Specialist leaders of education

Prospectus
Introduction

Background

The designation of specialist leader of education (SLE) was introduced in the Department for Education (DfE)'s 2010 Schools White Paper, The Importance of Teaching, which outlines the government's plans to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and school leadership through school-to-school support and peer-to-peer learning. Creating this new designation recognises the important role that many senior and middle leaders play in school improvement.

Aspects of the concept have already been tested in an SLE pilot and other work involving middle and senior leaders in London, Greater Manchester and the Black Country. In each of these areas, middle and senior leaders were deployed to support other schools as part of the former Leadership Strategy programme. On our SLE webpages we have published a document that covers lessons learned from the pilot.

The idea also draws on other successful examples of deploying middle and senior leaders, for example in many national support schools (NSS) where leaders at all levels have supported staff and teams in other schools.

The DfE has remitted the National College to work with teaching schools to roll out SLEs as a nationwide programme, starting with a development year (2011-12) in which aspects of the initiative will be further tested and reviewed.

Vision

SLEs are outstanding middle and senior leaders in positions below the headteacher, for example, assistant headteachers, key stage, phase and subject leaders or school business managers, with at least two years’ experience in a particular field of expertise. They have the capacity, skills and commitment to support other individuals or teams in leadership positions in other schools. They understand what outstanding leadership practice in their area of specialism looks like and are skilled in helping other leaders achieve it in their own context.

SLE designation builds on the success of the national leader of education (NLE) and local leader of education (LLE) designations by supporting and developing the leadership capacity of peers in other schools. The difference is that SLEs work at middle or senior leadership level rather than headship level. As with the NLE and LLE approaches, the SLE concept is about recognising leaders who are excellent at what they do and are able to help leaders in others schools to improve.

The National College is responsible for the designation and quality assurance of teaching schools, NLEs and LLEs. Teaching schools, in turn, will be responsible for the designation, de-designation, brokering and quality assurance of SLEs.

The year 2011-12 will be a development year for both teaching schools and SLEs. During this year we aim to designate up to 1,000 SLEs and then build up to 5,000 designations by 2014-15, in line with the expansion of the teaching schools model. Eventually, we plan to have 10,000 designated SLEs, ensuring national coverage.

Above all, this is about meeting the needs and demands of the system, so we need to know that SLEs are being actively deployed, not just designated. We want to see at least half of SLEs deployed within three months of designation.

SLEs will be expected to be able to evidence that their work has had a positive impact. Regardless of the type of support delivered, the ultimate aim will always be to contribute significantly to improving outcomes for children and young people by developing the capacity of peer leaders in other schools.
Role of specialist leaders of education

SLEs will work beyond their own schools, supporting individual or groups of leaders using a high-level coaching or facilitation approach that draws on their knowledge and expertise in their specialist area. This may involve a variety of support approaches, for example:

- one-to-one support
- facilitated group support
- use and analysis of data
- diagnosis of strengths and areas for development

SLEs will support the professional development of leaders. Their work may also potentially play a key role in succession planning by helping to identify potential future leaders.

As well as supporting other schools, we expect that SLEs will also be able to engage with other opportunities and areas of work. This could include, for example, undertaking research activity on behalf of teaching schools and the College, or engaging with local or national policymakers in relation to particular specialisms.

We have included some short case studies from pilot SLEs in Annex E to illustrate how the SLE role might work in practice.

The SLE role will develop throughout the design and development year (2011-12) and we will publish further information in due course.
Benefits of the SLE approach

We believe that the concept of specialist leaders of education will be beneficial for all parties involved; not only for schools receiving SLE support, but also for the individual SLE and his or her own school. This section outlines some of the key benefits that we have identified through our SLE pilot work and other, similar school-to-school support approaches.

Benefits for the SLE

The new SLE designation is a way of formally recognising outstanding leaders who have an excellent track record of supporting others and have specialist expertise from which other schools in their area can benefit. From our experience of deploying leaders to support other schools, this type of recognition is highly valued and much appreciated, and has the additional benefit of sustaining morale and enthusiasm.

