



The Development of **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN ENGLAND**

Possible Options for Brazil

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PREFACE



This report is the result of a collaborative field research project between two institutions committed to promoting quality and equity in Brazilian public education. Since 1993, the *Itaú Social Foundation* has been developing programmes aimed at improving education policies for the public sector. It believes that equitable and sustainable growth in Brazil necessarily depends on investment in education. Investment has focused on four areas: *Education Management, Full-day Schooling, Evaluation of Social Projects* and *Social Mobility*.

The *British Council* is a United Kingdom international organisation responsible for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Its goal is to build engagement with the United Kingdom and trust in it, by promoting exchange of knowledge and ideas by people from all over the world. It aims to reach its objectives by working in *Education, Science, Governance, English* and the *Arts*.

Although with distinctive identities and histories, the two organisations share a common cause and resolved to join forces and undertake an in-depth study of the development of school leadership in England. By 'school leadership' what is meant is the role of the school headteacher or principal, but also senior teachers and school managers who all contribute nowadays beyond their own school to the development of the broader education system.

Current research reports indicate that the English education system is among the top ten in the world, particular recognition being given to the search for continual policy improvement. Those countries which have an emphasis on constant policy improvement share a number of characteristics which are worth highlighting:



- ✓ Increased status of the teaching profession;
- ✓ Family support and understanding of education, developed within the school environment, and involving open and frank sharing by the two key partners, home and school;
- ✓ High level of investment in network infrastructure;
- ✓ High priority given to the recruitment, retention and development of all personnel.

A key unifying notion behind these approaches is that it is a systematic programme developed within a broad educational context. Integration of the component parts is important. The strategy operates with an eye on the medium- and the long-term of education policy and places every student at the heart of its concerns. Equity is a guiding principle behind the improvement of the education system.

Reform of the English educational system began about thirty years ago with the development of a national curriculum. It was an important first step in raising the standards and quality of the system and has been followed subsequently by many other initiatives detailed in this report.

It is the work of the last fifteen years, however, with substantial investment in school leadership development strategies that has made the country a pioneer in this field. In one of its research reports, the OECD identifies the English system as exemplary in its approach, highlighting the collaborative work among schools that has resulted from recent investment. Some elements of the English experience which have attracted the attention of the world include:



- ✓ Development of the concept of 'system leadership' based on the assumption that professionals in schools have a strategic role to play in the professional development of their peers;
- ✓ Professional development which is based on national standards for school leadership, with a focus on teaching and learning and career opportunities, and which lead to national qualifications;
- ✓ Development not only of the principal school leader, the headteacher, but of leaders throughout the school who have a range of responsibilities;
- ✓ Early talent-spotting and career development throughout every teacher's professional life;
- ✓ Identification of schools as the key professional development location – in partnership with universities – based on the model of 'teaching hospitals';
- ✓ A formal national system of school inspection that combines evaluation of each institution and the quality of its teaching and learning together with support for the improvement of results;
- ✓ Abundant availability of school performance data which help the drive for school improvement and aid families in their choice of schools.

In Brazil, the selection and training of school headteachers is a topic that has risen up the agenda of education policy. National and international research data show the impact of professional school leadership on student performance. School leadership is ranked second only to the quality of teaching among factors affecting student achievement. Teaching quality and school leadership together account for almost 60 per cent of the impact a school has on student achievement.

In the publication 'Educational Studies and Research' (Victor Civita Foundation, 2011), data is provided on the profile, recruitment and professional development



of headteachers. The report indicates an improvement in the policy for recruitment of professional candidates suitable for the role of school headteacher, a role which is complex and requires skills and abilities that go beyond those necessarily possessed by an excellent classroom teacher. However, there is still no consensus about how best to identify and train these professionals for taking on the role of school leader. In terms of professional development, there is, significantly, a missing element between the courses on offer and the challenges these professionals face in the daily life of the school.

National literature identifies and describes great success stories in school management. We have a wealth of material that can help us understand what the headteacher of an exemplary publicly-funded school does. But it is important to move forward in supporting states and municipalities in devising system-wide responses to this question. Improvement in the quality of the education system cannot be left to the haphazard emergence of individual headteachers acting as heroes in the school system. Public policy matters, and there is a strategic role for the education authorities in finding answers, as the English experience demonstrates.

The present initiative seeks to explore in depth the policy used in one other country and to inspire education policy makers all over Brazil to develop consistent medium- and long-term strategic plans for the improvement of education.

In order to help the reader, the report has a brief introduction which presents an overview of the English education context, and its major changes over the past three decades, especially with regard to leadership training and development. In the following chapter, *The Context of Leadership*, key features of the context in England are identified, among which the highly significant autonomy and accountability and the link to a system of inspections and data collection about pupil learning.



The chapter entitled *Leadership Development* details strategies that have been used to create teams of leaders who work in schools and the mechanisms that identify and develop new school leaders throughout their teaching careers. There is also a chapter dedicated to *school structures and innovations in the governance of the system* itself. There are many different types of publicly-funded schools in England and we seek to show how the variety of organizational arrangements affects the leadership and management of schools. Apart from the traditional format in which schools report to officers of a local or regional body, the system allows other forms of organisation, in which schools form geographical groups themselves, for example, and move to create a 'chain' or 'federation' of schools. Such innovations – which affect the governance of schools considerably – can generate new career opportunities, create collaboration between schools and lead to innovations specific to local contexts, making room for the development of new forms of leadership.

This report, which has as its primary audience public sector policy makers, seeks to extend knowledge of the professional development of headteachers in England. It aims to support and inspire strategies that describe, strengthen and refine the role of the school headteacher in school leadership. In those chapters with more practical content about initiatives developed in England, we have endeavoured to consider parallels between these measures and the situation in Brazil.

It is worth underlining that this study does not set out to import a ready-made formula to be applied to the recruitment and professional development of headteachers in Brazil. On the contrary, it is well understood that Brazil is a very different country, with its own historic and cultural background. But a consideration of a very different environment in which there is concrete evidence of progress in the field of school leadership and management may well inspire our policy makers and encourage the development of relevant solutions in Brazil.





INTRODUCTION



Over the past 15 years, there have been many changes in school leadership in England, regardless of which political party has been in power. The general context has been marked by the delegation to schools of responsibility for managing their everyday affairs and by a significant reduction of the state apparatus, which in the past had a significant role. In practice, this has meant the relocation of educational and administrative management to the individual school itself, with the headteacher taking full leadership responsibility, and having financial and technical autonomy to make the choices deemed most appropriate for the school.

These changes were not introduced without considerable resistance, but mechanisms have been developed to try to channel opposition in a non-confrontational manner. A key factor in this was the presence in the 1990s of 'education' as a key item on the political agenda. All parties began including in their pre-election manifestos proposals for education with detail about what was intended for the sector.

Once a government comes to power, implementation of policies takes place in an atmosphere of constant lobbying by professional associations, trade unions and pressure groups of many kinds. There is an intense debate about proposals and this contributes to reducing the element of surprise when policies are announced to the general public. It additionally allows politicians to reflect, away from the public eye, on the objections or reservations that may have been expressed about their intentions.

