

Sample Publication

# The Perfect Prefect?



## A Self Study Booklet

Published by Aurora Training & Development Services Ltd

April 2006

# Sample Publication

## CONTENTS

Chapter	Title	Page
1	Introduction	1
2	Roles of School Prefects	2
3	Skills and Personal Qualities	5
4	Applications of Skills and Personal Qualities	11
5	Leadership	15
6	Teamworking	18
7	The Role of Head Boy and Head Girl	21
8	How to Organise a Team of School Prefects	25
9	Next Steps	28
	Self-Perception Questionnaire	29
	Appendix A - Skills and Personal Qualities	30
	Further Training and Development	31

### Please Note

This publication is protected by Copyright Law  
No part of this publication may be copied without the written permission of Aurora TDS Ltd

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

If you are reading this book because you have been selected as a school prefect, congratulations!

Different schools have different approaches to choosing their prefects. Some are more democratic than others, but however you have been chosen you have been given an advantage in life over those students who were not selected. Research<sup>1</sup> undertaken in 2004 shows that many successful business people held positions of responsibility whilst they were at school. Some had been prefects; some had been captains of sports teams and some had been both.

This research, however, does not show that being a school prefect is a guarantee of career success. Whilst being a prefect gives early experience of having responsibility, there are two other factors that greatly affect later success in life.

Firstly, nearly all successful people would tell you that their achievements were based on a great deal of hard work. Secondly, they would tell you that they had experienced lots of failures but somehow learned from them and moved on. In other words they were hard working and resilient.

Before you start reading this booklet, please bear in mind that no-one can give you a set of instructions about how to be a successful prefect. As you are about to find out, because being a prefect means largely dealing with people, you will be operating somewhere between art and science and no-one, no-matter how experienced, can give you all the answers. Other people can guide you, but in the end you will have to work out the answers for yourself.

Being a school prefect will enable you to have experiences that you would otherwise not get at your age. You are now on the first rung of a long ladder of leadership and responsibility and if you think that being a school prefect is a bit scary, wait until to climb higher!

For now, I suggest you make the most of the opportunity that has been given to you and reading this booklet will give you a great start.

*Chris Cordery*

---

<sup>1</sup> This was undertaken by MORI for Development Dimensions International and was reported in January 2005.

## Chapter 2

### ROLES OF SCHOOL PREFECTS

#### Activity

Before you read this chapter, write down in this space what you consider to be the roles of a school prefect.

Although all schools are different it is important for you to have a good understanding of what is expected of prefects at your particular school.

At some schools prefect roles are written down and at others you are left to work them out for yourself.

In broad terms, roles fall into four categories:

- Maintaining Discipline
- Helping Staff
- Supporting Younger Pupils
- Organising Events

In your school you might be required to do all four of these, only some or, perhaps, additional tasks. There is no right or wrong here. It is up to each school to utilise its prefects in the best ways it sees fit. What is important, however, is that you, the other prefects, the Head Boy and Head Girl, the school staff and all other pupils know exactly what your roles are. This requires clear and good communication in your school and if it does not exist you should discuss the issue with the member of staff who has responsibility for prefects.

Just to be clear, roles are responsibilities that are expected of you. They describe what you do, not how. We will deal with how later.

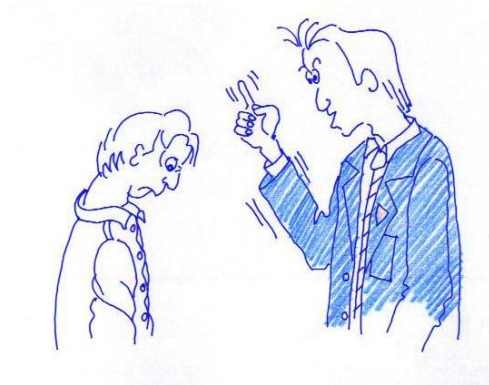
Let's now look at each role in detail .....

Some of them overlap but it is helpful to consider each one separately.

### Maintaining Discipline

Maintaining discipline is perhaps the most obvious role for prefects, but it does not apply to all schools. If it applies in your school you may find yourself needing to know your 'school rules' or 'code of conduct' very well indeed. You will be expected to be a guardian of the standards that are written in these documents and you will need to be prepared to challenge pupils who break the rules.

This is sometimes easy to do if those who break the rules are younger than you, but more difficult if they are in your year. We will look at some examples in Chapter 4.



Sample Copy

### Organising Events

In some, but not all, schools prefects organise or help staff to organise events. This can range from assisting with a sports day, chairing the School Council, producing the school magazine, showing new parents, teachers or visitors around the school and organising the Christmas or summer fair. In some schools prefects attend Governor meetings to represent the views of pupils. The full list can be wide and varied.

#### **Activity**

Write down the roles of a prefect at your school and compare this list with the one you made at the start of this chapter.

Now that you are clear about your roles we can move on to find out whether you are, or have the potential to be, an effective prefect.

## Chapter 3

### SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

Now that you know *what* is required of you, let's analyse the skills and personal qualities that you are likely to need if you are to be effective in your overall role as a prefect. First, let's look at some definitions ...

