

## NCSL's extended remit – advice to the secretary of state

### Summary

1. In December 2008 we were asked by the secretary of state to extend our remit – to create a leadership development programme for directors of children's service (DCS) and those aspiring to the role, and to chair a group of partners to develop proposals for a more coherent offer of support for senior and middle managers throughout the workforce.
2. We are already making good progress. We plan to run the first DCS programme in 2009/10 with 24 participants. Half of current DCSs will have begun the programme by 2010/11 and the remaining DCSs will have commenced by 2011/12. We are now asking for ministerial support for a further extension of this aspect of our remit which would enable us to build additional elements into the DCS provision. This includes proposals to:
  - consider creating a cadre of national leaders of children's services, to use the expertise of the most effective DCSs and those with the greatest capacity more widely;
  - develop an Executive Leadership programme for the more experienced DCSs starting in 2010/11.
3. As regards aspirant DCSs we are proposing to sponsor four 'Leadership Academies' from the Virtual Staff College in 2009/10, to help us develop appropriate provision for aspirant DCSs, so that a programme for them could begin in 2010/11. We propose in our new programme to develop cohorts of 40 aspirant DCSs each year. In addition we are proposing two specific further extensions of our remit for aspirant DCSs, to secure the next generation of top quality leaders:
  - a succession planning strategy from 2010/11 onward to ensure a strong flow of talent into DCS posts;
  - an Accelerated Leadership Programme to identify those with the greatest potential to move forward rapidly to DCS posts.
4. As regards middle leaders we will be receiving the results of research commissioned by the DCSF into the needs of middle and senior managers in March 2009 and will consider the implications of this research at the first meeting of the leadership group we have been asked to chair in June. We outline in this advice proposals that we will consider putting to the leadership group for further discussion.

5. The new responsibilities have wide implications across the College's work. We want the College to serve not just existing and future school and children's centre leaders but also existing and future directors of children's services. It needs to be 'one college'. We are therefore proposing a change of name for the organisation which will reflect this.
6. We are confident that we will deliver this vision in ways that ensure better outcomes for children, young people and their families, demonstrate impact and effectiveness and retain and enhance our commitment to school and children's centre leaders. We are also taking steps to build our capacity, and develop our expertise and reputation with a new group of stakeholders. In order to achieve the highest quality provision and the most successful outcomes we will move rapidly on the core DCS provision and then phase in the additional and new elements outlined in this advice.