An interesting strategy used by the Blair government was to create a 'social partnership' with associations and unions from the education world. This partnership was in place between the years 2003 to 2010. There were weekly meetings between officials of the Department for Education (DfE) and representatives of the various pressure groups, during which intentions for policy changes were shared, debated, discussed and modified. There was every opportunity for objections to be expressed and alternatives to be suggested. The result of these regular consultations was that, to some extent, the objections to any particularly controversial change were mollified, and once the policy was released, participants in the social partnership could jointly present arguments for change, instead of being on opposite sides of the argument.



The coalition government that came to power in 2010 replaced the social partnership by an **education forum**. The government and lobbyists were more ideologically divided than during Blair's time, and the 'harmony' of the previous arrangement ceased to exist. The Forum meetings have since been held every six weeks instead of weekly.

Another important approach to implementation of policy has been the **development of 'pilot studies' in various parts of the country before policies are adopted nationally**. Pilot schemes are carefully monitored and lessons are learned before a national policy is agreed upon. A good example was the adoption of full delegation of financial responsibility to school leaders – the relocation of financial and pedagogical management from local authorities to schools. The scheme was tested in pilot studies across the country before being adopted nationwide. The same process is used when pupil assessments are modified. Samples of the new tests are given to schools to try out, and the results are compared with existing assessments before the changes are adopted more widely.





Political Movements and Reforms

The 1980s were marked by a series of legislative changes, the last of which transformed the way English schools operated. In the 1980s, a mandatory requirement that all schools have a *Governing Body*¹ was introduced, motivated in part by a desire to strengthen local accountability. In 1986, Governing Bodies were required to draw up an annual report to parents on the school's progress and to hold an annual meeting where parents could ask questions about the school's work and progress. This additional opening up of the school system was extended considerably in 1988 with the *Education Reform Act* which was to have a profound impact on the complex history of schools and on the journey to enhanced leadership and autonomy.

The *Education Reform Act* affected almost every aspect of school life and, therefore, can be described as having been 'revolutionary'. Previously, for example, the only curriculum prescribed for English schools was that of religious teaching, but from 1988, a National Curriculum was introduced covering all subjects. At the same time, results of school inspections and tests of all primary and secondary schools were published to help parents choose the best school for their children. Schools were no longer required to have defined geographical areas from which their students would come; parents could choose a school irrespective of where they resided as long as there were vacancies available.

For the vast majority of observers and leaders, the most radical change of all was the delegation of educational management to schools, with only minimal reporting to the local authority being required². Schools were to be responsible for the appointment of staff, procurement of their own materials and the maintenance and improvement of their facilities.

1. Governing Bodies are equivalent to School Boards in Brazil, but with greater decision-making power on administrative and pedagogical issues. They include representatives of the community (whether or not they have children enrolled) and elected members of the school staff.

2. Equivalent to the Brazilian regional or municipal superintendents.



Education became more competitive in the 1980s. This was in part caused by a drop in the number of students which forced schools to promote themselves to fill vacant places, and in part because there was a political belief that competition between schools was a pre-requisite of their improvement.

If the idea of school autonomy has gone through variations in meaning and practice over the years, the same applies to its almost constant companion, 'accountability'. For, while politicians in their speeches may have welcomed the transfer of responsibility to school headteachers, they never hesitated to assert their right to ensure that schools should be made accountable for the autonomy granted to them.

In order to monitor schools more closely, there is a national inspection system which was originally created in the time of Queen Victoria, over 150 years ago. At that time inspectors were known *Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI)*. Until the 1990s, visits to a school by HMI would take place infrequently, maybe once every five years, or even less often, and the accountability generated by these inspections was still small. The prime purpose was to inform ministers of the state of play in schools. It was a period with few inspectors, all directly appointed by the Queen, but HMI were regarded as an elite group who had great influence on government ministers.

In 1992, the government transformed the national inspectorate into the *Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)*. The core of elite HMI inspectors was kept, but the broader expansion was achieved by recruitment of inspectors to companies which offer services to the government. The new inspectors were generally experienced professionals from the public education sector (headteachers or deputies). The transformation of *Ofsted* sought to achieve the regular inspection of all schools and the assessment of each school's progress against very precise criteria.

In 1997, Tony Blair declared that his new government had three priorities: Education, Education and Education. There would be greater levels of accountability, teachers who did not reach the desired standards would be dismissed, but there was the intention to support schools with comprehensive national literacy and numeracy strategies that plunged deep into the sphere of classroom practice.



The government drew leading world figures to the heart of the decision-making process on education. Ideas about how to transform the country's education standards were openly canvassed. The status of teachers enjoyed some improvement in part via an increase in their salaries. Celebration events were organised and shown on prime-time television, in recognition of the 'teachers of the year' as selected by a panel of judges. Quality schools were encouraged to share their good practice in various ways - one of the first examples being the 'Beacon Schools'. These schools, identified by their excellent results in examinations or tests or by Ofsted inspections, received additional funds to share their work with under-performing schools.

Government minds were not closed to evidence provided by academics and, in one of the most exciting initiatives, the *National College for School Leadership (NCSL)* was established in 2000, in explicit recognition of the importance of the headteacher to



a school's improvement. The impact of the *National College* on a generation of school leaders was profound.

In the first decade of the 21st century, virtually no year passed without some initiative to increase the effectiveness – understood in terms of quality and equity – of a public service that had already become one of the nation's top priorities. There was growing awareness that schools were not doing very well in international comparisons. Great emphasis was given to improving results in mathematics, English and science. When comparing the relationship between the standards of achievement of eleven year old students and the investment in education over the period 1995 to 2011, a clear increase can be seen in the number of students reaching age-appropriate standards: these rose from 50 to 80 per cent in English and mathematics. Over the same period of time investment grew continuously, practically doubling the budget for education.

A major analysis is undertaken every year by the chief inspector of schools and senior officers to identify main areas of under-performance and to try to find new ways to improve them. The persistent under-performance of specific groups of students has received repeated attention, with varying degrees of success - one specific example being that of white working class boys.

There has been a growing interest in education in urban areas, where some of the major difficulties have lain. An initiative entitled *Excellence in the Cities* was launched. Partnerships were formed between groups of twenty or more schools, additional funds were provided and it was expected that schools would focus their attention on three areas: 1) students considered talented or having the potential to be; 2) use of learning mentors who would work with students who have difficulties; 3) partnerships with learning support centres.

There was a growing conviction that good school leaders could strengthen the work of other schools in addition to their own. It was a seed that would later grow into the concept of 'system leadership' and school-to-school support. *The National College* identified outstanding school leaders to become 'consultant leaders', later known as *National Leaders of Education (NLEs)*, who would have the lead role in providing



systematic support to schools whose performance was low. The schools of these leaders by turn became *National Support Schools*, and this innovation survived the change of government in 2010, given its potential to raise the standards of teaching and learning through collaboration between schools.

The tireless effort to improve under-performing schools was accompanied by an increasingly intensive focus on the role of leadership in schools – but not just on the person of the headteacher. All schools created teams of leaders, and the idea of ‘middle leaders’ became widely used. Headteachers saw their income rise significantly while their duties grew exponentially. Schools became responsible for the care of children before and after school (the extended school day) and normally remained open from 7:30 to 18:30, with holiday clubs and the rental of school facilities for other events, making them, increasingly, open for business all day long.





