



Effective Subject Leadership: Introduction and Overview and Unit 1 Guidance for School Trainers

Working with these resources

This resource provides you with step by step materials to transform subject leadership in your school – all subject leaders and all subjects.

Once you have an overview of the resource there will be school decisions to make before you start. Discuss these with the head teacher to confirm your focus and timeline.

- *Are we focussing on all subject leaders and all subjects, or being selective?*
- *What is the urgency? How fast do we need to see the impact of this?*
- *When can we take staff development time for the sessions?*
- *Who monitors this, and how?*

Exploring these questions:

Are we focussing on all subject leaders and all subjects, or being selective?

The resource has most impact when used with all subject leaders, and if possible, all teachers at the same time. This ensures that the more experienced support the newer subject leaders and all learn together. There are specific formats and methods that will be new to experienced leaders and further improve their practice. Involving teachers who are not subject leaders is important. They need to understand their colleagues' role and will provide them with the information they need.

What is the urgency? How fast do we need to see the impact of this?

There may be short term needs in specific subjects. You can still train all leaders and teachers but accelerate the implementation for some subjects/leaders.

There may be an overall urgency to make impact within one term. This is achievable. The longest period of implementation should be one year to fit in with other school cycles for impact.

When can we take staff development time for the sessions?

For full implementation you will need a first session of 45 minutes, followed by 7 sessions of around 20 – 40 minutes, each a month or slightly more apart. This is because subject leaders will be putting strategies into practice between the sessions, driving forwards your school improvement priorities.

Who monitors this, and how?

As the programme unfolds, subject leaders will be providing specific information back to the school's leadership. It is essential that this is received and reviewed by the headteacher, but it is also appropriate that other senior leaders are involved too. If you have been delegated to lead this training, you will need to see all the information being submitted by all subject leaders, even if you are one of them!

A typical implementation programme is provided in the appendix of this guidance.



Professional development

How many poor courses, lectures and meetings have you attended?

Too many slides, presenters reading them, no opportunities for discussion, doesn't fit my school, general material, not sure what to do with it when I get back to work?

It doesn't have to be like that!

You are *facilitating* your colleagues' learning – they have to engage and make an effort, so....

- Don't use many slides
- Keep input short
- Engage colleagues in practical tasks
- Engineer their participation
- Always ensure there is practical implementation after each session

The videos and supporting documents in this resource provide you with everything you need, so there is no preparation time other than familiarisation.

Every unit is 3-9 minutes with 3-8 slides and an audio commentary (which doesn't read the slides out!) Playing the videos gives a concise and focused input which is then followed up in discussion and with commitment to action.

Training leads to implementation

Been on training? So what?

What will you implement, trial or evaluate back at work?

Every unit in this resource is followed by practical implementation. Reassure colleagues that this doesn't add to their workload, it just helps them deliver their existing subject leadership agenda more effectively. With each phase of implementation they will be providing evidence back to senior leaders, who will quality support this.

Before you start sessions with colleagues

- Look through *all* the unit videos and documents yourself – about an hour of your time.
- Decide on the timeline that suits your school and agree it with the headteacher.
- Book the dates for *all* the meetings.

And let colleagues know that this will be practical. It will help them become great subject leaders in two or three terms, or help them become even better if they are already great!



Running the first session

Introduction and Unit 1 suggested time: 45 minutes

This covers:

- The introductory unit
- Unit 1: What are the responsibilities of my subject leader role?
- Option – the role of the headteacher unit can also be used with all staff, if chosen.

Before you play the Introductory video, warm colleagues up: ask them what subject leadership is all about and flipchart all their ideas fully and accurately. Keep this and refer back to it throughout the different sessions – that way everyone will see their ideas and views evolve.

Show the Introductory video.

Go back to the contents of the resource on slide 6 again and pause the video on it – this is the contents and coverage. *Which parts are most relevant to us individually, and the school?* Ask colleagues to discuss for 5 minutes in pairs and feedback. This ensures that all colleagues participate and contribute.

In wrapping up, confirm the course of action you are taking as a school and the timeline proposed.

If needed, clarify and resolve these together....

Are we using all the units and sections?

How will we spread them out so we can take action and reflect?

What is the timeline?

Do we have any concerns? Log these so they can be addressed later.

The Unit 1 video *What are the responsibilities of my subject leader role?* provides a more detailed overview of the resource, and how it can help you in school. Following the Introductory video this can be played in the same session, or another session.

Show the Unit 1 video - It needs no specific introduction and is self-explanatory.

Afterwards, ask colleagues to talk in pairs again for 3-4 minutes only around the question:


To what extent does this look as though it aligns with our views of subject leadership?

Which parts, if any might take us in a different direction?

The aim here is to generate further discussion about subject leadership in your school as it is now, and as it might be in the future using this resource. If colleagues raise concerns, especially about time commitment and workload, listen carefully and explicitly make a note of them. Reassure colleagues that these will be covered in the following units, and that you will also give time in the sessions to consider them fully together.

Appendix – model implementation timeline

Unit	Timeline	Comments
Pre-course preparation	Discussion(s) with HT	Take time to plan the programme carefully so that it is reliable.
Introduction and overview and Unit 1: What are the responsibilities of my subject leader role?	Week 1	There is no practical follow up required from the first session.
Unit 2: What am I expected to know about my subject. Introduction of the subject audit.	1-2 weeks later to follow on	After this sessions colleagues need 3-4 weeks to begin to complete the subject audit.
Unit 3: How can I find out what I need to know in the time I have? Introduction to learning conversations	3-4 weeks later	After this session colleagues need a half term to begin to use learning conversations to supplement their knowledge of the subject across the school. They use this to continue completing the audit.
Unit 4: What can I do with the information I find?	Half a term later (5-6 weeks)	This unit continues to encourage and require learning conversations to be completed and recorded, and the audit to be updated. After this session allow another half term so that everyone has the equivalent of a full term to practise conversations and complete their audit. Remember that all subject leaders are doing this at the same time, so this is an intensive start up period that will not happen again.
Unit 5: How can I best action plan as a subject leader? Introduction of the action planning format.	When ready. Allow 3-4 weeks for action planning and receipt of first drafts.	Once the audits are complete as a first draft the focus can shift to action planning. Some leaders will have their subject on background maintenance and may not need to complete an action plan, or only a very short one. Some will have high priority subjects and will need time to draft their plan. It is very beneficial for all plans to be shared by all teachers to support one another.
Unit 6a: How can I help colleagues refine their practice and improve pupil outcomes? Taking Learning conversations from	4 weeks later	At the same time as this unit is introduced the SLT will be reviewing action plans and following up with individual leaders.



exploration to influence.		After this session allow a further half term for the deepening of learning conversations, especially in higher priority subjects.
Unit 6b: How can I help colleagues refine their practice and improve pupil outcomes? Trialling Lesson visits.	Half a term later (5-6 weeks).	Lesson visits are only used occasionally, but are important. After this session allow 4-5 weeks for a few to be trialled and the experience shared in staff meetings.
Unit 7: Where am I on my leadership journey? Introduction of the subject leader self-evaluation.	After lesson visits have been trialled.	This 'final' session can be completed once lesson visits have been trialled. After the session colleagues can start to highlight their self-evaluation. Set a deadline for receipt of these to the headteacher – 3-4 weeks.