We expect that SLE work will support continuing professional development (CPD) for these individuals, through, for example:

- opportunities to work autonomously and independently
- gaining further experience of working collaboratively with others
- being creative and trying out new ideas
- developing coaching and facilitation skills
- access to other contexts, processes and styles of working, widening their experience of different school environments
- the chance to learn from ideas and approaches used in other schools, to improve their own performance and that of colleagues in their own school
- networking opportunities with their peers

All of the above can help the individual to improve further in his or her current role, as well as to support them if they wish to think about opportunities for promotion.

Finally, we know that leaders working beyond their own schools benefit from knowing they are helping others to improve and are having a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people by using and sharing their knowledge and skills. This sense of moral purpose often proves the biggest incentive of all.

Benefits for the SLE’s school

The NLE and LLE programmes have shown that individuals can be motivated and re-energised by undertaking such leadership roles, which can in turn support staff retention.

We also believe the SLE programme will be an excellent form of CPD for middle and senior leaders, enabling them to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities in a variety of ways. This can mean that their ability to undertake their current role is further improved. It can also support schools’ internal succession-planning strategies by enabling individuals to demonstrate they are ready to step up to the next leadership level.
SLEs will further develop their coaching and mentoring skills, which can then be used to support colleagues in their own school, for example through in-house training and development. In addition, SLEs have the opportunity to learn about different school contexts and systems from the schools they support, which will in turn help them to develop their practice back in their own school. School-to-school support enables the sharing and development of outstanding, innovative practice, which can benefit both schools in a partnership.

SLE deployment may also result in some funding benefits for the SLE’s own school, although this will be agreed by the schools involved and by their teaching school alliance. Even if remuneration does not take the form of direct funding, it could involve an exchange of services that may help support or enhance an area of the SLE’s school.

Benefits for schools in receipt of SLE support

Feedback from the SLE pilot work and from other similar leadership work tells us that leaders really value and benefit from the support of their peers.

This type of peer-to-peer support is credible because it is rooted in current school leadership practice and will draw on real experience. It also provides an opportunity for true partnership working and a chance to try new approaches or ideas safely, in ways that are appropriate to the context in which leaders are working.

An SLE will bring a fresh perspective to specific challenges or issues, as well as the benefit of specialist knowledge and expertise. SLE support will take a coaching approach, meaning that any development will be collaborative rather than imposing support on the client school. This will help ensure long-term, sustainable improvement; the aim is to help supported leaders to develop their own leadership capacity.

Finally, schools often find that accessing support in a particular area (for example literacy, data management or behaviour) can have a marked positive impact on school performance overall as it provides a focus for development work with which all staff can engage.
SLE application and designation process

Eligibility criteria

We expect this new designation to be very popular and are keen to ensure the process for becoming an SLE is fair and equitable, whilst also ensuring local needs and priorities are met. Applicants will therefore need to meet strict eligibility criteria (see Annex A).

SLE designation is open to outstanding leaders who hold middle or senior leadership roles or responsibilities in schools and who have a particular area of expertise that is included in our list of agreed areas of expertise (Annex B), for example, subject areas, inclusion, performance management, literacy, early years, behaviour or school business management. The list will be kept under review to ensure it is meeting the needs of schools requiring support.

An SLE could be a specialist in more than one area. However, the SLE approach is about focusing on key strengths.

Although SLEs themselves must be outstanding at what they do, they do not have to come from outstanding schools, teaching schools or schools with headteachers who are national or local leaders of education (NLEs or LLEs). SLEs can come from any school.

We do not plan to define middle or senior leadership precisely, as we recognise that roles and responsibilities are different in different schools and that routes to leadership are not always straightforward. The headteacher of a potential SLE will therefore be asked to confirm that the individual holds a middle or senior leadership position.

Support for applicants

Teaching schools will offer support during each application round, for example by helping to answer applicants’ queries. Each teaching school will nominate someone as a point of contact for potential SLEs. Teaching schools may also hold information or briefing sessions for potential applicants during the application round. Applicants will need to contact teaching schools directly to find out what support is available.