We are now going to look in some detail at two particular skills, which are of the utmost importance to school prefects:

- Communication
- Assertiveness

#### Communication

The first thing to know about communication is that it is a two way process. For effective communication to take place, a message must be understood as it was intended to be understood. So, when talking to people, it is important to speak clearly and confidently, using words that are easily understood. Some people are natural at this and some people need to learn and practice how it should be done.



### Assertiveness

The skill of assertiveness is fundamental to being an effective prefect. If you are not naturally assertive, you will find being a prefect quite challenging and you will need to work on this area.

Before we tackle this subject, let us be clear what being assertive is not! Being assertive does not mean being aggressive, nor does it mean being weak or subservient.

You can think of assertive as being on a continuum (a line) between aggressive and subservient .....

Sample Copy



**Subservient**

**Assertive**

**Aggressive**



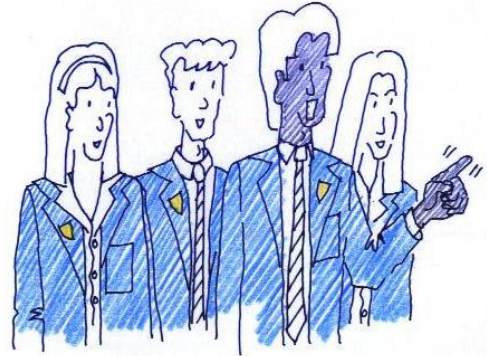
Sample Copy

## Chapter 5

### LEADERSHIP

You might not see a direct link between leadership and being a prefect, but there is one. In fact there are several.

You will have been chosen as a prefect based on certain skills and qualities that you already have or for the potential that has been recognised in you. Many of these skills and qualities are common with leadership, such as: courage, confidence, decisiveness and the ability to communicate effectively.



#### Role Model

No-matter whether you consider yourself, as a prefect, to be a leader, younger pupils will do so. That is why all prefects must accept the responsibility of setting a good example. In other words, you will be a role model to other pupils in your school. They will observe what you do and what you say and they will ***follow your lead***. Whether you like it or not, by accepting the mantle of being a prefect you are a leader.

## Chapter 6

### TEAMWORKING

Teamworking is an important and often neglected part of being a prefect. A school or college does not simply have a number of *individual* students who are identified as prefects. There is more to it than that. It has a *team* of prefects who are part of a prefect *system*.

To give a sporting analogy, a football manager does not run a group of individual footballers. He runs a team. He has to choose which players he wants and decide on how their different skills and qualities can be put together to greatest effect. He needs to choose a captain and develop a playing system within which everyone can work together towards a common aim: in this case, winning a football match.

Sample Copy

### Belbin Team Roles

Belbin's Team Roles provide an interesting way of looking into teamworking in more detail. Research has shown that in any given teamworking situation the team members will have certain preferred roles. Under the Belbin's Team Roles methodology there are nine roles:

**Plant** - creative and innovative

**Implementer** - good at turning ideas into practical actions

**Completer Finisher** - very keen indeed to get something finished

**Shaper** - keen to shape the task and how it is achieved

**Teamworker** - sees it as important to keep the team together

**Co-ordinator** - inclined towards co-ordinating activities (usually a good chairperson)

**Resource Investigator** - knows who to speak to and how or where to find resources

**Monitor Evaluator** - constantly checks progress and is concerned about standards

**Specialist** - has the specialist knowledge and skills needed to get a task completed (for example: IT expert, engineer, artist, sportsman)

Sample Copy

## Chapter 7

### THE ROLE OF HEAD BOY AND HEAD GIRL

If you have been chosen as Head Boy or Head Girl, congratulations. Your staff and probably, your Headteacher have noticed something in you that is particularly special.

This chapter will be directly relevant to you and useful for other prefects to read so that they too can understand your somewhat unique roles.



Sample Co.

The next chapter will help you a little further and if you want direct advice, you should talk with the teacher who is in charge of prefects. He or she should be able to give you feedback on a regular basis, perhaps monthly, on how you are doing. This way you may be able to make best use of the opportunity you have to become an effective leader.

Sample Copy

## Chapter 8

### HOW TO ORGANISE A TEAM OF SCHOOL PREFECTS

Having a group of students who happen to be appointed as prefects is not enough. They need to understand:

- What they are required to do
- How they should do it
- Who is responsible for doing what
- The limits of their authority

Sample Copy

## Chapter 9

### NEXT STEPS

This chapter considers what you should do next, but first let's recap.

You should now be clear about what is expected of you as a prefect in your particular school. You should also have a good understanding of the skills and personal qualities that are needed and the ones you already have and are your strengths. You should know about the link between being a prefect and being seen as a leader and you should understand the importance of prefects working together as an effective team.

If you would like to provide feedback to Aurora Training & Development Services about anything contained in this booklet, or omitted from it, please e-mail

[info@aurora-tds.co.uk](mailto:info@aurora-tds.co.uk).

