

How to embed your people strategy



You educate, we support



Strictly Education eGuides





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Introduction

A people strategy is critical to the success of any organisation, including schools and academy trusts. A well-designed people strategy can help attract and retain top talent, support employee development and growth, and ultimately contribute to improved outcomes. However, developing and implementing an effective people strategy can be a challenging task, particularly for those in the education sector who face unique challenges and constraints.

Whether you're just starting to develop your people strategy or looking to improve an existing one, this ebook will provide you with the guidance and support you need to boost your people strategy and achieve your goals.

We hope that you will find the contents helpful.

HR team, Strictly Education

**“People are our
greatest asset.”**

- David Ulrich

What is a people strategy & why is it important?

A people strategy is critical in the education sector to ensure that establishments have the right people, with the right skills, knowledge and experience, in the right roles, at the right time. It is a comprehensive plan for schools and academy trusts to manage their workforce in a way that supports its overall goals and objectives whilst addressing the specific challenges and opportunities of the education sector.

A people strategy considers the needs of employees, increases job satisfaction, motivation and commitment, with the overall goal of improving pupil outcomes. This helps to build a culture of excellence and achieve positive academic outcomes that benefit the wider community.

By implementing a people strategy, schools and multi-academy trusts can enable their workforce to achieve the organisation's vision and mission, by focusing on objectives aligned with agreed core values. This type of alignment can improve retention, enhance employee engagement, increase productivity, and ultimately improve pupil outcomes.



A successful people strategy requires leadership commitment, collaboration, and continuous evaluation to ensure it meets the changing needs of your establishment and its employees.



What should be included in a people strategy?

The components of a people strategy should support your organisation's vision and mission statements and may vary depending on your size, structure, and goals, but they generally include:

- + Recruitment & Retention
- + Talent Management
- + Professional Development
- + Employee Engagement
- + Rewards Strategy
- + Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

In addition to these components, a people strategy should also take into account the unique challenges and opportunities of the education sector. For example, schools and academy trusts may face staffing shortages in certain subject areas, such as STEM or SEND, or may struggle to attract and retain teachers in certain geographic areas or socio-economic communities. A people strategy should address these challenges in a proactive and strategic way, by developing targeted strategies or partnering with other organisations to share resources and expertise.

By addressing these components in a comprehensive and integrated way, a people strategy can help schools and academy trusts attract and retain top talent, support employee growth and development, and ultimately improve pupil outcomes.

Here are some suggestions for what to consider with each component:

Recruitment & Retention

Recruitment

Develop a robust recruitment process that aligns with your goals and values, attracts diverse candidates, and follows Equality and Diversity guidelines.

Retention

Develop a retention strategy that recognises and retains top talent by fostering a positive work environment, providing growth opportunities, and work-life balance.

Employee Engagement

Workplace Culture

Foster an inclusive culture that aligns with your values and promotes teamwork and employee well-being to enhance employee engagement.

Positive Work Environment

Nurture employee well-being, productivity and engagement with a positive work environment that prioritises supportive leadership, work-life balance, safety and comfort.

Open Communication

Encourage open communication and feedback between managers and employees by using surveys and suggestion boxes, for example.



Talent Management

Identify High Potential Talent

Identify high-potential employees and develop targeted strategies which include mentoring, coaching, and training to support their career goals and prepare them for leadership roles.

Employee Development

Offer development opportunities that align with objectives and support employee aspirations through training, courses, shadowing, job sharing or enrichment.

Organisational Development

Maximise the value gained from your employees by aligning your workforce planning and organisational structure to the strategy, goals and core purpose.

Professional Development

Training & CPD

Provide ongoing opportunities for employees to learn new skills and knowledge, enhance their career development, and support your goals and strategy.

Feedback & Coaching

Provide your employees with regular feedback and coaching where needed, so they can understand how to improve. This should always be respectful, constructive and supportive.

Performance and Appraisal

Allow your employees to showcase their achievements, set clear expectations and objectives, monitor performance, and provide regular feedback.

Rewards Strategy

Compensation & Benefits

This includes basic salary, pension, annual leave entitlement and any other allowances or retention payments. Other financial benefits may also include health insurance and employee benefit schemes.

Recognition Programmes

Create recognition programmes for employees who go above and beyond to show that you appreciate and value their efforts.

Work-Life Balance

Offer flexible work arrangements, that provide a balance between work and personal life, such as hybrid working, flexible hours, and job sharing.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

Recruit Diverse Talent

Create inclusive recruitment strategies by targeting underrepresented groups, exploring new recruitment channels, and providing clear career advancement opportunities.

