

## Element 4: Professional Practice

### Activity G: Leader for learning in a managerial role (This activity is focused on managers/room leaders.)

The various tasks practitioners undertake on a daily basis typically fall into management or leadership roles; roles which are intricately connected.

The **management role** in a room normally includes time-keeping or tasks that meet children's basic needs and ensure their safety, for example, organising snack-time, filling out roll-books, resourcing and organising the environment, arranging toilet/nappy-time, or tidying up after planned activities. A setting manager carries out similar types of tasks such as organising rosters and time sheets, ensuring compliance with the *Pre-School Regulations* (Department of Health and Children, 2006), *Children First* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2011), managing finances and complying with statutory requirements including making returns to relevant government departments and agencies.

In contrast, the **leadership or educational role** in a setting encompasses the tasks that relate directly to supporting children's learning and development using *Aistear* and *Síolta*, for example, observing children and planning for their learning, being a curriculum developer, recording and documenting children's learning and development, discussing and evaluating practice, and reflecting on your own role as a leader for learning. It's also about ensuring that the whole setting embraces a consistent vision for children.

Practitioners can often be caught up in management tasks rather than leading learning, sometimes at the expense of children's learning and development. Activity G will support you to reflect on what aspects of your role you find yourself giving significant amounts of your time to in your setting.

This activity can be completed alone, with a colleague, with your team or with the support of a mentor.

Make a note of the types of tasks you do each day across a week.  
Reflecting on these notes, consider the following questions.

**What type of tasks do I perform most frequently—management or leadership for learning. Why?**

**Does someone else contribute to the leadership for learning tasks in my room or setting? How?**

**How can I give more time and focus to my work as a leader for learning?**

**What support do I need? Who or what can help me?**

**To what extent do I provide feedback to staff on their work with children in the setting?**

**Do I support staff to engage in a range of regular and on-going continuing professional development opportunities, for example, accredited and unaccredited training?**

**Could co-operative working relations with other services be used to support the professional development of practitioners in my setting?**

**Do I provide regular opportunities for practitioners to reflect on and to contribute to the development of quality practice?**

Additional activities to support setting managers or supervisors in their particular role in supporting learning and professional practice, will be developed and added to [www.aistearsiolta.ie](http://www.aistearsiolta.ie)