Application

We will hold open application rounds. Individuals will be required to complete an online application through the National College website. Application forms will be assessed by teaching schools, which will have responsibility for designating SLEs. Applications will be reviewed against the agreed SLE designation criteria to ensure consistency across the country.

References

Each SLE application must be accompanied by two references, one from the applicant’s headteacher and another from a leader whom the applicant has supported. Where an applicant has experience of supporting a leader outside their own school, they will be asked to include that person as one of their referees. Referees will need to complete an online form and will be set a deadline for returning references.
Initial sift

Once online applications have been submitted, the College will check that each applicant:

- has a leadership role or responsibility in school
- has at least two years’ leadership experience
- has at least two years’ experience in his or her area of expertise

Applications that meet these initial sift criteria will be passed to a teaching school for assessment. This will normally be the closest teaching school geographically, unless the applicant’s school is part of a teaching school alliance. In the latter case, the applicant should name the alliance as part of the application. The teaching school will assess the applications and invite all applicants to undertake an assessment exercise.

Assessment exercise

Applicants who pass the initial sift will be invited to undertake an assessment exercise, organised by the teaching school that has assessed their application. This exercise will include an individual presentation followed by an observed group discussion. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate their communication and interpersonal skills, and their ability to collaborate through interaction with their peers. The assessment timeline is in Annex C.

Prioritisation

We expect this designation to be very popular and therefore some prioritisation of applications is likely to be required. In the first round, we aim to designate up to 1,000 SLEs and similar limits will be put in place for future rounds.

If there are more successful applicants in a particular round than teaching schools are able to designate, applicants will be prioritised on a needs-led basis, based on local intelligence on supply and demand. Each teaching school will make decisions on the priorities for its own alliance or area, taking into account the needs of local schools and the capacity that is already available to support those needs. These decisions may, for example, include consideration of:

- phase
- area of expertise
- the range of expertise an individual is able to offer across different specialist areas
Outcomes

Applicants who do not pass the initial sift (see above) will be notified by the National College. Teaching schools will inform all other applicants of the outcomes of the assessment exercise. Timelines for the first round are in Annex C.

There will be an agreed process for appeals against designation decisions. Initially we will expect individuals to have an informal discussion with the teaching school that has assessed their application. However, if an applicant wishes to proceed to formal appeal, there will be a process in place involving the College, a national appeals panel and, where necessary, the College’s adjudicator. We will clarify the appeals process in due course and publish the procedures on the National College website.

Initial training

We expect SLEs to have existing facilitation and coaching skills since this is a requirement of the designation criteria, but it is expected that individuals will develop these skills further through training, ongoing CPD and the role itself.

Following designation, all SLEs will be required to attend a mandatory core training day, designed to provide an introduction to the SLE role. There is also a menu of additional optional training sessions. These sessions will be held as twilight sessions to reduce the burden on SLEs’ own schools.

SLEs will be entitled to access the core day plus two optional twilight sessions at no cost, but if they wish to attend any further sessions, this would need to be funded by their own school. We regret that we are not able to offer funding to cover travel or supply cover costs.

The training will be delivered by selected teaching schools around the country and SLEs will be asked to choose the school with which they will undertake their training.

During 2010-11 we worked with schools to develop and pilot different aspects of the training process. This will be further developed with the first cohort of teaching schools through the development year (2011-12).

See Annex D for details of the training sessions.
The model in practice

Brokerage

Teaching schools will be responsible for brokering support from the SLEs within their alliance or area, so each teaching school will have a pool of SLEs.

Working with the schools and other partners in their alliance, they will identify where SLE support is needed, which could be in any school in the alliance but is likely to be in schools that are facing particular challenges, and which will be prioritised accordingly. The teaching school will match an SLE in its pool with a leader or leaders in the school that requires support, liaising with the SLE and his or her own school’s headteacher to confirm capacity and availability.

In some cases, the SLE’s own headteacher will have a role in the brokerage process, for example where the SLE’s school is a national support school (NSS) and has been asked to provide support to a school facing particular challenges.

Multiple teaching school alliances may choose to join their SLE pools together to enable schools needing support to access an even wider range of expertise.