The responsibilities of school leaders now included fundamental questions of academic success. They were accountable for the quality of education provided and inspection outcomes, the safety and well-being of students, the extended school day and a major review of the roles of school staff. With the process of delegation of school management, an increasing number of assistants worked alongside teachers in the classroom; this process continued and was expanded. In 2003, there were changes that introduced a range of new roles, such as learning mentors, data managers and school-based administrators. Additional teachers were brought in to cover for teachers who now had an entitlement to 10 per cent of their working week outside the classroom for planning, preparation and assessment.

The first decade of the new century came to an end with the biggest financial crisis in recent history. The coalition government which took power in 2010 was facing enormous challenges and these were compounded by the decision to prioritise a reduction of public spending to tackle national problems of financial debt and deficit.

Even at a time which saw real cuts in public spending, the new Secretary of State for Education (equivalent to the Minister of Education in Brazil), Michael Gove, was unwilling to give up on his appetite for reform. His intentions can be summarised in the following government manifesto entitled *The Importance of Teachers*:

“In England, what is needed most of all is decisive action to free our teachers from constraint and improve their professional status and authority, raise the standards set by our curriculum and qualifications to match the best in the world and, having freed schools from external control, hold them effectively to account for the results they achieve. Government should make sure that school funding is fair, with more money for the most disadvantaged, but should then support the efforts



of teachers, helping them to learn from one another and from proven best practice, rather than ceaselessly directing them to follow centralised Government initiatives.”
Department for Education (DfE), *The Importance of Teaching: the Schools White Paper*, 2010.

On the positive side, new opportunities were created which attracted those school leaders with a more entrepreneurial spirit. They embraced the changes and made accelerated progress in developing new approaches to school improvement, for example, in the form of ‘federations’³ and ‘teaching schools’⁴. The perspectives were broadened, and school headteachers accepted the fact that they have responsibility for all children and young people in their area, not only those attending their own schools. There is a widespread ambition to improve the general quality of education on offer.

England began a process of school reform in the late 1980s and since then, regardless of political changes, has been implementing a political agenda committed to providing quality and equity in public sector education. While changes have been introduced to the curriculum, to the inspection regime and to the production of data, it is clear that the fundamental change lies in school-based leadership and management and the introduction of the notion of ‘dispersed’ or ‘shared’ leadership, involving senior managers and teachers as well as the headteacher.

These matters will be discussed fully in following chapters.

3. Two or more schools that share a single Governing Body and work closely together as their own family of schools.

4. High-performing schools are also able to assume the role of teacher training, along the model of medical schools.





THE LEADERSHIP CONTEXT





The School as the Locus of Leadership

In the last thirty years, there has been a fundamental change in the culture of school leadership and management in England. Until 1988, the title of the school leader, head **teacher** (literally the leading teacher in the school), indicated that the person at the helm was, first and foremost, a teacher. There was chalk dust on the clothes, and the priorities were the students, the teachers and the parents.

At that time, headteachers operated in a relatively centralised system. They were agents of a larger organisation and the support they received was not always in tune with the school's needs – neither educational terms nor in terms of the premises they had to manage. The impression was that there was a gulf between those who actually lived the daily experience of the school and those who decided about its needs. For the headteachers, it was easy to feel that school was not really 'theirs' in any real sense, and that any significant improvement would only be achieved if there were greater engagement with the upper echelons of local bureaucracy. The authority had its own favourite projects. Access to the distant, inner sanctum where decisions were made was surrounded in mystery.





“It was my first week as a headteacher in 1985, and after four days, the headteacher’s chair in the office collapsed under my (not very great) weight. I wrote to the director of education⁵ – who was responsible for 100 schools at the time and therefore very busy – asking for a replacement chair and he replied to say he would send someone to examine it. The man came, wrote a report, and we awaited the decision. After several days we heard that the decision was that the chair would be sent away to the local authority’s workshop for repair⁶. I spent the following six weeks using a child’s chair until the antique original was returned.” Adrian Ingham (researcher and former school headteacher)

In the 1990s, the situation began to change: the first step in this transformation had been the educational reform of 1988. A whole generation of headteachers found themselves protagonists in these changes, with positive effects in terms of greater engagement with the reality of school life, but also in terms of increased professional challenges. The greatest challenges were not only enhanced accountability, but also the professional demands made of heads who were required to support all school staff in developing high quality learning and equity for all students.

In this sense, one of the greatest impacts from the 1988 *Reform Act* was on the headteachers themselves, who, all of a sudden, moved from being school-based employees of a bigger system to ‘entrepreneurs’. During this period, not only did the emphasis and language shift from ‘*headteacher*’ to ‘*manager*’ but, in a very short time, from ‘*manager*’ to ‘*leader*’.

5. Director of education is the equivalent of the head of a regional educational facility or an oversight body that mediates the relationship between the Department for Education and schools.

6. Where there is mention of the local authority, it is a regional educational organisation or an oversight body that mediates the relationship between the Department for Education and schools.



“My time as a headteacher was divided in two by the introduction of ‘local management of schools’. I am absolutely sure which half was more enjoyable! The point was not the financial autonomy but the management autonomy I had because I had the finances! I used to be told (by the local authority) that next year I could employ 54.7 teachers, with two at deputy level...and so on. My first budget was £30,000 (for a large secondary school⁷) to spend on books and equipment. Then, overnight, that £30,000 became £3million and I could decide how many teachers I was going to have and all the rest. Suddenly I was in charge of the school’s fate.” John Dunford (champion of the *National Pupil Premium* and adviser to ‘*Whole Education*’⁸)

Another decisive factor in this changing scenario, complementary to the Education Reform Act of 1988, was the progressive reduction of the powers of the local authorities as middle tier bodies in the implementation of education policy. During this period, which began in the 1990s, the feeling intensified that those who understand the real needs of the school are those who manage it every day. ‘Manage’ here refers primarily to pedagogical questions. The usefulness of local authorities was questioned and they were seen as a bottleneck in the implementation of national education policies aimed at having an impact

7. Equivalent to a Brazilian high school.

8. *Whole Education* is a non-governmental organisation that provides support to schools. *Pupil Premium* is a government programme that provides extra funding for students who are entitled to free school meals.



on improving learning. The perceived lack of legitimacy of bureaucrats in a local authority office increased the belief that successful school leaders are the ones who have the expertise to promote improvements in the quality of teaching.

As with many education systems worldwide, the organisation of the English system had a three-tiered structure: central government, local government and schools. In England, the intermediate level – local government – comprised elected local politicians who were able to modify aspects of national policies to reflect local needs and circumstances. Decisions taken at local level, however, did not always match the expectations of central government for the implementation of national policy.

Some local authorities were considered an obstacle to improving education, in many cases tolerating low standards and taking too long to deal with cases of underperformance. This level of governance began to receive the same treatment meted out to failed schools: local authorities were put in 'special measures' and in some cases, submitted to the intervention of private consultancies.

