

HEARTS AT WORK



Why Happy Teachers Create Great Schools

*A Resource Book for Principals, Leadership Teams, and Teachers on
Fostering Teacher Wellbeing, Strengthening Morale,
and Developing Schools of Excellence*



**CHAPTER ALIGNED REFLECTIONS, ACTIVITIES, ASSESSMENTS,
PULSE SURVEYS AND MORE FOR PRINCIPALS, LEADERSHIP TEAMS,
TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

CHAPTER 3

Foundations of Effective Principal-Teacher Relationships

Chapter Summary

- Strong schools are built on strong relationships.
- Trust grows when leaders listen, communicate openly, and act consistently.
- Empathy turns authority into influence.
- Respect and collaboration don't happen by chance—they're modelled daily.
- When relationships are healthy, morale follows naturally.

Reflection Prompts

(For personal journaling or leadership team discussion)

- How safe do teachers in my school feel speaking honestly with me?
- When teachers disagree or struggle, do they experience understanding or judgment?
- What signals do my daily actions send about trust and respect?
- Where have communication gaps quietly created frustration or conflict?
- If teachers described our relationship culture, what words would they use?

Action Steps

(Choose 2–3 to focus on this term)

- Commit to one consistent listening practice (weekly check-ins, open-door hour, or staff walk-throughs).
- Practice reflective listening in meetings—pause, paraphrase, then respond.
- Make one leadership decision more transparent by explaining the why behind it.
- Publicly acknowledge respectful collaboration or thoughtful disagreement.
- Establish or revisit shared norms for communication and conflict resolution.

Activity for Principals

“Trust & Communication Health Check”

Time: 45–60 minutes

Who: Principal alone or with leadership team

Step 1: Diagnose (15 minutes)

Rate your school on a scale of 1–5:

- Teachers feel safe speaking up
- Communication is clear and timely
- Conflicts are handled calmly and fairly
- Respect is visible in daily interactions

Identify one weakest area.

Step 2: Design (20 minutes)

For the weakest area, answer:

- What leadership behaviour needs to increase?
- What behaviour needs to stop?
- What simple routine can reinforce trust weekly?

Write one specific commitment (e.g., "I will check in with two teachers every Friday.")

Step 3: Act & Review (Next 4 weeks)

- Implement the commitment consistently.
- At the end of the month, ask teachers one question: "What leadership behaviour helped you feel more heard this month?"
- Adjust based on feedback.