Orbis
Exemplary learning

Middle Leadership

Program outline

Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Welcome to the Middle Leadership program

Designed in collaboration with South Australian educators, this program empowers you to build the skills and knowledge to step into your first people leadership role with confidence. You'll learn with peers and strengthen your ability to lead with a shared purpose, aligned to the Strategy for Public Education.

The program is delivered face-to-face and online over 3 terms through masterclasses, workshops, group coaching and one-to-one coaching.

What you'll learn

Module 1: Understand self as a leader

- Learn to recognise when you're not performing at your best and how this affects your work, relationships and wellbeing.
- Identify factors that hinder your performance and learn practical strategies for managing change.
- Choose how you will react and respond to challenges and opportunities.

Module 2: Model educational leadership

- Recognise when fresh thinking is needed and plan steps to implement ideas.
- Identify specific problems to solve and approach them with curiosity.
- Be an agent for change and challenge current thinking.

Module 3: Lead change and improvement

- Build psychological safety so people feel confident to contribute, ask questions and learn.
- Look at situations from other people's perspectives to strengthen relationships.
- Understand what drives behaviour.

Module 4: Build a strong culture

- Seek feedback to support your growth.
- Approach feedback positively, balancing affirmation with constructive guidance.
- Give clear, consistent and impactful feedback.

Module 5: Build capability in others

- Support others to set purposeful goals with an appropriate level of stretch
- Use insightful questions to guide an effective coaching conversation.
- Help others recognise behaviours they want to change, and the mindsets and beliefs that drive them.

Workshops

The workshops build your confidence and foundational skills as an effective middle leader. A professional leadership coach will guide each session.

Each session introduces practical leadership tools. You'll then practise using them in pairs and small groups. The workshops are highly interactive and draw on real examples from middle leaders' schools and communities to deepen your leadership learning.

Masterclasses

You'll take part in a full-day workshop and 2-hour webinar designed by educational leadership expert Bruce Armstrong. Bruce led statewide school improvement in Victoria and founded Victoria's Educational Leadership Institute.

Bruce Armstrong and Neil Barker, former Director of the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership, will facilitate the masterclasses and webinars. These sessions will deepen your understanding of educational leadership, unpack tools and strategies you can apply, and offer practical examples for driving change in your school. They'll help you to connect your work with wider school initiatives to bring the Strategy for Public Education to life.

Applied learning activities

You'll identify a 'problem of practice', apply your learnings and share your experiences with peers, facilitators and coaches. This helps build accountability, gives you valuable feedback and supports meaningful change.

Coaching

You'll take part in in 3 one-to-one coaching sessions and 3 group coaching sessions with your workshop facilitator. All coaching sessions will be delivered through Microsoft Teams.

1:1 coaching

Each one-to-one coaching session has a clear purpose within the professional learning. It gives you opportunities to:

- **Receive personalised leadership support.**
  After your Personal Leadership Review, you'll work with your coach to set personal development goals. You'll identify common 'mind traps' that can compromise leadership effectiveness and learn how to overcome them.

- **Develop a high expectations culture and strengthen professional relationships.**
  Plan how you will create a culture of high expectations in your school. Collaborate with your coach to develop practical ways to build strong, supportive relationships within your team and across your professional networks.
- **Lead change with confidence.**
  Explore ways to effectively handle challenging situations with colleagues and learn how to positively influence and engage others in supporting your goals.
- **Plan your leadership strategy beyond the program.**
  Discuss with your coach the progress you've made, explore future areas for growth and lay the groundwork for ongoing development.

You can schedule one-to-one coaching sessions at times that suit you, using a personalised log-in to access your coach's availability.

Group coaching

Group coaching will take place through Teams in pods of up to 8 middle leaders. These sessions provide a focused, collaborative learning experience. They help you build professional connections and give and receive feedback from your coach and peers.

Resources

Throughout the program, you'll keep a personal journal to track your progress – recording your development goals, insights from sessions, personal reflections and feedback from others. A toolkit, crafted as a quick reference booklet, will be shared with you through Teams. It encompasses a compilation of all tools and frameworks discussed within the program.

Participant requirements

This program is designed as sequenced professional learning, with each session building on the last. Coaching between sessions offers personalised leadership support and opportunities to plan and reflect on applied learning.
To support strong learning outcomes for all participants, the following requirements apply.

Commitment to participate

By accepting a place in this program, you agree to:

- attend all scheduled sessions
- arrive on time and stay for the full session
- actively participate in discussions, activities and collaborative tasks

- have a working camera and microphone for virtual sessions, and keep cameras on throughout
- complete any required preparation, reflection or follow-up activities
- communicate promptly if circumstances arise that may affect your attendance or participation.

Before the program begins, you will need to ensure you have the support of your line manager or site leader to commit to the program. Discuss the time investment in detail to ensure your participation will provide maximum value for you as a leader and for your school community.
When you've met the requirements, you'll receive a certificate of completion from Orbis. This can be used as evidence for your required professional learning hours for registration renewal.

If you're unable to meet these requirements, please contact Orbis to discuss.

"A fantastic opportunity to connect with other leaders, learn more about myself as a leader and develop the knowledge and skills to enhance my leadership."

Curtis Perrey, Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School