

C1

Hold High Standards

COMPLETED EXAMPLE TOOLKIT

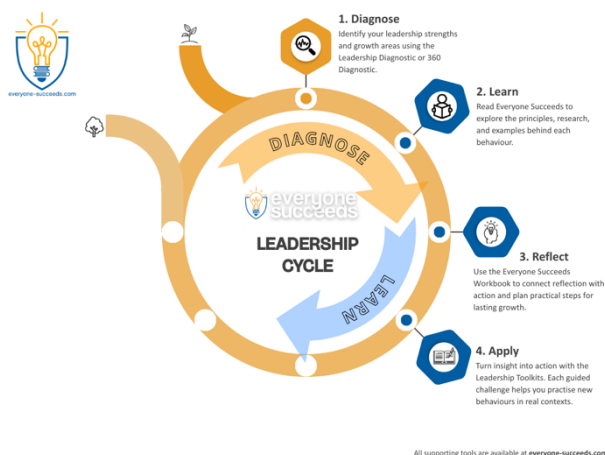
PRIMARY

Headteacher



everyone-succeeds.com

4. Apply - Toolkit



C1 Toolkit

Role and context: Sarah is the Headteacher of a two-form-entry primary school with 420 pupils.

Holding high standards requires leaders to define what good looks like, identify where standards are slipping and take action to address any drift.

What are you trying to improve?
Identify one specific area where stronger standards would lead to improvement, for example, homework completion, corridor conduct, presentation of work, lesson transitions, attendance, punctuality.
Pride, care and consistency in the school environment, especially shared spaces and displays.
What is the standard?
What is the precise, observable expectation you want everyone to meet? Avoid vague statements such as “students show respect” or “staff have high expectations”, for example, students begin work within 30 seconds, homework is completed by at least 95% of students, all books contain the date and title.
Shared areas are uncluttered and safe; displays are current, purposeful and undamaged; repairs are logged the same day; every team completes its Friday five-minute environment check.

Confront the brutal facts	
What evidence do you have about current performance? Focus on evidence rather than assumptions, for example, learning walks, student voice, attendance data, behaviour logs, homework completion data, work scrutiny.	
Evidence	What does it tell me?
Whole-school environment walk	Strong classrooms contrast with outdated displays and clutter in several shared areas.
Premises log	Minor repairs remain open because ownership and escalation are unclear.
Parent survey comments	Families value the school but some describe entrances and corridors as tired.
Pupil leadership audit	Pupils notice damaged work and want more responsibility for shared spaces.
Staff discussion	Teams agree it matters but do not share a practical definition of 'ready'.
Identify the gap	
What is the difference between the standard and reality?	
The school's values emphasise pride and care, yet shared spaces do not consistently communicate those values and routine upkeep depends on individual initiative.	

Identify the main issue		
This behaviour can be difficult for different reasons. More than one factor may be involved, but identifying the main barrier will help you choose the most useful response. What is preventing high standards from being understood, accepted and upheld? ☒ Clarity: The standard or what strong practice looks like is not defined clearly. ☐ Capability: People understand the standard but lack the knowledge, confidence or skill to meet it. ☐ Commitment: People can meet the standard but do not yet believe it is necessary, worthwhile or fair. ☐ Consistency: Leaders apply, model or reinforce the standard unevenly. ☐ Systems: Workload, processes or resources make the standard difficult to achieve consistently. ☐ Relationships: Trust, credibility or concerns about fairness are weakening the response to high standards.		
Determine your actions		
Consider what actions would most effectively address the issue you have identified, for example: • Clarity: Define, model or exemplify the standard. • Capability: Train, coach or support people to meet the standard. • Commitment: Explain why the standard matters and build ownership. • Consistency: Increase follow-up and reduce drift. • Systems: Simplify or improve the processes supporting the standard. • Relationships: Build trust, credibility or accountability.		
Action	Who	Review date
Create a visual 'ready environment' standard with pupils and staff.	Headteacher	Within 2 weeks
Assign zones, introduce Friday checks and simplify repair logging.	Business manager	Within 3 weeks
Review one zone weekly and celebrate rapid, sustainable improvement.	Headteacher/SLT	Weekly

5. Coach and Practise



The table below contains practical actions, coaching questions and practice activities designed to help you implement this behaviour effectively.

