



Supporting Aspiring Primary Leaders

Portsmouth City
Council

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RECRUITING DEVELOPING SUPPORTING LEADERS

CASE STUDY

Supporting Aspiring School Leaders | Portsmouth City Council

THE BACKGROUND Portsmouth is taking an active approach to succession planning for schools leaders in the city – across both primary and secondary phases. As part of its wider strategy, the local authority is targeting particular support towards NPQH graduates within the city who are closest to headship, encouraging them to put themselves forward for headteacher roles.

THE CHALLENGE In the first phase of this project in 2008, the local authority identified a cross phase group of 16 potential headteachers, each with different aspirations and development needs. A talented school leader from within the City was seconded to lead and co-ordinate a programme to meet the group's needs – but with only very limited time available to commit to the project, she looked to bring together external support to enable her to deliver the programme. Navigate worked in partnership with another consultant to achieve this.

THE SOLUTION With a wide variety of development needs, it was clear that a highly personalised approach was required. Each of the programme participants was invited to a one-to-one discussion to explore their career ambitions and to identify the factors influencing their progress towards headship. For some, headship was already a clear goal; for others, it was an option they would be prepared to consider with the right support. As a result of these discussions, each participant was able to develop their own programme of support, working with the core delivery team. Inputs ranged from one-to-one coaching sessions to group activities looking at (for example) financial management skills and preparation for job interview.

THE RESULT

Evaluation of the project in 2008 was very positive, leading to it being re-commissioned in 2009.

Of the 16 participants in the first cohort, 12 have gone on to substantive or acting headships.

T: 0844 800 5300

F: 0844 800 5301

E: info@navigategroup.co.uk