The decision to delegate school leadership responsibility to schools, bypassing local authorities, was not only taken with the intention of weakening the influence of obstructive or stubborn local politicians. Whenever possible, the government aims to present research evidence of the power of effective leadership grounded in the daily life of the school. In a 2010 policy document, it is alleged that a '*lesson taken from the best educational systems in the world is that they delegate the maximum possible power to the front line whilst, at the same time, retaining high levels of accountability.*' White Paper, DfE, 2010.



“It is going to have to come from within in this new, self-improving system. It is all about schools taking responsibility for their own development, for themselves, for their colleagues, for their community and owning it all. If you are able to see this as an opportunity, it is huge! And it is here that the system is crucially dependent on the quality of leadership.” Fiona Allen (headteacher of *Corsham Primary* and *Ofsted* inspector)

A gradual process of reducing budgets made the situation of local authorities difficult to the point that, currently, most of them have trouble providing many of the services for which they were traditionally responsible. These include: financial resources, human resources, school improvement and support for children with special educational needs. Schools now hold the financial resources and are able to choose how to use them. They have turned to alternative providers for the services they need and which local authorities are incapable of providing and this process has given rise to many new private sources to fill the gaping hole.

But it is still too early to rule out the role of local authorities completely. Although private alternatives constitute the ‘preferred’ option for the direct provision of services, a joint accountability role for local authorities seems to be developing. At the moment, there are many schools that prefer to remain linked to the local authority, as a means of sharing an identity with a group of schools supported by the intermediary local organisation. This is despite all the autonomy the schools enjoy and shows that the isolation that some schools can feel can be reversed through an alliance with the authorities.



The Somerset Pact, created by schools in the west of England looking for ways of improving standards, illustrates collaborative work in which the local authority is involved as a partner. In this example, schools worked together, with the participation of officers of the local authority, to define local priorities and find solutions to local challenges.





“The Compact was born at a time when the entire system began to crack and when most secondary schools were deciding to take the money and become academies⁹. It was also due in part to dissatisfaction with what was being given by local authorities. The Compact became a forum for all schools and a repository for all kinds of business that the local authority no longer had the capacity to provide. With all stakeholders coming together there is the chance to plan developments, to obtain better quality assurance as it is the only forum where the full range from early years to upper secondary, governors, academies and community schools meet to consider education for Somerset pupils. The Compact defines action plans and makes decisions about how it will spend its central fund of about six million pounds. (...) In this sense, the Compact brings some stability and cohesion.” David Derbyshire (headteacher of *Wadham School* and adviser to the *Somerset Compact*)

9. Academies are schools that opt to have full autonomy from the local authority. On becoming academies, they receive additional funding from the government.



An effective intermediate level should not be prescribed or implemented centrally, but must come in response to the needs and expectations of schools and of school leaders. [*National College for School Leadership, The New Landscape for Schools and School Leaders, 2012*]

Andy Hargreaves, a leading education researcher, considers the role of local authorities and points out that a possible new form of intermediary organisation is being constituted, where local authorities do not take direct action in school improvement but start taking on a role in promoting the formation of school clusters to develop their self-improvement.

Leadership with Accountability

The delegation of school management, and the consequent autonomy arising from the Education Reform Act of 1988, was something from which all public sector schools benefited. In the education system as a whole, there has been a strengthening of the culture which sees the school as the key actor in the kind of decision-making which is likely to have a major impact on student learning. At the same time, a trend has been developing within schools which mirrors the more general trend to sharing or delegation of power. An *ethos* of trust has developed among school leaders who believe that individual autonomy can generate creativity and enhance learning.

“With the flexibility that we enjoy, I really feel the difference. I inherited 130 school policies, mostly outdated, and, because we no longer were required to answer to the local authority, I just reviewed the 40 policies that are legally compulsory. It was the same with the school development plan and the self-assessment form. This leaves us with more time and space to focus on things like teaching and learning.”
Gavin King (headteacher of *Bressingham Primary School*)



Taken alone, freedom and autonomy are simply states of being. A school is or is not free and autonomous. What matters is what is done with the freedom and autonomy. The usefulness of autonomy for schools will be evaluated by the effectiveness of what results from it, much more than by its title. To this end, the past few years have seen accountability mechanisms being put in place to enable evaluation of school results and of the quality of leadership and management. Students' learning remains the core focus, but accountability also has to consider financial management, management of human resources, and of the curriculum. In extreme circumstances, when a school is incapable of reversing repeated low performance, the school leader is liable to lose his or her position.

A system with a high level of autonomy in different aspects of school governance requires some form of control over how resources are being used and what the outcomes are. Accountability creates the link in the system. Certain standards are expected, but schools are free to choose how they will achieve them. This, of course, is far from being straightforward. Tensions invariably develop in the relationship between schools and central government, especially those schools which, for various reasons, may find it difficult to improve the learning of their students.

Derek Morris, regional secretary for London of the National Association of Headteachers recalls that, fifteen years ago, *'there was less accountability and, therefore, there was a different kind of autonomy'*. He makes it clear that the new autonomy creates tension, bringing with it acute forms of accountability for the school leader.

An isolated policy of granting greater autonomy to schools will not produce better results per se. Schools with more autonomy tend to perform better than schools with less autonomy when the school system as a whole uses accountability guidelines such as setting clear goals as to what students are expected to learn and share information on the results, and/or when principals and teachers work together to manage the schools. [OECD: *PISA 2012 Results: What Makes Schools Successful? Resources, Policies and Practice*, 2013]



“Headteachers have become very vulnerable to losing their jobs if their school has not jumped through the accountability hoops successfully... With the powerful accountability structure, schools tend to be either confident or constrained. The ones who are constrained are very, very wary of doing anything other than jumping through the *Ofsted*¹⁰ hoops because someone is going to lose their job if they don't push the right buttons.” Dr. John Dunford (champion *National Pupil Premium* and adviser to *Whole Education*)

10. The organisation responsible for the inspection of the English public school system.



Russell Hobby, General Secretary of the *National Headteachers Association (NAHT)*, expresses understandable reservations about the burden imposed on small schools, given the full range of duties they have to meet. He also speaks of the capacity of schools to take risks in a potentially punitive environment:

"It is possible to take risks, but first your results have to be at least reasonable – we have the example of some free schools which have tried to strike out in a new direction but their results were appalling and they have lost their licence to practise! Headship is like a stool, as long as all the legs are in place, you can lose one and survive, but not if more start to go...so if you have the confidence of the governing body and the parental body (both within headteachers' control) and you are delivering at least good enough results in league tables, there is a lot that can be done in terms of innovation and professional risks." Russell Hobby (General Secretary of the National Association of Headteachers)

On the other hand, many educators and experts claim that an autonomous system without accountability would be untenable in terms of public management.

'I think a basic structure must exist before schools are freed to act on their own! If there is public money involved, there must be some degree of built-in accountability.

The freedom given to academies in this country has gone too far in many respects, and some school headteachers abused the situation, for example, spending money on themselves!' Fiona Allen (headteacher of Corsham Primary and Ofsted inspector)



Tensions of this kind exist and have to be managed carefully. Changes to a policy of accountability can overwhelm some, such as very small schools or schools located in rural areas, or the most vulnerable. As the case of England shows, other types of support can be provided and there are a number of strategies that generate extra help – and not only in terms of financial resources – for schools that are struggling.

