

Succession Planning

One key part of the on-going 'Leadership in Special Education Settings' is Succession Planning.

This is a discussion paper around those features which are either distinct in *character* or distinct by *degree* in schools and settings for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Its purpose in respect of these settings is to identify a few important things which might help to:

- Outline thinking about the nature of leadership
- Underline the particular succession planning and professional learning issues
- Recognise the inter-agency working and the leadership of and within these teams
- Identify some challenges in respect of teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment
- Identify some issues in respect of national agendas and bodies
- Make some suggestions about the way forward

Succession planning and professional learning issues

Teachers and support staff learn on the job

- **Very few staff have previously worked in a similar setting**

Whilst all schools will provide induction, schools within special education are likely to have

1. Groups of children dissimilar to those teachers have taught before
2. More processes involving more people
3. Fewer teaching staff with a wider range of responsibilities than a secondary school
4. Greater responsibility for a group of support staff
5. Greater uncertainty about its future and possible closures and amalgamations
6. Fewer new recruits and fresh blood but more stable
7. Anyone specifically trained except in areas of specific need eg: the deaf and dyslexia

- **Very few staff have had previous training**

Leaders are hard to find

- **There is a smaller pool of potential teacher leaders**
- **There are fewer schools in which to develop**
- **There are economic and familial barriers to movement**

Head Teachers are even harder to find:

It is recognised that by 2015 some 25% of current Head Teachers around the country will be retiring.

How are these to be replaced?

How are we working to ensure that we can and do find the leaders we need?

As well as the above comments, the following also apply as well:

- **Very few applications are actually made**
- **A high percentage positions are re-advertised**

- **There are very few schools within travelling distance of the 'type' that may be most suitable**
- **Long-standing SEN reviews around the country may have made people reluctant to enter the field**
- **NPQH requires the application for headship within 18 months from starting the programme. For the reasons above this may require people to move home when they may not be in a position to do so.**

Comments from other education practitioners are most welcome.