- **Action Steps:** Practical actions that leaders can take when implementing this behaviour.
- **Key Questions:** Questions designed to deepen thinking, challenge assumptions and refine implementation.
- **Practice:** Structured opportunities to rehearse the behaviour before using it in a real situation.

Action Steps	Key Questions	Practice
Define what high standards look like.	What does excellent look like for this routine, behaviour, or piece of work?	Clarify the standard A routine is being interpreted differently by different people. Script a concise explanation that describes what meeting the standard should look and sound like, why it matters and what you want people to do consistently.
Make standards visible.	How can you make these expectations impossible to miss?	Reset the standard A student or colleague falls slightly below an agreed expectation. Script how you will describe what you have noticed, restate the standard calmly and give them an immediate opportunity to put it right.
Model and reinforce consistently.	What does your behaviour teach others about what matters?	Address inconsistency A colleague is applying an agreed expectation differently from the rest of the team. Script a private conversation in which you share the evidence, invite their perspective, clarify what is non-negotiable and agree any support or follow-up required.
Recognise and celebrate adherence.	How will you highlight when standards are met?	Recognise the standard A student, colleague or team is consistently modelling the agreed standard. Script a brief message that names the specific behaviour, explains its effect and reinforces why it should become normal practice.

The final stage of Coach & Practise is to rehearse how you will apply this behaviour in your own context. Use the following pages to prepare, practise and refine a specific leadership action before putting it into practice.

C1 Practice Script and Feedback

What is the specific scenario you are preparing for?

Wednesday's whole-staff session, where I have to raise the state of our shared spaces without anyone hearing that I care more about displays than about teaching.

What exactly are you trying to achieve?

For staff to hear this as being about the children who walk through those corridors every day, and for every shared space to leave the meeting with a name against it and a routine that does not add to anybody's week.

What will you say or do? Write the exact words or actions.

'Before we talk about the standard for our shared spaces, I want to be clear about its purpose. This is not a request for expensive decoration or perfect displays. It is about whether every part of our school communicates care, dignity and readiness to learn.

There is much to be proud of. Our environment walk found classrooms where resources were accessible, pupils' work was treated with care and displays helped children remember important learning. It also found cluttered corridors, damaged work that had not been replaced and displays that no longer supported the current curriculum. Parents have described some entrances and corridors as tired, and pupil leaders have told us that they notice when their work is damaged or left up long after it is relevant.

Our shared standard will be simple. Communal areas must be safe and uncluttered. Displays must be current, purposeful and in good condition. Damage or repairs must be logged on the day they are noticed. Every shared area will have a named team, and that team will complete a five-minute check each Friday.

We will build the visual examples with staff and pupil leaders today, because the people who use these spaces should help us define what care looks like. The standard itself is not optional, but there is no expectation that every corridor looks the same. We will remove low-value display work and we will not ask colleagues to spend their own money or create elaborate resources.

The business manager will assign zones and simplify the repair log. Premises colleagues will own repair updates, and SLT will resolve resource or storage barriers. I will review one rotating zone each week with a pupil leader. We will recognise prompt, sustainable improvement and address any area where the agreed standard continues to be missed.'

Premortem: If this fails, what is the most likely reason? What will you do in response?

I think this gets a polite reception and then quietly becomes tidying, one more thing on top of everything else, and by half term the Friday check is happening in two zones and nowhere else. I would see it in the checks themselves, if they were being done in a minute rather than five. I would see it in somebody quietly buying backing paper out of their own money again. And I would see it in a repair log that keeps growing while nothing on it gets fixed. So every expectation is tied to something a child actually experiences, the low-value display work stops before the new standard starts, nobody spends their own money, and I publish how long repairs are really taking, because if leaders are slow then none of the rest of it survives.

C1 Updated Practice Script

Feedback: What feedback did you receive?

Nobody in that room is going to argue with dignity rather than decoration, and splitting the work between staff, premises and SLT will stop this landing as one more job for teachers. The trouble is not the case you make. It is what you leave unsettled. You tell them the standard is not optional and then invite them to build the visual examples with you, and you have not said which of those two wins when they disagree. The second thing is harder. A Friday check will show you a zone that does not meet the standard, and standing there you will not be able to tell whether that team let it go or whether they have been waiting five weeks for a cupboard. Get that wrong once, in front of people, and the standard is finished. What do you say to the colleague who tells you they agree with every word of this and have nowhere to put anything?

What will you say or do? Write the exact words or actions.