Accountability produces consequences. Logic dictates that it could not be otherwise. A school that has received a negative *Ofsted* report will have increased monitoring and hence greater scrutiny and less autonomy over decisions than a school that has had a successful report. A local authority leader, Paddy McGuire, argued that schools that are not doing well under *Ofsted* need to tighten up on freedoms and autonomy until they achieve a 'good' judgement and then drop the reins and relax while striving to achieve the 'outstanding' judgement.

Most schools in England receive positive reports from *Ofsted* and therefore are better placed to take advantage of the enormous degree of autonomy they have compared with schools in other education systems. There is great potential for creative innovation geared to bringing about change. It all depends of course on the quality of the person leading the institution.

"In a liberal, democratic state, I take the view that autonomy is a good thing. It is desirable to be in control of who you are and where you want to go. It is something I have always wanted for children and for the school I led. But autonomy doesn't exist in a vacuum, it is always in the context of a community. We are encouraged to be autonomous but if



it is in a vacuum, you become a tyrant. If autonomy is denied, you cannot do what you have to do.” Rob Benzie (Executive Officer of the Somerset Secondary Headteachers’ Association)

Rob Benzie points out that autonomy does not exist in a void. It does not ‘belong’ to a community, a team, let alone a leader who does not have the skills required for the performance of such a role. Autonomy is important in achieving positive results but depends on the capacity of a headteacher to lead – although not alone – important features of school life - the emotional, educational and administrative. To be bold in the exercise of autonomy can be risky - and far from free of consequences.

In this context, it is worth reflecting on the balance between autonomy and prescription. Today, in the English system, there is no desire to return to an era when school headteachers had to ask permission of the local authority to leave the school premises, carry out small repairs or implement the curriculum. The limits of autonomy need to be preserved but balance is essential for a concept such as ‘accountability’. Its influence has the potential to inhibit autonomous innovation since the process of experimenting holds implicit risks.

Autonomy is a condition, a tool that school leaders can use to achieve their goals. On its own, it is an empty container. To become meaningful and effective, it requires vision, values and purpose. An autonomous leader will not serve the community well if autonomy is the ultimate goal, as is the case of a leader described by the renowned poet Roger McCough:



I wanna be the leader
I wanna be the leader
Can I be the leader?
Can I? Can I?
Promise? Promise?
Yippee, I'm the leader
I'm the leader

Ok what do we do?

[McGough, R., *The Kingfisher Book of Funny Poems*, 2002.]

Politician David Simmons leaves no room for doubt: *'I support our degree of autonomy, but only if there are good leaders. Without them, it is a recipe for disaster. To put it another way, the greater the autonomy in a school system, the more important is the quality of leadership in schools.'*

The External School Inspection System: Office for Standards in Education - Ofsted

After the creation of *Ofsted* (*Office for Standards in Education*), in 1992, schools began to receive full-scale inspections, covering all aspects of their work: teaching and learning, leadership, finance, facilities, policy documentation, etc. During the first ten years or so, schools were visited for five days every five or six years. They were advised of the visits some weeks in advance, giving them time to prepare.



Starting in 2005, schools were told just days before an impending inspection. They were encouraged to keep a *Self Evaluation Form (SEF)*, in which they could provide contextual and performance information to help inspectors before the inspection. *Ofsted* visits now last only two or three days, with fewer inspectors, are held every three or four years, with just one day's notice.

Each inspection is followed by a public report made available online for consultation, and many parents take advantage of this. The report has become an important tool used by families in search of a 'good' school. The on-line report provides a general overall judgement, accompanied by reviews of specific areas of the school's work. The scale used when first introduced was 1 (outstanding), 2 (good), 3 (satisfactory) and 4 (inadequate). Schools in the lowest category, inadequate, were subject to frequent subsequent inspections until judged to have reached a satisfactory standard.

The inspection system underwent significant changes in 2012, when two separate versions were produced. The main innovation was the decision to abolish the judgement 'satisfactory' and replace it with 'requires improvement'. The justification given was that no school should be able to make do with just being 'satisfactory'. All should be encouraged to achieve a good or outstanding judgement. Failure to do so would result in serious repercussions.

For many, this turned out to be a genuine incentive to improve. Richard Graydon, Executive Officer of the Somerset Association of Secondary Headteachers, whose schools needed to improve their standards, illustrates one aspect of the impact of this change: *'Our schools were good for pastoral work, but weak in terms of progress. The replacement of 'satisfactory' by 'requires improvement' injected an urgency that was not there before.'*

Schools that receive the 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' judgement are monitored and supported by *Ofsted* for several months – receiving visits from inspectors, with written and published reports on their progress – and should expect a thorough follow-up inspection within one or two years, depending on the severity of their shortcomings.



The Department for Education produces annual sets of data on school performance on tests and national examinations¹¹. The way in which results of individual schools influence inspections has changed a lot over the years and is a powerful force in the lives of English schools.

Inspections today

Ofsted has a small central team, which comprises the remaining members of the elite school inspectors, *Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI)*. The strategic direction of *Ofsted* is led by the core team while inspections are carried out by inspectors employed by private educational consultancies. To ensure consistency, all inspectors are trained on the important 'inspection framework' which is updated annually. In addition to this, there are clear procedures to be followed in the inspections, with defined instructions to inspectors for the period before, during and after the visits, as described below.



11. On the Ofsted website, it is possible to read inspection reports and all other documents produced for every school in England. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>



Inspection mode

Before

Notification

A school is notified of an inspection at noon or just after noon of the working day prior to the start of the inspection. But the *HMCI (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools)* reserves the right to inspect any school without prior notice, when deemed necessary. When the inspection is performed without notice, there is a call to the school 15 to 30 minutes before the visit.

Information about the school used by inspectors

For the initial identification of issues to be checked during the inspection, inspectors look at a range of evidence, including performance data, the report of the school's previous inspection, any recent reports and/or *Ofsted* monitoring letters and *Parent View*¹².

Gathering of information on the opinions of parents, students and other partners about the school before and during the inspection

When notified of an inspection, the school must take reasonable steps to notify all parents of students enrolled in it, including those who are excluded, those who involved in some type of activity outside school, those involved in special programmes, or those who are absent. The school must also notify any relevant external partners including those who provide some kind of support to their students.

Ofsted provides a standard letter to notify parents of the inspection. Schools are obliged to distribute this. The letter gives information to the parents and explains how they are able to express their opinions. This document will be the primary source of information for inspectors on the views of parents. Inspectors will also take into account the results of previous surveys carried out or commissioned by the school.

During the inspection, the inspectors talk to several students to sample their opinions on important aspects of the school. Inspectors also take into account outside opinions about the school's performance. These can include any evaluation of school performance undertaken by the local authority.

12. Questionnaires filled out by parents covering different aspects of the school and available on-line.



During

Duration of the visit

Inspections usually do not last more than two days, and the size of the inspection team varies according to the size and nature of the school. In a large school there may be five inspectors, for example.

Inspection routines

Inspectors spend most of the time observing lessons and gathering evidence to substantiate their assessments. They evaluate evidence regarding the performance of specific groups of students and individuals, including students entitled to additional support. They pay particular attention to the quality of learning in normal lessons as well as 'booster' lessons and evidence of learning programmes offered outside normal school hours.

