

C-me helps develop pioneering leadership in Schools

“C-me has provided a refreshing and interesting alternative for me to use with middle and senior leaders. The focus on natural and adapted behaviours makes this an original and interesting profile to use.” - Matthew Woodville, Principal, Wellsway School.

ABOUT

Wellsway is a successful 11-18yrs mixed secondary school located in Keynsham, on the outskirts of Bath.



The current inspection framework for schools within England and Wales continues to place a strong emphasis on the effectiveness of leadership. In a recent TES blog post by Lorna Fitzjohn, Ofsted Regional Director for the West Midlands, it was said that: “good leadership makes the biggest difference to raising school standards.” The most effective leaders determine the culture of their schools. They are aspirational and uncompromising in their ambitions. They value the professionalism of their teams and are committed to staff members’ personal development.’

THE CHALLENGE

The need to invest in leaders and develop their leadership styles and capabilities has become, in education, much more than an aspiration, it is a critical part of the journey towards being an outstanding educational establishment. This deeper understanding of the critical importance of developing leadership couldn’t be exemplified more clearly than in Wellsway School, Keynsham, Bristol.

Although already performing well in terms of academic outcomes, when appointed as Principal in 2016, Matthew Woodville identified some core issues around leadership and consequently made the decision to strategically develop the schools’ leadership structure.

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THE SOLUTION

Matthew’s first intervention was to overhaul the structure of the middle leadership team. Backed by his senior team he took a radical approach and reordered departments, moving from ten to eight equally weighted curriculum teams, ensuring parity between team leaders. Matthew recruited a mix of new and experienced leaders as the new Curriculum Directors.

Phase one: Tailored Leadership Training.

The second key decision was to invest in personalised training. Critically, Matthew wanted to move beyond one size fits all models often used in a training package. His aim was to really invest in the individuals he had appointed as curriculum directors.

Wellsway has used C-me profiles to develop different aspects of leadership by continually referencing and reflecting on reports; doing so has allowed for the development of excellence within leadership at all levels within the school.

WHY C-ME

Vice Principal, Sophie Francis, had encountered C-me through the 'Women into Leadership' Programme, (see C-me diversity within leadership teams case study). She felt that C-me behavioural profiling would provide the bespoke, personalised, and reflective elements Wellsway were looking for.

Leading by Example

Once the decision had been made to restructure and bring in the tailored training, Matthew and the Senior Leadership Team decided to model the way in which they expected middle leadership to engage. They completed the C-me profiling questionnaires to produce their individual reports and completed the accompanying workshop to explore workplace behaviours.

Phase 2: 360 Reports / Deepening Colour.

An important outcome of using C-me with both the senior and middle management teams has been that Wellsway has created a shared language around workplace and leadership behaviours. They collectively have a way of describing differing approaches and are able to assess the behaviours that shape the curriculum teams.

RESULTS/BENEFITS

One of the classic issues around training is the short-term nature of the learning. Clearly for a school choosing to invest in bespoke training there is an imperative for the training to embed itself and affect the ongoing work in the school.

Having invested in profiles, the school worked with the facilitator to find ways to deepen the collective understanding of colour. The Pastoral Leadership Team have also reflected on their profiles and a bespoke session is being developed for the school's Assistant Team Leaders. For the Senior Team, the C-me 360 report provided a vehicle for further reflection, involving support and teaching staff from all areas of the school.

The Curriculum Directors revisited their own reports and looked at issues around conflict. They also took part in guided coaching sessions in small groups, the aim being to establish deeper on-going peer support. Wellsway also broadened out the initial training to include the pastoral heads.

The way in which Wellsway has made use of the initial C-me profile, developing different aspects of leadership and continually referencing and reflecting on the reports, supported the development of excellence within leadership at all levels in the school.

FUTURE PLANS

The Curriculum Directors followed the same training as the Senior Leadership, however, they also each received a personal coaching session. Following the general training, each person was given 30 minutes alone with the facilitator to discuss and reflect on their own profile.

Phase 3: Coaching / Looking at key aspects of performance.

As the school moves into the third year of leadership development and interaction with their profiles, the plan is to continue a robust colour-coaching program across the school. To address any leadership issues, staff can ask for a series of coaching interventions. There is also a plan to look at some of the key aspects of performance raised in the profiles to further support and develop the middle leaders.