In areas where a teaching school has not yet been designated, selected NSSs will support the identification and recruitment of SLEs in partnership with an identified teaching school alliance. The NSS would then take on the brokering role for SLEs in that area. This will be an interim solution while teaching schools designation builds up gradually over the next few years.

Local authorities and other brokers may also engage SLEs through teaching school alliances. We envisage that many teaching schools will liaise with their local authorities to help identify the needs of schools in their alliance or area, to identify potential new SLEs and to broker support. In some cases, teaching schools may choose to engage a local authority as a strategic partner within an alliance. In these instances, the alliance may agree that the local authority has a role in brokering SLE deployments.

Deployment

SLEs will be deployed beyond their own schools in response to local needs. The main objective of the SLE programme is for SLEs to support the development needs of peers in schools other than their own through outreach work. It is important to note that there is no guarantee of deployment, as this depends on need and demand.

Models and types of deployments will vary. For example, one deployment might be a two-day diagnostic exercise, whilst another might require a three-month full-time support role. We have included some examples in the case studies in Annex E.

Any funding for deployments will be agreed between the schools and other parties concerned. If funding is involved, this may come from the local authority, other schools or even the College or DfE in some cases. Please see the section on funding and support below for more details.

It is possible, and in some instances quite likely, that a school could be supported by an NLE/LLE and an SLE at the same time, in which case both designated professionals should ensure they work together on shared priorities. SLEs may work with an NLE/LLE and potentially other professionals as part of a team.

Many SLEs will no doubt continue to use their skills and experience to help support the development of colleagues in their own schools, as a part of their role as a middle or senior leader, but this will not count as deployment as an SLE.
Time commitment

At the moment there is no predefined time commitment for a deployment, as models of deployments will vary (as explained in the deployment section above). Some deployments will require more time than others. However, following feedback through our consultation so far, we estimate that the average level of capacity for an SLE is likely to be around 15 days a year.

SLE applicants will need to have discussed with their headteachers how much time they are likely to be able to commit to the role over the course of a year. When arranging specific deployments, they will need to discuss and agree the time commitment and how this is managed, for example whether the time is taken as a block of consecutive days, or spread over a longer period.

We envisage that schools will develop different approaches to help them plan and manage SLE outreach time, for example, by ensuring the school has additional capacity that allows flexibility in the SLE’s schedule, or having flexible arrangements for securing supply cover or backfill at relatively short notice.

Quality assurance and impact monitoring

SLEs will be monitored and held accountable for the quality of the support they provide through their teaching school alliance. They will be expected to be able to evidence that their work has had a positive impact.

Teaching schools are responsible for ensuring that the SLEs they have designated are providing high-quality support to others and that this support is having a positive impact. They are also responsible for reviewing the designation of any SLEs whose work does not ensure sufficiently high-quality outcomes. We are currently working with the first cohort of teaching schools to design and develop a quality-assurance process which will include guidance on assessing the impact of SLE work.

To identify and monitor appropriate outcomes and impact measures for deployments, teaching schools may look at indicators such as:

• improved examination results
• improved progress within specific departments
• improved attendance
• improved Ofsted evidence
• improved behaviour/discipline
• greater progress by individual children
• reduction in in-school variation
• closing the achievement gap (particularly in relation to pupils in receipt of free school meals and vulnerable groups)
• improved quality of teaching and learning
• improved team ethos/morale
• improved development of initial teacher training/newly qualified teachers
• improved views of parents, governors and others in the community
• increased support for the most able pupils
• improved safeguarding
• more effective use of assessment for learning, data and tracking of pupil progress
• improved self-evaluation
• improved processes and systems.

Ongoing review of designation

An SLE’s designation will be reviewed in conjunction with the review cycle of the teaching school that he or she is linked to. Teaching schools will normally be designated for a period of four years, after which time they will be reviewed. This will include a review of the SLEs within their alliance. So, if an SLE is designated one year after the teaching school was designated, they will be reviewed in three years’ time. The SLE review will involve reviewing the individuals against the designation criteria, to ensure they still meet them, as well as against local needs and priorities, taking into account supply and demand.

Alongside this, teaching schools may review a designation at any stage if there is a change in the SLE’s circumstances or if an issue arises which would be likely to lead to de-designation.

