

an Interim Head to cover the bases until the optimal Head can be found, or launch a new search process (perhaps using a different search consultant, assuming one has already been engaged – or else engage one if not) after re-examining the personal characteristics specified for the original search.

Sometimes, it is difficult to attract a new Head to a school if the school has been experiencing difficulties, especially at the board level. The ‘grapevine’ among Heads of Schools is extensive, and with good reason, prospective Heads are seldom eager to move schools in order to work with a dysfunctional board. If the board has been suffering from dysfunction, it should assume that prospective applicants will be aware of the fact, and thus face up to the challenge of rectifying the problems prior to the search process. Most applicants can be reassured by hard evidence that a board has faced up to its difficulties and has sorted through the problems, especially if an external consultant has been involved in the process of evaluating and advising the board.

The Head’s contract

Once the decision on who to appoint as Head has been made by the board, the board should offer a written contract. Before finalising the contract, the Board should check the draft document with its legal advisors. In addition to any local legal requirements, the Head’s contract must include:

- a statement prescribing the authority of the Head and a list of the Head’s responsibilities (a role description);
- the terms of remuneration;
- the timing and process of annual evaluations;
- the duration of the contract, with provisions for renewal and termination; and
- a statement identifying the laws under which the contract is administered.

The statement of the **Head’s authority and responsibilities** should be stated fairly generally in the contract to allow flexibility on both sides, although a fairly precise expansion of the role might be stated in a separate role description document. In any case, a more specific list of goals and priorities will normally be negotiated annually as part of the framework for regular evaluations.

Any contract for a Head of School should state in unambiguous terms that the Head is the CEO of the organisation. In practice, this gives the Head authority over the management of the school, including the obligation to implement board policy