



Sticky Change

Experts in fostering change that sticks

Case Study Leadership for middle leaders

THE DESTINATION

We had successfully worked with the Senior Leadership Team of a Church of England comprehensive school in the North West over a number of years. The school had a solidly "good" Ofsted rating, the result of a thorough, systematic focus on improvement over a number of years. But to get to "outstanding", something different was needed. For the whole organisation to step up, the leadership team recognised that they, and middle leaders across the whole organisation needed to rethink their roles and responsibilities as leaders, and develop the self-awareness, the behaviours and the skills to make them confident and effective.

THE INTERVENTION

We worked with the SLT to engage senior leaders and managers in the changes that they would need to make, to ensure there was space for the middle leaders to generate ideas for change and that these would be welcome and supported as appropriate. They defined what they would need to do differently and how they would need to behave to create this development culture that previously had only existed around teaching and learning for the classroom.

We designed an approach that covered a series of workshops across the school year which focussed on: building self-awareness, management style and influencing skills, leadership and its application in school; how to engage others in change and support them through it; how to hold people accountable and monitor progress ensuring completion of work, dealing with conflict and managing difficult issues, and being a role model for others.

Each participant also had a couple of coaching sessions during the period of the programme so they could work through issues that were pertinent to them. We also built in a couple of "share and learn" sessions so that the group had the opportunity to talk together about the successes and challenges they were experiencing and to ensure that the school benefited from both the individual's learning and from the collective learning of the group.

These processes were further embedded by each participant establishing a change project to work on through the period of the programme. This provided the practice field to apply the skills and learning and also contributed to the development of teams and to whole school improvement. Participants were challenged throughout to understand how their leadership behaviours could develop and improve, and were empowered to achieve this.

This programme has been repeated and a cohort group has been established who are always at the forefront of championing change in school. In order to keep fostering enthusiasm and to further embed and sustain this work each year, by popular request, there is a Masterclass workshop before the beginning of the new school year that gives an open invitation for members of this cohort group to attend which they do in their own time.

THE 'SO WHAT' FACTOR

There is an excitement and enthusiasm in school for change with lots of volunteers to lead or work on whole school improvement projects. There is an increased awareness of, and respect for, all aspects of a complex organisation and the interdependencies of the work which is needed to make the school successful at every level. Many within the original cohort group have been promoted and seen development within their careers. Feedback from participants include comments such as "this has been life changing" and "the best CPD I have ever had" and "every middle or senior leader should do this".

Whilst there have been other contributing factors, the school has now achieved an Ofsted rating of "outstanding" across the board, become an academy, a National Support School and a National Teaching School. The Headteacher says "These programmes have been the most significant transformational work my school has ever undertaken. They have enabled the school to build capacity and strong, confident and resilient leadership which underpins all the educational improvement that we have undertaken. They underpin our "Outstanding" Ofsted judgement.

For more information about any of our services please contact one of our offices or email us at info@stickychange.com