both within the school and involving other stakeholders? ● How able are staff, pupils and parents to share their views? ● Are staff encouraged to innovate and take risks to improve pupil outcomes? ● Are channels of communication clear and well used? ● Do staff feel well supported to improve their performance? ● How and when is collaborative teamwork actively promoted? 		

Leadership and Management Resilience Action Plan

Name of School:

Date:

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Strengths	
Things we might do differently	
Possible action points	

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