Tips for school leaders during COVID-19 outbreak

If you now find yourself leading a remote and distributed team, it may well be the first time you have managed people from a distance. Here are some tips for you.

1. Ask your team members about any concerns they may have and what support they need – don't assume or guess. Encourage them to reach out at any time and make it easy for them to do so.

2. Check in regularly, even if it is just for 5 minutes, to see how they are and **not just what they have done**. Determine the best means for ongoing contact individually and as a team, for example, by chat, phone, e-mail, video call or a combination.

3. Ask good questions and listen attentively to answers. This is even more important than when you are in the same building. Don't focus only on work and ask about their family, shopping, health and any challenges they are facing.

4. Hold a virtual team meeting each week, encourage team members to have regular contact with colleagues and create a virtual staff room.

5. Consider a 'buddy' system to ensure everyone has someone outside their line manager to look out for them.

6. Encourage team members to set time aside for personal care and breaks to do things they enjoy, for meditation, home workouts and healthy eating.

7. Show empathy as individual circumstances will be very different and how people manage uncertainty and stress is subjective. Your stressors may be very different to theirs.

8. See this as a time and opportunity to learn more about others and those you lead.

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