Inclusive Policies

Implement policies that are inclusive to create a welcoming and safe work environment where everyone can feel that they belong. Encourage active listening, open communication.

Training Programmes

Provide ongoing training for employees and managers on EDI topics such as unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, and effective communication.

Assessing your current people strategy

Before you can develop and implement people strategy, it's important to assess your current approach and identify areas for improvement. This ensures that your new strategy is informed by the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach, and that it addresses any challenges or gaps that may be hindering your school's success.

Assessing your current people strategy involves several key steps:



**Employee
Engagement**



**Data
Analysis**



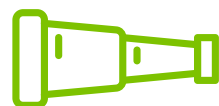
**Identify Strengths &
Weaknesses**



**Priority
Setting**



**Develop an
Action Plan**



**Monitor &
Evaluate**

Where do you want to be and how are you going to get there?

By assessing your current people strategy in a thoughtful and strategic way, you can identify areas for improvement and develop a new strategy that addresses your organisation's specific challenges and goals. This can help you attract and retain top talent, support employee growth and development, and ultimately improve pupil and outcomes.



Assessing and developing your people strategy: step-by-step, explained



Implementing an effective people strategy

Once you have assessed your current people strategy and identified areas for improvement, the next step is to develop and implement a new strategy that can help you achieve your goals. Implementing an effective people strategy involves several key steps:



Communicate your Strategy

Clearly and effectively communicate your vision and goals to all stakeholders within your school or academy trust. Offer and provide support to help employees understand and embrace your new approach.



Build a Strong Leadership Team

A leadership team that is committed to your vision will help you implement your strategy effectively. They could be existing employees, or you could recruit new leaders who will bring fresh perspectives and expertise.



Policies and Procedures

To support your people strategy, establish fair, consistent, and transparent policies and procedures. Involve employees, staff representative groups/Trade Unions in this process, ensuring clear communication of these policies.



Training & CPD

To foster employee growth and optimise performance, invest in training and professional development for your staff. Ensure your people strategy encompasses mentorship, coaching, on-the-job training and formal development opportunities.



Performance Management

Effective performance management practices should identify employee strengths and weaknesses, whilst supporting their overall growth and development. This should include goal and objective setting, feedback, coaching, and regular performance evaluations.



Positive Culture

Implementing an effective people strategy requires a positive culture that supports your goals and values. Promote teamwork and collaboration, recognise and reward employee contributions, and create an environment that is supportive, inclusive, and respectful.

It's important to approach this process in a thoughtful and strategic way, involving key stakeholders and ensuring that your strategy is aligned with your school or academy trust's overall mission, vision and values.

With the right approach, you can create a culture of excellence and achieve your goals for your school or academy trust.



Monitoring your people strategy

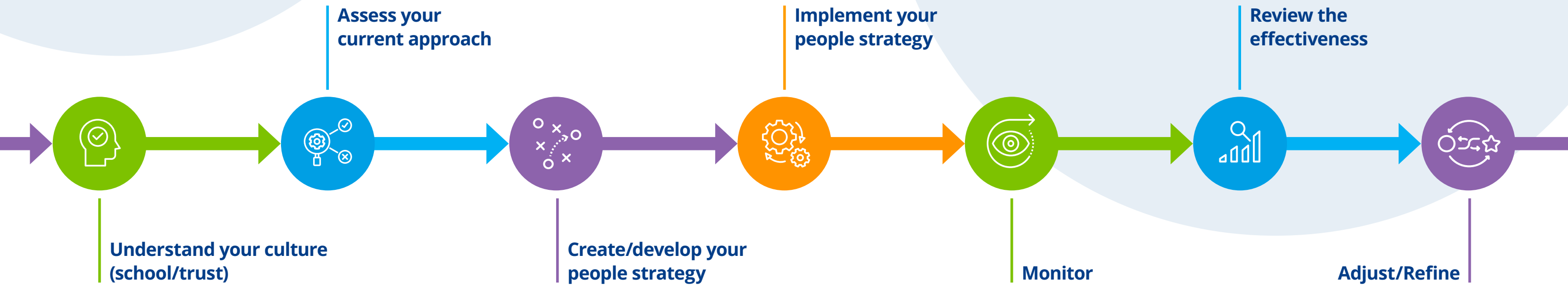
Once you have implemented a new people strategy, it's important to measure its success and track progress toward your goals. This can help you to identify areas of strength and weakness, make adjustments as needed, and continuously improve over time. Here are some key metrics you can use to measure the success of your people strategy:

