

# What are the Duties and Functions of an ideal Headmaster?

As a functionary, hundreds and thousands of eyes watch him, judge him, and measure him and eager to follow his noble examples. Unless he has a perceiving eye, and understanding heart and an all-adjusting mental poise, he is bound to falter and fumble in his duties. The Headmaster should be firm in his dealings, resolute in his conviction and decisions, relentless in his execution.

A Headmaster has to perform multifarious duties. They can be categorized conveniently into the following:

## **(a) Teaching:**

Headmaster of a school is a teacher first and last. Teaching is his fundamental duty. Headmasters remain so much absorbed in other duties that they never enter classes. But they should take at least two periods a day on specialized subjects. They should deliver or guide demonstration classes.

Despite some frustration of administration and demands on his time improvement of instruction is one of the most important responsibilities and duties of Headmaster. The headmastership and leadership are synonymous in education. He is the key person charged with responsibilities of improving instruction.

By actually teaching, the Headmaster comes to know the standard of pupils in different classes and the standard of teaching in the school. He directly comes in contact and understands difficulties of students and teachers.

No one expects Headmaster to be an expert in all instructional areas. He may master at least one or two subjects with manageable standard in other subjects. In spite of the fact, that Headmasters are over-burdened with a number of other duties; they should be first rate teachers being conversant with content and the latest methods of teaching.

## **(b) Planning:**

Unless the Headmaster plans for the school, there will be confusion all round. For making proper planning, help of pupils, teachers, and parents

should be taken. Most of the planning will be there in course of discussions of school problems in the staff meetings and students councils.

Jacobson paints a good picture, "In extreme cases there are teachers without students, classes without teachers, class-sections with enrolment twice the capacity of the room, the teachers are handicapped, because of shortage of suppliers, lack of books and equipments, improperly classified students". This state of affairs is due to inadequate planning in schools.

### **(c) Organization & Administration:**

The next important task of Headmaster is organization. In the organization of school plant the headmaster should procure adequate furniture and equipment for the school. He should make petty repairs, distribute the furniture, look to the buildings, organize laboratories, the workshop and the library and take care of the sanitation and entire material aspect of school plant.

The Headmaster looks to the instructional work of the school including construction of curriculum, preparation and distribution of syllabi, work distribution among the staff, allotment of co-curricular duties, construction of the time schedule and the school calendar.

### **(d) Supervision:**

Supervision and administration are the two combined functions which are mostly blended in one. Administration means performance of certain routine duties in connection with finance, discipline, correspondence etc. By supervision it is meant the overseeing the work done by the teaching staff. Supervision is improving the total teaching learning situation. This situation is no more "detection or fault finding." A Headmaster should follow the following principles of supervision.

1. Its purpose is to help, encourage and guide rather than criticize.
2. It should be done in a spirit of cooperation.
3. It should be done regularly and effectively.
4. Partiality and prejudice should find no place in it.
5. The criteria of supervision should be known to teachers.

Supervision of instructional work is the most important function of the Headmaster. Classroom is the heart of teaching situation. It is the centre of instruction. It is the duty of headmaster to upgrade the quality of education through creative, cooperative and constructive supervision. It is not a matter of rushing into a classroom in session to make correction or an adjustment, as an auto mechanic adjusts a faulty motor. A motor is a thing within itself, but a classroom is a combination of human beings. Class visits form an essential part of the duties of the Headmaster. But that alone gives him no right either to snub or criticize a teacher in the presence of the class.

If the Headmaster feels a particular teacher needs correction, he should send for the teacher for post-visit conference. So, Headmaster's role is to play an excellent guide and the post-visit conference should see the teacher, a better person, wiser and saner. When Headmaster finds any defect with the teacher, he will discuss after the period is over in the Headmaster's office and not in front of the class.

### **Some specific Duties of Headmaster**

#### **1. School Supplies:**

This involves planning. Estimates are to be prepared regarding the quantity of purchases to be made. Specification of each item is to be laid down and quotations have to be invited and approved by the Headmaster. Goods ordered should be inspected and checked on arrival. Headmaster will appoint a selection committee for purchase and maintenance of equipments.

#### **2. School Campus:**

School plant should provide adequate educational services. Best use of all the rooms, laboratories, workshops and the farm is made. In case of over-crowding students may attend laboratories in groups. School may be used for its specific uses. All school buildings should be guarded against building hazards. The perfect up-keep of the school campus is the lookout of the Headmaster.

#### **3. Co-Curricular Activities:**

Over-all management of school co-curricular activities is the Headmaster's responsibility. Various activities may of course, be distributed amongst the staff members in accordance with their previous background, interest and aptitude. Adequate budget allotment should be

made for these activities. All wastage and unnecessary expenditure should be checked.

#### **4. Office:**

The modern conception of the Headmaster's office is that, it is a service centre. Communication with higher authorities, the parents, the public, the teacher and the students is made by the Headmaster.

Among the specific duty on the Headmaster in respect of efficient working of school office, the following are noteworthy:

(i) The office must be located at a suitable place. It must be adequately spaced and proper up-keep ensured.

(ii) Office work must be distributed adequately among members of the office staff. Headmaster must supervise their work, check irregularities, check inefficiency and ensure regular and prompt work.

(iii) Headmaster must decide time to be devoted for office work.

(iv) Headmaster must make note of his office duties.

(v) Duties of Headmaster prescribed by Education Department and Managing Committee should be strictly followed.

(vi) The Headmaster should strictly obey the rules and regulations by the University or school Board, to which the school is affiliated.

(vii) Routine duties of the Headmaster should be admission, checking class registers, cash book, acquaintance roll, attendance registers accounts of various fees and fines.

All these general duties and specific responsibilities of the Headmaster will go to make better schools.