

## Case Study – Leadership and Gender Equality

Partner name:	DECSY
Country:	UK
Case Study title:	UK Secondary School Case Study
Type of material	Text – narrative account
Target group involved	Secondary 11-18
Weblink (if applicable):	
Theme/sub-category of the Charter Mark	Leadership
Description of the case study:	<p>An account of how a secondary school focussed on leadership in relation to gender equality.</p> <p>This is an average sized mixed secondary school with a Sixth Form. The school is situated in the East of England. For the Gender Equality Charter Mark (GECM)<sup>1</sup>, the school looked at how leadership promotes gender equality. This was quite an interesting area for the school as it has positive female role models in their staffing and at senior leadership level with a high percentage of the most senior staff in the school being female. A significant number of female staff have also been promoted to more senior positions in the school. What would be interesting to see is if the students are getting a good experience, if staff are familiar with and contribute towards a positive ethos in gender equality and how both students and staff leadership promotes or doesn't promote gender equality.</p> <p>Initially the school set up a staff working group; however, time pressure was a significant concern. To counter this, the GECM coordinator looked more holistically at how the school was promoting gender equality through leadership and what could be accomplished throughout the year to address areas where things could be improved. It became clear that the school were doing a myriad of programmes which greatly contribute to raising awareness about gender equality and promoting positive gender roles, but these were sometimes not broadcasted around the school so that all pupils and staff members knew what was going on. Being in this role was very illuminating in this respect as the GECM coordinator got to work with many members of staff in their specific roles and make hints, suggestions and give feedback on how things could be positively influenced. It was interesting to note the power of simply letting staff and students alike know what was going on in the school through briefings, assemblies and form-tutor directed time.</p>

<sup>1</sup> This was the previous phase of this project which established Gender Equality Charter Marks in secondary schools in England, Hungary and Italy



Austria



Croatia

Finland



Greece



Hungary



Italy



Poland



Slovakia



UK



One of the big areas where significant change occurred over the course of the year was through the use of the Student Council to influence and lead on gender equality in the school. Student voice was looked at, and the role of the Student Council in the school. How could they generate greater awareness about what gender equality was?

One of the key areas where the school excelled was engaging in the 'Women's Leadership' conferences which were hosted at the school and which were attended by various female members of staff from other schools as well as from this one. This was very inspirational and staff who were already committed to the promotion of positive gender roles in the school did far more to take action on the school initiatives. This included the setting up of clubs and activities specifically targeting girls in the school.

Raising of awareness of gender equality was also accomplished through briefings with students, the creation of various activities during school form-tutor directed time and whole staff training. Some of the resources provided by the GECM were pivotal in helping to explain gender equality; these were then in turn used and adapted for the training provided for members of staff. This included the use of language with really helpful examples of how staff can use language appropriately and how not to use language in a way which describes negative gender roles.

The impact was substantial in generating great enthusiasm amongst colleagues and pupils alike about issues pertaining to gender equality as well as encourage rich discussion about the role of women in society and how schools contribute to this.

During a very interesting year, the GECM coordinator was able to explore all the good work the school does to promote gender equality and to find ways to maximise the impact these initiatives have, as well as introduce a lot of new courses, programmes and activities so that this important issue remained at the forefront of the school's thinking at all times.

The school's next step is to extend pupil voice, so that there is even greater communication between staff and pupils about concerns and ideas relating to gender equality, so that pupils feel more encouraged to have those important discussions and have their questions answered.

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