Other evidence gathered by inspectors includes discussions with students and staff, listening to students reading and scrutinising their workbooks. The inspectors also examine school registers and documentation relating to student progress and safeguarding. They have a duty to take into account the views of all those who have some kind of involvement with the school.

Record of evidence

During the inspection, the inspectors gather, analyse and record evidence and write down their judgements on forms that are standard for all schools in the country. The forms are part of the inspection evidence-base. The Lead Inspector is responsible for compiling and ensuring the quality of the evidence-base.

Contributions of the school team: headteacher and staff

An inspection will have a greater impact on a school's ability to improve if the school staff understand the evidence and the conclusions that led to the judgements, and understand what needs to be done to improve. Thus, the lead inspector must make sure that the headteacher and staff:

- ✓ Are aware of the inspection;
- ✓ Understand how the inspection team makes its judgements;
- ✓ Are given the opportunity to ask questions about how evidence is used to form judgements;
- ✓ Have the opportunity to present evidence.

Headteachers are invited to:

- ✓ Undertake joint observations of lessons with the inspector(s), as agreed with the lead inspector;
- ✓ Receive regular updates by the lead inspector, unless there are strong reasons why this is not done;
- ✓ Attend formal meetings of the inspection team at the end of each day of the inspection;
- ✓ Comment on the recommendations of the inspectors, to ensure that they are understood.

The participation of headteachers in inspection activities such as attendance at team meetings and participation in joint observations is not mandatory, and a headteacher may choose to accept or not.



After

Judgements

The lead inspector is responsible for ensuring that school judgements are agreed upon collectively by the inspection team, that they are based on the criteria in the inspection framework and are convincingly substantiated by recorded evidence. Inspectors identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school and what it needs to do to improve. Findings are discussed with the school headteacher at regular intervals and, where appropriate, with senior staff. The headteacher must have the opportunity to provide evidence, if relevant.

Final judgements will only be made when all the evidence has been collected and analysed.

These judgements, including the overall effectiveness of the school, represent the collective opinion of the inspection team. They will be subject to quality control by *Ofsted* before the report is published.





The final element of an *Ofsted* inspection, the written report, also has a standard format. Currently, a slimmed-down report is being developed which has the following structure:

First part

- ✓ Detailing the reasons that led to the judgements, followed by the main strengths of the school;
- ✓ Information about the inspection such as the names of the inspection team members, the duration of the visit, the number of observed teachers, the meetings held and the documents examined.

Second part

- ✓ More general information relevant to understanding the context of the particular school (ethnic break down, speakers of English as an additional language, number of students involved in support programmes, composition of the Governing Body, size of the school compared with national averages, if there was a recent change of the headteacher, among others);
- ✓ What the school needs to do to improve, with specific focus on student learning, quality of teaching, behaviour and safety of students, leadership and management and, finally, a comment on the participation of the Governing Body.

The inspection process, from notification of the inspection to publication of results, creates in the school community a mix of apprehension and keen anticipation – the hope that there will be recognition of the school's good work.

One primary school, *Whitehall Junior*, founded in 1911, had received an *Ofsted*



inspection the day before a site visit which was part of this research programme. Since taking on the headship of the school almost ten years ago, Joanna Nightingale has been working to develop a staff team committed to improving the quality of learning for students, 70 per cent of whom do not have English as their first language. The last inspection of the school took place in 2010, and there was keen anticipation that inspectors would recognise the progress that has since been made. Staff revealed a potent mix of attitudes to the inspection and accountability. The entire school team had clearly expended enormous energy organising data to show the inspectors as evidence of strategies that had been developed and to demonstrate the investment in learning that had taken place. The school leader's role as 'edgy' catalyst of this palpable commitment to the school is very evident.

The existence of detailed steps for all inspections seeks to achieve consistency among the teams undertaking this work, especially the outsourced professionals – most of whom are experienced headteachers of public sector schools. The strategy aims to ensure the same standard of judgement in inspections of all schools. However, there is a degree of discomfort expressed by schools who dislike the rigidity of the framework.

There is a feeling that there is a finality to inspection judgements that bears little relation to the nature of classroom experience. It is clear that the attitude schools express about *Ofsted* often correlates directly with the assessment made by the inspection team: schools rated as good or outstanding see the inspections as positive and those receiving negative comments may react to the whole process with extreme indignation. By contrast, *Ofsted* inspectors often claim that anxiety generated by the inspections is actually brought on by the headteachers themselves!

It is undeniable that headteachers have concerns that the choice of judgements made by *Ofsted* inevitably constrains schools to focus on these criteria: they seek to understand what inspectors will look for during an inspection and how they might plan to meet expectations.



"A lot of headteacher time is taken up in fear of *Ofsted* and preparing for it. (...) A number of schools which have achieved outstanding judgements have heads who are *Ofsted* inspectors as well. If I had done a recent inspection as an inspector (prior to our recent inspection), I think I would have been better placed to argue that we deserved outstanding! (...)

I think the positives about *Ofsted* are that it is based on action research in schools and has led to higher expectations of children and has kept lifting these, which I think keeps the momentum for improvement. I think we now have a shared understanding of what good teaching and good leadership look like." Gavin King (headteacher of *Bressingham Primary School*)

Gavin King demonstrates the positive result of what happens when school headteachers become familiar with how *Ofsted* works, by becoming qualified inspectors themselves. Some school leaders describe themselves as 'resident inspectors' - in a positive sense: they consider it their duty to monitor their schools every day, preparing them for when *Ofsted* inspectors appear. In some schools, this process is carried too far, and teachers receive constant visits by senior leaders observing what happens in the classroom. Teachers feel that senior leaders give too much attention to what is observed in the inspections and cease to be interested in the broader issues of education. There is clearly a need to find a balance between the monitoring of teaching in classrooms and trusting the professionalism of fellow teachers.



The removal of a headteacher

A decision on the future of a headteacher depends on the school's Governing Body. If the headteacher is new to a school and cannot be held responsible for current performance, it is extremely unlikely that a poor inspection report would result in dismissal. If, however, the headteacher has been in the school for a long time, the likelihood of dismissal increases considerably.



Despite the anxiety reported by many school teams, it is important to highlight the support that *Ofsted* offers, especially for schools that find it difficult to reverse under-achievement. As noted above, inspections often act as spurs to change that have an impact on the quality of education.

To some extent, it is to be expected that a system carrying with it a high level of accountability will cause distortions in the behaviour of those who are likely to fail. They will change in order to increase their chances of achieving set targets, and the changes will not always be in the students' interests. The dilemmas about the *Ofsted* inspection system have given rise to serious considerations of alternative approaches that would meet the schools' needs, whilst still providing sufficient data for monitoring and accountability.