- ✓ Employee Satisfaction and Engagement can be measured through surveys, focus groups, and other forms of feedback.
- ✓ Recruitment can be tracked using metrics such as time to fill a vacancy, candidate quality, talent pool and diversity of new recruits.
- ✓ Training & CPD - can be measured by tracking metrics such as employee skill development, training completion rates, and employee satisfaction with training opportunities.
- ✓ Performance and Productivity may include metrics such as goal attainment, task completion rates, and quality of work.
- ✓ Employee Retention can be tracked using employee turnover rates. High turnover can be costly and disruptive. If your people strategy is successful you should see a decrease in employee turnover rates.

It's important to regularly review these metrics and make adjustments to your people strategy as needed. If you are not seeing the results you want, you may need to adjust your approach or invest in additional resources to support your goals.

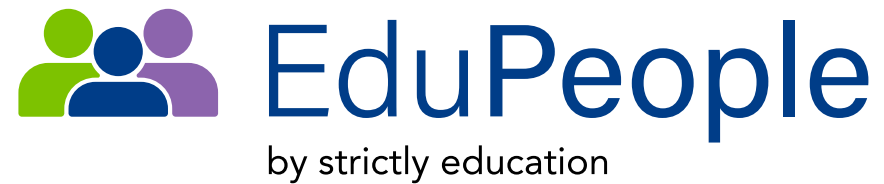


People Strategy Roadmap



Conclusion

Implementing a people strategy is essential for the success of any organisation, but it can be especially important for schools and academy trusts. By focusing on recruitment, retention, professional development, and other key areas, you can create a culture of excellence that supports pupil outcomes and long-term success.



How Strictly Education can help – EduPeople

One place, one view of your people; puts you in control

EduPeople is an HR, payroll, and pensions system and service that helps schools and academy trusts to effectively implement and monitor their people strategy. EduPeople provides a range of modules that allow you to implement your people strategy, automate processes, reduce excess administration, and gain real-time strategic insights to inform decision making. EduPeople gives you the tools you need to implement and monitor your people strategy whilst taking the pressure off staff by improving efficiencies, saving you time and money.

EduPeople features



Employee Self Service



Absence Management



Contact of Employment Administration



Case Management



Single Central Record



Pre-Employment Checks & Record



Equality Data Management & Reporting



Recruitment & Onboarding



Learning & Development



Performance Management

Having a complete and accurate view of your people is essential to making informed strategic decisions. With EduPeople, you can easily view your people data in real-time from a MAT-wide view all the way through to a single establishment, giving you an accurate and complete reflection of your people in one place. EduPeople's data insights and analytics allow you to take control of your people data and fully understand key HR trends to form strategic insights that will influence your people strategy.

EduPeople helps you by:

- Saving time and cost in HR administration
- Enhancing your strategic decision making through a single view over your workforce
- Helping you scale and grow at your own pace with its modular platform
- Integrating with other school business systems, without having to duplicate data entry
- Attracting, developing and retaining staff with talent modules



How Strictly Education can help – **HR Services**

Services to assist with your people strategy

✓ HR Consultancy (People Strategy)

Our HR consultancy services support your people strategy by helping you to understand your school's vision and culture. We provide a range of practical guidance, review HR structures, develop roadmaps, and address key areas like recruitment and employee engagement. With our expertise and guidance, you can create a people strategy that supports your school's growth and success.

✓ HR Resources Hub

Our Education HR Online website gives you access to a range of downloadable resources, guides and templates on a comprehensive range of HR topics. Find out more about the **free 7-day trial** and how to subscribe to our HR support website **here**.

✓ Eteach/Recruitment SLA

Our Education Recruitment service, in collaboration with Eteach, offers schools and academies the opportunity to promote their offerings to potential candidates throughout the year, rather than only when vacancies need to be filled. By making a single payment, you gain unlimited access to Eteach's online portal, which features a range of tools to help your advert stand out.

✓ EduPeople

With one employee record at its core, EduPeople is a single HR, payroll and pensions system that enables you to implement your people strategy. EduPeople increases efficiencies, saving you time and money, whilst improving strategic decision making.

**Find out more
about EduPeople**





You educate,
we support

HR & Payroll



Finance & MIS



Governance & Compliance



Premises & Infrastructure



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