‘Before we talk about the standard for our shared spaces, I want to be clear about its purpose. This is not a request for expensive decoration or perfect displays. It is about whether every part of our school communicates care, dignity and readiness to learn.

There is much to be proud of. Our environment walk found classrooms where resources were accessible, pupils’ work was treated with care and displays helped children remember important learning. It also found cluttered corridors, damaged work that had not been replaced and displays that no longer supported the current curriculum. Parents have described some entrances and corridors as tired, and pupil leaders have told us that they notice when their work is damaged or left up long after it is relevant.

Three things are fixed. Communal areas must be safe and uncluttered. Displays must be current, purposeful and in good condition. Damage or repairs must be logged on the day they are noticed. What we will shape together is what those expectations look like in different spaces, which existing displays should remain and how pupils can help sustain them. There is no expectation that every corridor looks the same.

Every shared area will have a named team and a five-minute Friday check. We will remove low-value display work, and no colleague will be expected to spend personal money or produce elaborate resources. The business manager will publish the zones, provide central storage and make the repair log accessible in one place. Premises colleagues will acknowledge urgent safety issues the same day and provide an update on other repairs within two working days.

If a check shows that a team has not completed an action within its control, I will address that directly. If the barrier is storage, damage, workload or resources, SLT will own the solution and give the team a date by which it will be resolved. We cannot ask staff and pupils to show care while accepting slow leadership follow-through.

Today, staff and pupil leaders will use photographs from our own school to create the visual standard and identify the first three spaces to improve. I will review one rotating zone each week with a pupil leader, recognise prompt and sustainable improvement, and report back on the obstacles that leaders have removed.’

Implementation Intention: Commit to when you will deliver this script.

What will you do?

Lead a staff-and-pupil session to agree and launch the shared-spaces standard.

When?

Next whole-staff development session, Wednesday at 1.30 pm

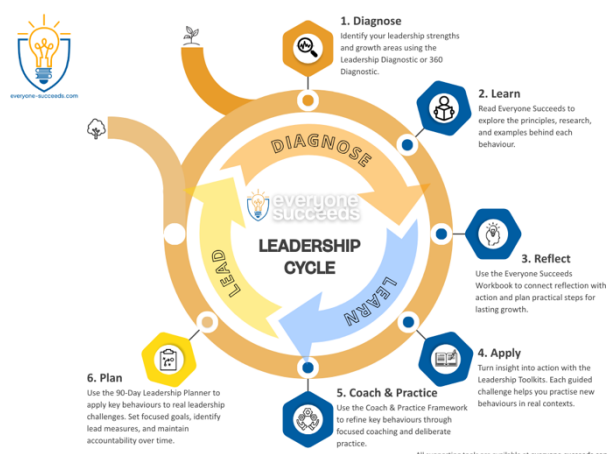
Where?

School hall, using photographs of shared spaces, the draft zone map and the simplified repair log

With whom?

All staff, the business manager, premises lead and pupil leadership representatives

6. Plan – 90 Day Leadership Planner



The purpose of the planner is to turn insight into measurable progress over the next 90 days.

Key Results and Lead Measures

Key Results	Lead Measures
The measurable outcomes that will tell you whether you have achieved your goal (S5 Establish Collective Goals).	The indicators you will monitor that are predictive of success and within your control to influence (S8 Find the Lead Measures).
Every urgent safety issue is acknowledged the same day and every other repair updated within two working days, by day 30.	Weekly review of one rotating zone with a pupil leader.
At least 90% of shared zones meet the visual standard by day 60.	Friday check completion and repair-response time.
At least fifteen percentage points more staff, pupils and families describe the school as cared for and welcoming than in this month's baseline, by day 90.	Monthly pulse feedback from staff, pupils and families.

Progress Tracker

	Key Actions	Evidence of Impact	Reflections / Adjustments
30 Days	Agree visual standard, remove clutter and assign ownership.	Urgent issues close within 48 hours; every zone has an owner.	Provide central storage and stop displays that add workload without value.
60 Days	Use pupil audits and weekly recognition.	At least 90% of sampled zones meet the agreed standard.	Target leadership support where premises constraints persist.
90 Days	Repeat the staff, pupil and family pulse and review sustainability.	More staff, pupils and families describe the school as cared for and welcoming.	Reduce checks where habits are secure; retain rapid repair escalation.
Next Steps	Embed the visual standard in induction and premises planning, with a termly pupil-led review of shared spaces.		