The de-designation criteria include the following:

• The SLE has not supported another school for a year or more.
• There is a lack of evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of the SLE’s work where an opportunity has been given.
• The SLE no longer meets the eligibility criteria.
• The SLE conducts him- or herself in an inappropriate manner or brings into disrepute the reputation of the National College, teaching schools or the SLE programme.

If an SLE changes role or school, his or her designation will be reviewed by the appropriate teaching school. This review will determine whether the SLE withdraws from the initiative and will take into account:

• whether the SLE continues to meet the criteria in their new role
• whether he or she still has the capacity to undertake the role
• whether his or her new school, if applicable, is able to release the SLE for outreach work

As each SLE will be linked to a teaching school alliance, if the teaching school is de-designated, we will consider whether its SLEs can be linked to another teaching school.

In addition of course, the individual may choose to resign from his or her role as SLE at any point.

There will be an agreed process for appeals against de-designation decisions. Initially we will expect individuals to have an informal discussion with their teaching school. However, if they then wish to proceed to a formal appeal, there will be a process in place involving the College, a national appeals panel and, where necessary, the College’s adjudicator. The appeals process will be published on the National College website in due course.
Funding and support

Charging and remuneration

There are no plans to implement a national charging and remuneration policy for SLEs, to have an SLE pay spine or to provide formal financial reward for SLEs. Any funding agreed for SLE deployments will be made directly to the schools involved rather than to individuals.

We do recognise that some other teacher designations currently have a formal financial reward. However the SLE approach is in line with that for NLEs/NSS and LLEs, where any individual remuneration is agreed by the parties involved. We know that many SLEs will be driven by wanting to make a difference to children and young people in their own and other schools, and may see the role as valuable leadership experience and a stepping stone towards senior leadership and headship.

The National College believes that decisions about payment should be taken at a local level by teaching school alliances in order to best address local needs and priorities. This may include agreeing payments for specific SLE deployments, either from schools receiving support or from other sources or commissioning bodies, to help the SLE’s school towards reimbursement for backfill or supply cover.

We expect that different models and approaches will be developed by teaching schools over time, for example:

- Schools within an alliance might jointly agree a day rate for SLE time within their group.
- Schools may agree to swap SLEs on a reciprocal, cost-neutral basis.
- Some SLEs’ salary levels may be set to reflect the additional responsibility of the role.

Any payments will need to be agreed and managed by the headteachers and governors of the schools concerned (and in discussion with the individual SLE where required), in line with any applicable legislative regulations and advice from professional associations. It will be important to ensure that any such approaches are developed with value for money in mind.

As with other aspects of the initiative, we will use the development year to look at different approaches and gather feedback on how they are working.

Support

All SLEs will be assigned to a teaching school alliance. The allocated teaching school will be responsible for providing ongoing support to its SLEs.

SLEs will also be able to access a menu of optional training sessions (see Annex C). SLEs may wish to undertake the training before their first deployment, or as CPD at a later date.

In addition, the National College SLE team will be on hand to answer any queries by email to sle@nationalcollege.org.uk.
Further information

We will aim to update this prospectus over time to take into account further developments and future designation rounds. We will also keep our website updated at www.nationalcollege.org.uk/sle.

If you have specific questions that are not answered through this document or the SLE webpages, please contact us at sle@nationalcollege.org.uk.

Consultation

We are keen to ensure that we learn and incorporate lessons as we go along and we are committed to reviewing aspects of the SLE programme where required. We have already run an SLE consultation survey (receiving over 950 responses), online discussions and face-to-face consultation events.

Consultation will be ongoing throughout 2011-12 and further opportunities for consultation will be published on our website. We are also happy to continue to receive views and comments via email at sle@nationalcollege.org.uk.
Annex A: SLE eligibility criteria

To become a specialist leader of education (SLE), you will need to hold a middle or senior leadership role in a school and have a specialism that is included on our list of areas of expertise (see Annex B). You must be able to meet strict eligibility criteria.

We do not precisely define middle or senior leadership because we recognise that roles and responsibilities differ and that routes to leadership are not always straightforward. Your headteacher will therefore be asked to confirm that you hold an appropriate role.

