

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 5

Communication Strategies for Enhancing Teacher Morale

Chapter Summary

- Communication shapes how teachers feel every single day.
- Clear feedback and sincere recognition boost confidence and commitment.
- Transparency builds trust, even during setbacks.
- Technology enables faster, more responsive communication when used wisely.
- When communication feels human, morale follows it.

Reflection Prompts

(For personal reflection or leadership team dialogue)

- How do teachers usually experience my communication—encouraging or evaluative?
- Do my feedback and recognition feel specific and genuine, or routine and rushed?
- How transparent am I when sharing data, decisions, and challenges with teachers?
- Are communication tools reducing stress or unintentionally adding to it?
- Do my stories and examples reflect teachers' real classroom realities?

Action Steps

(Select 3–4 to practise over the next 6–8 weeks)

- Replace generic praise with specific, behaviour-focused feedback at least once a day.
- Publicly recognise one teacher effort each week using a short anecdote, not just praise.
- Share one set of school data (attendance, learning progress, initiatives) and explain the why behind it
- Set clear norms for digital communication (what is urgent, what can wait).
- Introduce a regular space for teacher voice—stories, feedback, or peer recognition.

Activity for Principals

“Communication Impact Audit”

Time: 45–60 minutes

Who: Principal alone or with senior leadership team

Step 1: Review (15 minutes)

Reflect on the past month:

- How often did teachers receive feedback?
- How often was recognition specific and timely?
- When data was shared, was the reasoning explained?

Identify one communication habit that needs improvement.

Step 2: Redesign (20 minutes)

Choose one focus area:

- Feedback & recognition

- Transparency & data sharing
- Technology use
- Storytelling

Write one clear commitment, for example: “I will begin every staff meeting with one real classroom story or recognition.”

Step 3: Implement & Listen (Next 4 weeks)

- Practise the commitment consistently.
- Ask teachers one simple question: “What communication from leadership helped you most this month?”
- Adjust based on responses.

Optional Teacher Pulse Check

(Anonymous, 3 questions)

1. I receive useful and specific feedback.
2. Leadership communication feels transparent and respectful.
3. I feel recognised for my efforts.

Use results to guide the next communication cycle.

School Self-Assessment Tool

Communication Strategies for Enhancing Teacher Morale

Purpose:

To help school leaders assess how feedback, recognition, transparency, technology, and storytelling are experienced by teachers—and how these practices influence morale.

How to Use This Tool

- Complete individually and/or with the leadership team
- Wherever possible, triangulate with teacher feedback
- Use it for baseline assessment and repeat after one term

Rating Scale

1 = Rarely true; 2 = Sometimes true; 3 = Mostly true; 4 = Consistently true

Section A: Feedback Quality

Statement	1	2	3	4
Teachers receive feedback regularly, not only during appraisals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback is specific and behaviour-focused	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback balances appreciation with guidance for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teachers feel feedback supports growth, not judgment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflection: What kind of feedback do teachers most commonly receive in this school?

Section B: Recognition & Appreciation

Statement	1	2	3	4
Teacher efforts are acknowledged promptly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition is specific, not generic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition feels sincere rather than symbolic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Different preferences for recognition are respected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflection: Who tends to get recognised—and who might be overlooked?

Section C: Data & Transparency

Statement	1	2	3	4
School data is shared regularly and clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The reasoning behind decisions is explained	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Both successes and challenges are communicated openly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data is used to improve practice, not to blame	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflection: How comfortable are teachers with the way data is shared and discussed?

Section D: Technology-Enabled Communication

Statement	1	2	3	4
Communication tools are easy and accessible for all staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear norms exist for urgent vs non-urgent communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Statement	1	2	3	4
Technology reduces confusion rather than increasing stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff feel confident using communication platforms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflection: Is technology serving people—or are people serving technology?

Section E: Storytelling & Human Connection

Statement	1	2	3	4
Leaders use real stories to communicate values and decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher efforts are highlighted through anecdotes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teachers are invited to share their own stories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication feels personal, not just procedural	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflection: Whose stories shape the narrative of this school?

Interpreting Your Results

- 16–20 per section: Strong practice – sustain and deepen
- 11–15: Developing – needs consistency and intention
- Below 10: Priority area – likely affecting morale

Identify one lowest-scoring section as your leadership focus for the next term.

Action Planning Template

(Aligned to Chapter Strategies)

Priority Area: _____

One Communication Habit to START: _____

One Habit to STOP: _____

One Practice to Strengthen Teacher Morale: _____

How We Will Review Progress (after 6–8 weeks): _____

Chapter-Aligned School Activity

“Communication Improvement Cycle”

- Weeks 1–2: Complete self-assessment
- Weeks 3–6: Implement 1–2 communication changes
- Week 7: Ask teachers: “Which communication from leadership helped you most recently?”

Use feedback to refine practice.