"I think the *Ofsted* journey was an important part of developments that have taken us here. I do think, however, that schools in this country are reaching the point where actually *Ofsted* should become less harsh or the stakes lowered a bit. There is now so much capacity for rigorous and accurate self-evaluation in schools that you can move to a system that is more like the Finnish system where there is still accountability but it takes different forms." Andy Reid (former HMI and Head of Institutional Inspections and Frameworks, *Ofsted*)

At all times, the role of the inspection system is subject to scrutiny and review. Its focus is modified with great regularity, and influenced by changes brought in by the national Minister of Education or the head of *Ofsted*. Many people believe the model is based on a lack of trust in educators and would prefer a model based on improved training and development of teachers. On the other hand, the outside



community, society at large and the government like inspection outcomes which are easy to read. It is unlikely that the *Ofsted* system will come to an end, but rather that the institution will undergo further development.

The Role of Assessment Data

Nowadays, the power of data provokes enthusiasm worldwide – and this applies to systems with high levels of autonomy and accountability as well. The English Department for Education (equivalent to the Brazilian Ministry of Education), even before the end of the 1990s had developed one of the largest and most comprehensive databases on students and schools anywhere in the world, and it is added to year-on-year.

School leaders of an earlier era would not have understood the reason for such commitment. They would have wondered about the nature and purpose of the data, since most schools in their time had compiled data on student attendance and little else.

“When I first started working in the field, around 2000, there was a small amount of data on school performance and that has grown so that through the schools’ census (data collected from all schools three times per year) we have a record of the data of every individual pupil on roll in a school which is matched to their attendance record and attainment record. Over time, that data resource has grown each year. But we haven’t really seen a tremendous increase in understanding of data – and that is not a criticism just for education, but applies to society as a whole.” Dave Thomson (statistician)



The abundant data in schools comes from assessment of student achievement either resulting from teacher assessment or from tests and formal examinations. These assessments combine to produce a performance profile for whole classes of students and for the school as a whole. Results can be compared from year-to-year, from class-to-class or from school-to-school. Data can be accessed by parents, inspectors and the general public.

While there are constant debates about the validity of assessments, schools nevertheless spend enormous energy and time in an effort to refine their data-generating processes – a task which has become an essential one in the repertoire of school leaders.

The headteacher Dominic Cragoe is not the only one to say that he and his colleagues consider that data collection is now a crucial part of the contemporary educational world and to ignore it would be very risky. As noted earlier, the first words uttered by an *Ofsted* inspector when visiting a school are probably about school data, and any headteacher who is not well prepared to talk about this subject will be in trouble.

Wise headteachers need not be personally aware of all data details, but someone among the leadership team should be. Nowadays, the pages of the *Times Educational Supplement* carry several job advertisements for school data managers, announced every week. Dave Thomson cites the observation that some schools are 'data democracies', with knowledge being freely shared among senior leaders, while a few other schools operate a more risky arrangement of 'data dictatorship' in which numbers are guarded by a specialist who makes a point of only releasing to enquirers data considered to be in the person's interest.



"It is vitally important. We hold year-group feedback sessions where my head of 'assessment, recording and reporting' will sit with the team of three teachers and their assistants and they are 'held to account'. We use a program called Pupil Asset and we are clear that we would expect X (result or progress) on the basis of where the children were last year, and if they haven't made progress we will ask questions. The reviews happen three times a year and it is a sizeable job." Dominic Cragoe (headteacher of *Seringham Primary National Teaching School Alliance* and *Ofsted* inspector)

Peter Earley is a renowned leadership researcher in England. He describes the importance of 'improvements driven by data'. Schools in England are aware of *the consequences of prolonged poor performance*, and it is now expected that they will use data to track the progress of groups of students who may not be achieving adequately. Data is a very powerful tool available to schools, and the use of this tool is being improved rapidly. Peter Earley describes how schools with students from poorer families receive additional funds (*Pupil Premium*) – but the funds are contingent on schools giving an exact account of how the money is spent and, crucially, the impact that funding has had on the academic progress of the pupils concerned.

In this scenario, some institutions have developed guidelines to help staff see how data can inform developments in teaching and learning. One tool developed by the *Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)* is widely used by headteachers. The tool lists the various initiatives used by schools to try to tackle under-performance of students and evaluates the relative statistical impact of each initiative. It is a most useful tool which enables schools to study pedagogically-valid strategies, evaluate which ones generate the best cost-benefit outcomes, and decide which ones best meet their needs.



The ability to understand and interpret available data on the school and on the educational system more generally is an important skill for any school leader. Interviews and field visits show that the great challenge for the school leader is to create an environment in which data is a tool to support all staff involved in teaching and learning. Senior and middle leaders have to be able to support teachers in the classroom with data which is directly relevant to the challenges which occur in the classroom environment.





REFLECTIONS FOR THE BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

The English experience offers evidence for reflection on aspects of the education system that influence the way school leadership and management are carried out by the headteacher and other leaders. First of all we have seen that there is now a more direct link between the national Department for Education and the school, and a reduction in the role of the local authority. As a result, decision-making about teaching and learning and administration is the school's responsibility, creating a huge degree of autonomy about what works best for each school. The monitoring of how schools are performing in terms of standards is achieved by a system of inspections, and the production of abundant data, the results of which also serve as accountability measures for the lead professionals in schools.

The introduction of national policies in England enables us to evaluate similarities with the Brazilian context, and to reflect on areas where differences exist between the two contexts:

- ✓ **Autonomy and accountability:** there has been an exponential growth in school autonomy in England, both in terms of pedagogical and administrative decision-making, including the procurement of out-sourced services and investment in infrastructure. As a consequence, there has been a massive investment in the training and development of headteachers capable of performing such an important role. The national education department has a more remote control of what happens at school level and, therefore has developed accountability mechanisms to scrutinise the results of each school. The accountability mechanisms are taken very seriously and when there are failures in teaching and learning or administration, there are serious consequences for schools. In Brazil, the degree of autonomy experienced by schools depends on the local system in which they work. In general, one can say that there is more room for autonomy in relation to educational matters than to administrative ones. The degree of accountability is still low, with the focus on administration. The English example leads us to reflect on how important it will be to invest in human resources if we are to set up a more effective autonomous system.



- ✓ **The Middle Tier:** the reduction in the role of this structure (local education authorities) in the English education system has its main justification in the belief that it is the *school and inside the school* that the best solutions to challenges can be found. The initiative to weaken the role of the middle tier derives from a feeling that the distance between policy makers and grass-roots practitioners has been too great. In Brazil, influential secretaries of education create intermediary bodies which work between them and the schools. It is useful to re-consider the efficiency of this system since the same feeling of detachment exists between those who work on school policy and those who implement it. The intermediary bodies often question their own function. There are districts that have already sought to redesign this top-down relationship and the role of professionals involved. But it is still common to find areas where at the intermediate/regional level bureaucratic roles emerge that hold back the prioritisation of pedagogical matters in their relations with schools. They take an attitude of simply passing on information, with little dialogue taking place between them and the schools. Even in smaller networks that rely on just one central body, there is often a gulf between the daily routine of the school and the educational policy that comes from above. A key strategic step may well be to re-think the approach to management structures so that they respond more quickly and in harmony to the demands and difficulties of the school and the classroom.