Please note that although you need to be an outstanding leader, you can come from any school – not just those that are outstanding – as long as your school has the capacity to release you for outreach work. SLE designation is open to individuals from:

• nursery schools
• primary, middle, secondary, all-through and special schools
• pupil referral units and short-stay schools
• faith schools
• independent schools
• academies, chains and free schools
• sixth form colleges

Below are the eligibility criteria for the design and development year (2011-12).

Experience

SLEs will:

• be outstanding middle or senior leaders with at least two years' experience and a first-class knowledge in a particular field of expertise
• have a minimum of two years' experience in a leadership role within a school or academy

Track record

SLEs will have:

• a successful track record, supported by substantial impact evidence, of working effectively within their own school and/or across a group of schools, or working with a range of leaders within a single school
• evidence of successfully using coaching and/or facilitation skills to bring about sustainable improvements
Capacity and commitment

SLEs will:

• have a commitment to outreach work and the capacity to undertake such work
• be supported in their application by their headteacher and chair of governors and be able to be released from their school for a mutually agreed allocation of time

Skills

SLEs will have:

• excellent communication and interpersonal skills
• the ability to utilise high levels of emotional intelligence to work sensitively and collaboratively with peer colleagues
• an understanding of what constitutes ‘outstanding’ in their field of expertise and the ability and confidence to articulate this
• an appreciation of how their specialism and skills can contribute to the wider school improvement agenda
• an analytical approach in identifying the needs and ability to prioritise accordingly, including the ability to set and establish new and innovative working practices
• the ability to grow leadership capacity in others
### Annex B: SLE areas of expertise

Below is the agreed list of areas of expertise for specialist leaders of education (SLEs) for 2011-12. The four categories are based on the new areas of focus for Ofsted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key area</th>
<th>Area of expertise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership and management</strong></td>
<td>- Academies and academy transition&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Federations&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>- Leadership of continuing professional development (CPD)</td>
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<td>- Networks, partnerships and collaboration</td>
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<td>- Quality standards</td>
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<td>- School business management and financial management</td>
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<td>- Self-evaluation</td>
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<td>- Strategic analysis and diagnostics</td>
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<td>- Subject, key stage, phase, faculty leadership and management</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Teams, staffing, restructures and performance management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assessment for learning (AfL), tracking pupil progress and data</td>
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<td><strong>Pupil achievement</strong></td>
<td>- Closing the gap with a focus on free school meals (FSM) and vulnerable groups</td>
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<td>- Curriculum development</td>
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<td>- English as an additional language (EAL)</td>
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<td>- Early years</td>
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<td>- English</td>
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<td>- Literacy</td>
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<td>- Maths</td>
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<td>- Modern foreign languages (MFL)</td>
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<td>- Mobility</td>
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<td>- Numeracy</td>
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<td>- Other subject areas</td>
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<td>- Phonics</td>
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<td>- Science</td>
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<td>- Special educational needs (SEN)</td>
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<td>- Sixth forms</td>
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<td>- Support for the most able pupils</td>
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<td><strong>Quality of teaching</strong></td>
<td>- Teaching and learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Initial teacher training (ITT) and newly qualified teacher (NQT) development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Behaviour and safety</strong></td>
<td>- Safeguarding learners</td>
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<td>- Behaviour and discipline</td>
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<td>- Attendance</td>
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<td>- Pupil leadership and voice</td>
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<sup>*</sup>Note: SLEs for academies, academy transition and federations will be leaders with excellent knowledge and expertise in ensuring continued performance during transition to an academy, or through a change of structure to a federation. They will be able to show evidence that during this significant transition or change, their school maintained its levels of performance, staff motivation and focus on priorities, and will be able to use this experience to develop the capacity of other leaders managing similar processes.
## Annex C: Timelines

