

# Designation of Swaledale Alliance System Leaders

**This information is for those colleagues who are interested in being designated as a Swaledale Alliance System Leader as well as for their headteachers and/or line managers.**

The Swaledale Alliance is always interested in receiving applications from outstanding middle or senior leaders who are interested in our system leadership roles.

## What is a Swaledale Alliance System Leader?

Within the Swaledale Alliance our System Leaders are:

- outstanding middle/senior leaders with at least two years' leadership experience who have a particular area of expertise and a successful track record of school improvement.
- leading practitioners in their own schools, who are keen to share their skills, knowledge and understanding with other colleagues.

System Leaders provide school-to-school support, peer-to-peer learning and/or pedagogical support.

System Leaders will:

- have excellent interpersonal skills
- be able to work sensitively and collaboratively with others
- have a commitment to inreach and/or outreach work
- understand what outstanding leadership practice in their area of specialism looks like and help other leaders to achieve it in their own context

The System Leader's role focuses on building the leadership capacity of middle and senior leaders in other schools. This may be done in a variety of ways such as:

- one-to-one peer coaching
- facilitated group support
- data analysis
- coaching
- joint action planning



## What do System Leaders do?

Swaledale Alliance System Leaders provide school-to-school support as a result of a request from the receiving school or as part of a support plan brokered by the Alliance. Models and types of support will vary according to the specific needs of the school.

Deployments are agreed between all parties prior to taking place and the capacity of both the System Leader's school and the System Leader are given consideration. It is important to emphasise that every deployment is agreed with all parties involved, and that if a System Leader's line manager (for example a headteacher or even a chair of governors) feels that a particular deployment isn't appropriate for the school or their System Leader at the time, they are able to refuse it.

In addition to providing school-to-school support, Swaledale Alliance System Leaders are expected to be proactive in supporting the development of leadership capacity within the Alliance in their area of expertise. This might be through facilitating development groups or networks in their area of expertise, working with other System Leaders on Alliance development projects, production of short videos and updating the Alliance of development needs across the school community.

System Leaders can come from any school or academy, including nursery, primary, secondary or special. Whilst the individual must demonstrate outstanding in their area of expertise, in 'Ofsted terms' their school does not have to be.

## Funding Support

Payment is made for specific deployments and for facilitating joint practice development groups. Currently the System Leader's school is re-imbursed pro-rata at a rate of £300 per day. Headteacher's reimbursement rates are £400 per day.

## What are the benefits of being an Swaledale Alliance System Leader?

Being a Swaledale Alliance System Leader provides opportunities to develop skills and gain experience in working with colleagues across the Alliance and in schools in a variety of contexts. System Leaders play a leading role in the development of a school-led, self-improving system. Being a System Leader:

- is an excellent form of continuing professional development.
- provides opportunities to work in schools of different sizes and in different contexts to the System Leader's own school.
- enhances knowledge, skills and abilities to further develop their current role and influence others.
- benefits the System Leader's own school by
  - supporting internal succession planning strategies by enabling individuals to demonstrate they are ready to step up to the next leadership level.
  - enabling skills such as coaching and mentoring to be developed which can be used to support colleagues in their own school.

A school receiving support from a System Leaders benefits from:

- engaging with an outstanding expert with leadership skills in a particular field of practice who also understands current challenges, policy, and best practice and local needs.
- peer-to-peer support and building leadership capacity delivered in a collaborative way.
- a partnership approach to developing local solutions, taking into account an individual school's own circumstances.

- embedding coaching and mentoring approaches that support sustainable change and improvement.

## Becoming a System Leader with the Swaledale Alliance

The Swaledale Alliance is responsible for the designation, brokering, deployment and quality assurance of SLEs and for ensuring appropriate CPD. The support of a System Leader's own headteacher (or governing body in the case of a headteacher) is essential.

To become a System Leader with the Swaledale Alliance you will need to complete an application form and have a signed reference from your headteacher. That reference confirms that you will be able to have time out of school to perform the System Leader role – recognising that if a headteacher feels that a particular deployment is not appropriate for the school or their System Leader - they are able to refuse it.

Applicants whose application demonstrates that they have the necessary experience and skills in the required areas of expertise will be invited to interview. The panel will include headteachers from the Swaledale Alliance.

## Quality Assurance and Evaluation

Once designated, System Leaders must go through an induction process and receive training for their role. System Leaders will also need to take part in CPD and quality assurance activities, including as members of the System Leaders Development Group which will meet regularly across an academic year.

Any school-to-school support work will be subject to quality assurance and evaluation. For each visit to a school, System Leaders complete a Visit Record Form to be sent to the person receiving support and a Visit Evaluation Form for the HT and Alliance manager. At the end of a deployment an overall Deployment Evaluation Form is completed by the school receiving support.

## Period of Designation

System Leaders are designated for a period of 4 years unless there are changes to their circumstances which mean that they no longer meet the criteria or can no longer act as a System Leader. Re-designation for a further 4 years is a similar process to the original designation and System Leaders are expected to be able to provide evidence for the impact of their work in developing leadership capacity. This evidence might come from OfSTED reports, LA review, pupil outcomes or from feedback from development groups.

## How to Apply

Complete the accompanying application form and return to:

Margaret Thompson - [mthompson@swaledalealliance.org](mailto:mthompson@swaledalealliance.org)

## Application Deadline

Applications to be received by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

## Interview Window

Week commencing Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023