Sample Copy

## PREFECT SELF-PERCEPTION

I already have the following skills that will be useful to me as a prefect:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

I already have the following Personal Qualities that will be useful to me as a prefect:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Assertiveness & Communication Skills

	1	2	3	4	5
I rate my Assertiveness as					
I rate my Communication Skills as					

Place a tick showing your rating - 5 being the strongest

I believe that my three preferred Belbin Team Roles are:

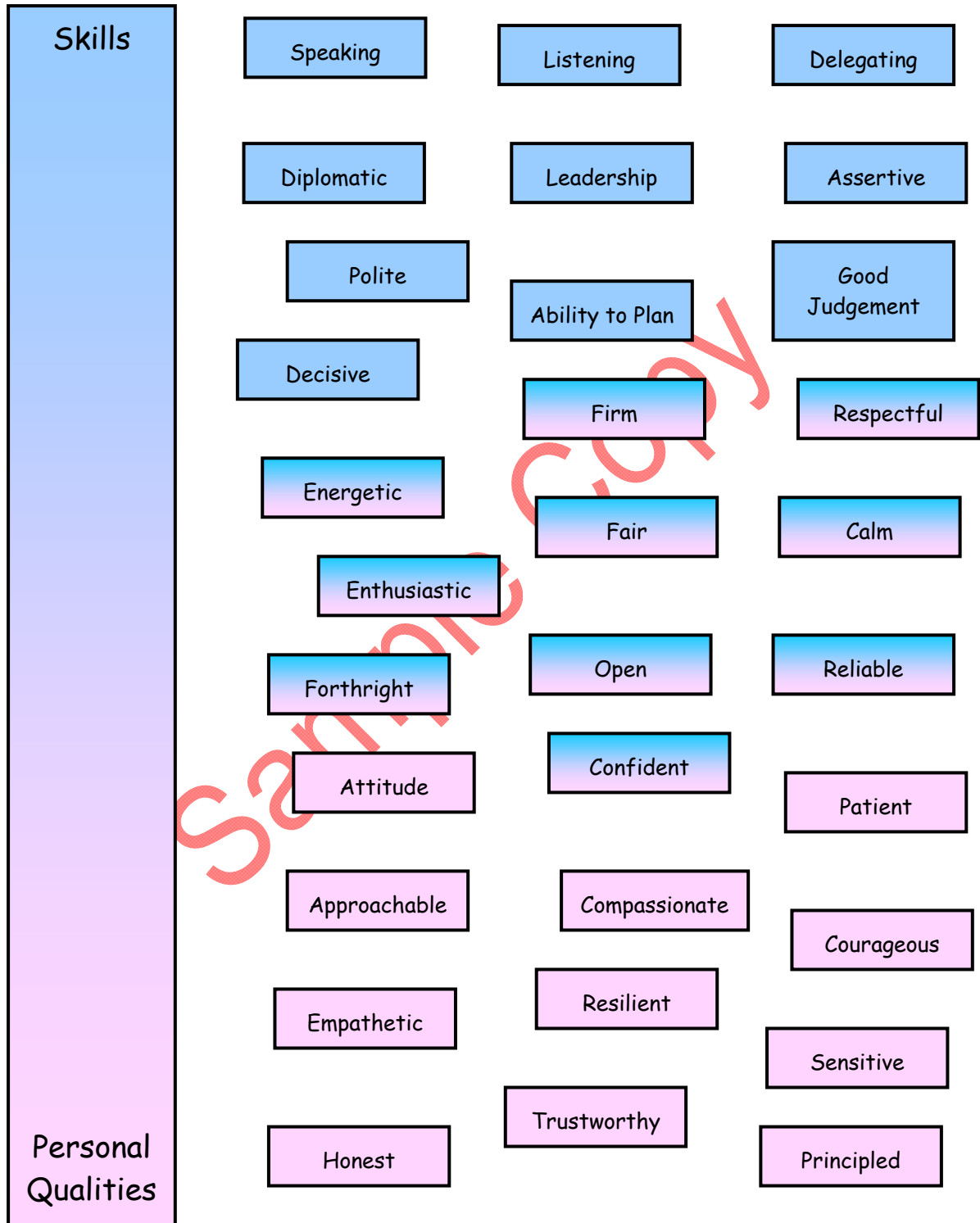
- 
- 
- 

In the way that I conduct myself as a prefect I will always be:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-

# Appendix A

## SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES



## Further Training and Development

Aurora Training & Development Services Ltd provides the following services for schools and colleges:

- Prefect Training Courses - some recognised by the Institute of Leadership and Management
- Advice to staff on how to select and develop prefects and organise effective prefect systems
- Conferences for staff and Head Boys and Head Girls
- Courses for students in:
  - Assertiveness
  - Communication Skills
  - Confidence Development
  - Presentation Skills - public speaking - using video feedback
  - Dealing with difficult situations
  - Effective Teamworking - using Belbin's Team Roles for young people (GetSet®)

For adults in businesses and all kinds of organisations Aurora Training & Development Services offers:

- Personal Coaching for performance development
- Leadership Development programmes
- Presentation Skills - using video feedback
- Confidence Development
- Team Development - using Belbin's Team Roles
- Courses in a variety of management subjects

Further information can be found at

[www.aurora-tds.co.uk](http://www.aurora-tds.co.uk)

or by calling 0173 376 4179