The following timelines are for the first cohort of SLEs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application round opens</td>
<td>17 October 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching schools available to answer queries/hold briefings</td>
<td>17 October to 24 November 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application round closes</td>
<td>Midnight on 25 November 2011</td>
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<td>Deadline for references</td>
<td>Noon on 1 December 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching schools assess all applications and references that have passed the initial sift, and invite applicants to attend assessment exercises</td>
<td>5 to 9 December 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>National College advises any applicants that have not passed the initial sift</td>
<td>By 9 December 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicants undertake group interview and presentation exercises</td>
<td>12 December 2011 to 13 January 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching schools inform applicants of outcomes and successful SLEs are designated</td>
<td>20 January 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Window for designation appeals</td>
<td>20 January to 20 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLEs select a training centre</td>
<td>23 January to 3 February 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLE core training begins</td>
<td>From 1 March 2012 onwards</td>
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</table>
Annex D: Training for SLEs

SLE training will be delivered by selected teaching schools. All SLEs will be required to attend a mandatory core training day shortly after they are designated.

There is also a menu of additional optional training sessions. SLEs will be entitled to access the core day plus two optional twilight sessions at no cost, but if they wish to attend any further sessions this would need to be funded by their own school. We regret that we are not able to offer funding to cover travel or supply cover costs.

Overview of training sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An introduction to school-to-school support</td>
<td>One core day</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>– equip SLEs with tools and techniques for effective school-to-school support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– enable SLEs to support change and ensure impact when supporting leaders in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One twilight session</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>– equip SLEs with strategies to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning in client schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(two hours)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– enable SLEs to choose the right leadership style in supporting others and dealing with resistance effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One twilight session</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>– enable leaders to develop a culture of coaching across the school and share strategies for getting the best out of a team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(two hours)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– raise awareness of key elements of how schools operate successfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning</td>
<td>One twilight session</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>– equip SLEs with strategies to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning in client schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(two hours)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– enable SLEs to choose the right leadership style in supporting others and dealing with resistance effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing self</td>
<td>One twilight session</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>– equip SLEs with strategies to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning in client schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(two hours)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– enable SLEs to choose the right leadership style in supporting others and dealing with resistance effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing others (including coaching)</td>
<td>Two twilight sessions</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>– equip SLEs with strategies to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning in client schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(two hours each)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– enable SLEs to choose the right leadership style in supporting others and dealing with resistance effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing organisation</td>
<td>One twilight session</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>– equip SLEs with strategies to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning in client schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(two hours)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– enable SLEs to choose the right leadership style in supporting others and dealing with resistance effectively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex E: Case studies

The following case studies have been developed following the SLE pilot work. We are interested in building up more case studies over the course of the development year (2011-12).

Felicity Fagan, The Swinton High School

For me the role of an SLE is to support and develop identified schools in order for them to fully achieve their potential. An SLE is there to advise, coach and develop other leaders. By using my experience as a member of the senior leadership team, former head of English and classroom practitioner, I am able to bring new ideas and a new perspective to issues that may have arisen in the school.

As an assistant headteacher for teaching and learning in a school that is heavily involved in school-to-school support, I am lucky enough to be able to use my role as an SLE on a weekly basis. My timetable in school is organised around my school-to-school support day.

I work at a school in Bolton for one day a week. My work is primarily with the English faculty alongside liaison with the headteacher.

As part of my school’s support work I also work at a school in Settle, North Yorkshire for 5 days out of a 10-day contract; the other days are supported by my head of English. Again this is to boost achievement in the English faculty at Key Stage 4 and to develop initiatives that will have a long-term effect on the faculty.

I feel that going into and supporting other schools also benefits my own. Through the coaching model and sharing ideas I have brought new initiatives, resources and concepts back to my own school. It also allows me on a professional level to be able to see how different schools operate and the positive and negative issues arising from different ways of working.

Bill Leyland, Hawkley Hall High School

To me the SLE role allows me to use the skills and experience gained through the remarkable improvement journey at my own school, to affect longlasting, substantial change in schools with specific needs. It is precisely the fact that school improvement has been realised in the host school over many years that elicits the sharp focus required to intervene most effectively.

