



## Acknowledging staff achievements

### ***Why acknowledge staff achievements?***

Acknowledging what staff do, their contribution to the department, the school and their impact on students, other staff and parents is an important part of being a leader, but you can also encourage them to acknowledge each other and identify opportunities for acknowledgement from senior leaders.

In all workplaces employee recognition and acknowledgement is one of the main factors that will improve retention rate. It is known to improve morale, job satisfaction, motivation and retention. It is not surprising in that acknowledgement is one of our emotional needs. Tackling the issue head-on is one of the strategies that can be a small change that makes a big difference.

### ***What to acknowledge***

- Stepping up in an emergency or last minute
- Dealing with a difficult situation
- Supporting another colleague
- Managing a difficult class or student
- Consistency / reliability
- A job well done e.g. end of report writing, mock marking etc
- Maintaining own boundaries, recognising when people say no
- Coping with tough times

### ***How to acknowledge staff***

- **Individual or team?** Individuals need acknowledgement for their work, but when there is a whole team effort, a thank you via email or verbally in a meeting helps reinforce the importance of team effort and gives the opportunity to recognise those behaviours.
- **Private or public?** This is a matter of discretion. Public shout outs for those that have visibly contributed to the department can work well as a means of acknowledgement. It needs to be done with consideration of whether the person being thanked will be embarrassed. There needs to be a culture of public thanks for it to be effective. If in doubt, private thank-yous and acknowledgements will always be appreciated.
- **Horizontal (peer to peer) or vertical?** Encouraging acknowledgements between peers is a good way to strengthen relationships. In addition, recognition from the science leader or senior leaders is also appreciated by staff.
- **Informal or formal?** Informal, more spontaneous thank-yous and acknowledgements are authentic, timely and meaningful. Hand written notes on postcards, cards or even postits are fairly informal. Emails and letters on headed paper, perhaps with line manager cc'd in are more formal, but give gravitas that their actions are appreciated and the impact significant.
- **Technicians?** Science technicians can be the unsung heroes of the science department. Ensure that they are included in whole team achievements when they have played a part, ensure each term that their contribution is acknowledged and appreciated

### ***Ideas from the ASE SOS Pilot 2020-2021***

- Notes, postcards, emails, letters, hand-written notes.
- A postit note on a chocolate bar in a teachers' pigeon hole
- Whole staff treats: donoughts, fruit, sweets, biscuits, nice coffee
- What would work with you?