I have supported one school by contributing to diagnostic analysis of its science department, which is perceived to be underperforming. Analysis has comprised lesson observations, work scrutiny, interviews with senior and middle leaders, data scrutiny and annotated student interviews. I have led collaborative action-planning as well as providing consultative support for monitoring progress and (crucially) ensuring sustainability when the support phase ends.

In another school I have provided support to leaders in target-setting, tracking systems and subsequent intervention for pupil groups and individuals. I facilitated the generation of an action plan and provided support to implement this.

I have found particularly that solving familiar problems in an unfamiliar context has reinvigorated initiatives in Hawkley Hall. Refocusing on a system or philosophy that we may feel we have perfected actually helps to reveal further potential improvements. That, coupled with the myriad of new strategies experienced in new school settings makes SLE work highly valuable for the host school.
Wendy Godfrey, Piper Hill Specialist Support High School

I am deputy headteacher at Piper Hill Specialist Support High School. My role in school includes strategic leadership for learning, teaching, assessment and pupil progress. I have a responsibility for developing and co-ordinating our school-to-school support as a teaching school, national support school and specialist support high school. I also lead two access groups in school, providing flexible, personalised provision for some of our most challenging learners.

My SLE deployment was part of a package of support commissioned by the local authority with a focus on the leadership of teaching and learning and behaviour. The scope of the project included:

• auditing, reviewing and supporting the development of performance management structures within school to align teacher and teaching assistant development with national standards and school improvement priorities
• work with the leadership team to develop a positive culture, recognising good practice through ‘what went well’ briefings, supported observations with follow-up feedback and increased professional dialogue
• the successful leadership development of solution-focused approaches to behaviour management and support, which reduced the impact of challenging behaviour on the learning of all pupils

Piper Hill is an innovative and aspirational school with a culture of continuous improvement and which supports outstanding provision for every one of our pupils. This ethos of solution-focused development has created an ideal climate through which to develop my role as an SLE; working with partner schools to develop aspects of their practice has invariably brought new energy and vision to my own professional practice and resultant benefits for my school.

Shamim Bhatia Pikes Lane Primary School

I am an upper Key Stage 2 team leader, with teaching and learning responsibilities and responsibility for assessment, data analysis, tracking, intervention, developing pupil progress meetings and modelling excellent practice.

I see the SLE role as an opportunity to make a difference in more than one school by empowering people to drive forward change that is both sustainable and builds capacity. The skills and experience gained through building key relationships and leading school improvement in my own school have enabled me to gather evidence effectively and build trust, which is essential to any SLE contract.

My support to a primary school in Greater Manchester in special measures included:

• diagnostic analysis of standards with the assessment leader, looking at tracking data and systems in place to monitor and raise standards; interviews with senior and middle leaders; work scrutiny through moderation in key stages; collaborative pupil progress meetings and pupil interviews (pupil voice)
• identifying needs, eg the need for leadership innovation in target-setting, high aspirations, finely honed tracking systems and subsequent intervention for pupil groups and individuals
• collaborative action-planning with the coach and assessment leader, including engaging parents and the community
I have also supported subject/middle leaders in a primary school in Salford. This has included:

- developing the skills of subject leadership with a potential middle leader, with modern foreign languages as a key element
- coaching colleagues in the audit of existing provision, staff and pupil surveys, preparing for Ofsted inspection and building the confidence of subject leaders
- facilitating the generation of an action plan
- providing consultative support for monitoring the action plan, measuring impact and supporting sustainability when the initial support phase ends

Subject-leader confidence increased as a result of the support and I received positive feedback from the school.

The fact that I have to use a range of approaches from facilitative coaching to direct modelling in a different context is a real challenge, but the process works because of the enthusiasm and collaboration of professionals who are willing to share their expertise. It develops our staff further as they question existing practice and explore other strategies and initiatives. As my role takes me away from my school, it enables others to step up to leadership, so developing capacity in the host school. One of the most valuable aspects of this role is that I can use the strengths of the client school to further improve areas where there are identified gaps in my own school. Finally, the value of positive feedback from the client and senior leaders cannot be measured.
The National College for School Leadership is committed to excellence and dedicated to inclusiveness. We exist to develop and inspire great leaders of schools, early years settings and children’s services. We share the same ambition – to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people.

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