- ✓ **School inspection system:** the current arrangements for school inspections in England gained momentum in the 2000s. An administratively autonomous institution (*Ofsted*) offers support to the central government department responsible for monitoring and accountability of schools. With substantial investment of resources, it has also provided support for pedagogical improvement in those schools which are facing great challenges. This occurs in two ways. One is by way of enhanced monitoring by inspectors of those schools that are facing greatest difficulty – especially by working closely with the headteacher. The other tends to follow an inspection and triggers the involvement of a supportive school leader from another school to help in the development of an action plan for the needy school. Implementation of the action plan is then monitored by *Ofsted*, by the Governing Body, by the school staff and by the school leader who is offering support. The creation of an organisation responsible for monitoring schools



provides opportunities for more transparency in the process and gives more room for consideration of pedagogical issues. The detail of how inspections are undertaken in England also offers an alternative model to the traditional school monitoring systems that normally take place in Brazil. Most Brazilian Departments of Education already have technical supervisors who visit schools. It is time to assess what occurs during these visits and see how they can be improved to increase their effectiveness. We have seen that in the case of *Ofsted*, it not just a question of reading statistics and holding meetings with the school leaders: important insights can be gained through dialogue with teachers, students, families and through classroom observation. The choice and collection of data by *Ofsted* shows how a closer reading of the school context can be achieved, one that is truer to the reality of schools with, as a consequence, the provision of support for struggling schools being more customized to need.

- ✓ **Assessment data:** by the 1990s, the English system was recognised as being one of the most prolific producers of data about its schools. Since then, the trend has intensified and developed further: data can be filtered and analysed in countless ways, seeking trends per school, per subject, per teacher, per locality... In fact they can be looked at in many, many different ways and the database is available to schools with updates being made almost immediately after tests or examinations have occurred. The disclosure of data to the community, in a language that assists families to choose and monitor school quality for their children, is also advancing with the inclusion of questionnaire data from parents' point of view. Most schools strive to transmit to the community their values and their commitment to student learning. In Brazil, when comparing the evaluation data produced in the 1990s to the present, there has been a major advance and a trend for programmes in this field that resemble the English approach. Today's main challenge for the departments is to promote the better use of data to inform the pedagogical work of schools and to communicate their meaning more comprehensibly to families and society. A more systemic level of challenge remains. Assessment data has to be used to improve the management of networks of schools – in terms of equitable provision of support to schools in the continuing professional development of school leaders and teaching coordinators.





THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP



Among the many responsibilities held by school headteachers, none is more important than that of the quality of teaching and the learning. It can be extremely difficult for school leaders to retain this as the number one priority when finances are fragile, the school building needs repairs, it is difficult to recruit teachers and important incidents of the community are affecting the school. But learning is the one aspect of school life about which there can be no negotiation.

Ofsted inspectors virtually ignore the intense desire of school heads to 'contextualise things'. As seen in the previous chapter, the task of the inspectors is to analyse evidence (especially assessment data) of the school's previous position compared with its current position, and to look for reasons to explain the degree of progress. Attempts by headteachers to camouflage poor performance rarely work.

To deal with this range of responsibilities without losing focus on student learning, the English education system has adopted different strategies for training its headteachers. Some focus on the skills of the individual and some centre on the individual's ability to create a support team of leaders working together.

In this chapter we will look at these strategies and see how they strengthen the skill level required in the running of a school. At the outset, it is worth emphasising the stress that is placed on the school itself being the preferred place for training to occur.



The National College for School Leadership

“One of the high points for me in terms of leadership innovations was the *National College*. I learnt more about leadership development there than anywhere. It was a real high and I went to everything I could.” John Ayres (Principal of *Eden Academy* and national leader of education)

The central importance of leadership in schools was affirmed by the creation in 2000 of a national college for the development of school leaders. Its location in the heart of the country, Nottingham, was loaded with symbolism, and its building had high-quality accommodation and facilities for meetings and conferences. When it was created, the *College*, as it is called by most, was seen as the first of its kind in the world, and created a widespread sense of pride and loyalty among the profession.

The leadership college played a primary role in the development and implementation of a qualification for the position of school headteacher in England, the **National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)**, which, until 2012, was mandatory for new headteachers, ensuring the development of a large contingent of headteachers who currently work in schools.



"The sheer idea that there was a place for heads to come together and that leadership was valued and important, that there was a programme of training that heads went through...was all hugely significant. There was now an institution where heads came together not in their professional self-interest but in their role as a profession – valuing their professional integrity and shaping the system, and the *National College* was a vehicle for doing this." Russell Hobby (General Secretary of the National Association of Headteachers)

"The *College* gave people the feeling of being part of something the government valued. Over 90 per cent of school principals said they always valued the work of the National College, even if they had never been there." Steve Munby (former Chief Executive of the *National College*)

From the time of its inauguration, the *National College* began promoting courses based in its home building, as well as conferences of international quality. Its publications are considered a reference point in the field of leadership training, with creative and innovative ideas that inspire the practice of headteachers in England. Its web site offers practical and stimulating ideas and case studies.

Currently, the headship qualification offered by the *College* is optional, but it is still seen as excellent preparation for the practical task of running a school in England. It takes between six and 18 months to complete the training, and applicants must:



- ✓ Spend a minimum of nine days in a school in a different context from their own;
- ✓ Finish three basic study modules and two elective modules;
- ✓ Go through a final evaluation.

The contents of the basic modules cover the following themes¹³:

- ✓ **Leading and enhancing teaching: learning to develop, improve and maintain high quality education in your school;**
- ✓ **Leading an effective school: know the main administrative systems needed in an effective school, especially teacher performance, student behaviour and financial management;**
- ✓ **Success in school management: learn about the legal and accounting elements essential to a headteacher's job and to governance, with an emphasis on how successful headteachers operate in practice.**

The final assessment consists of three tasks: one carried out in the candidate's own school, a second in a different school and thirdly, an assessment based on a presentation and interview. The candidate must demonstrate at the end of the tasks what improvement was achieved in the two schools and in the interview the ability to undertake a professional presentation.



13. See attached topics covered in each of these subjects and the optional ones.



The content covers important aspects of administration but emphasises the educational and inter-personal aspects the leadership role demands. When they are interviewed, headteachers often reveal very different styles or interests, some with a greater emphasis on administration, others clearly on teaching, but regardless of the preference for one area or another, it is clear that all of them have to embrace both and maintain a clear focus on the quality of what is happening in the school.

Another important point to note is the *practical character* that the training has had over time – a first draft had given too much emphasis to theory, and aspects of the practical job were being neglected. The training course for headteachers was in danger of perpetuating the divorce between those who contemplate school life and those who live it.

The response of the *National College* was to make sure the focus was on training taking place in the school environment, thus providing opportunities for on-the-job learning, with the support of a mentor. Thus, the qualification of headteachers moved from a programme based on a course to a practical on-the-job learning programme.

Steve Munby, who led the *National College* in its heyday, considers the creation of the qualification (NPQH) one of the great National College successes, but expresses a caveat. For him, at first, it was too easy to gain access to the course: *'The process was not sufficiently rigorous. The important thing in a national standard is to keep the level of demand high and that it be revised.'*

The current chief executive of the *National College*, Charlie Taylor, reinforces one of the great achievements of the training: *'The great achievement of the NPQH was that it got leaders to think more about leadership as opposed to management. The qualities of a good leader were thought to be what makes the difference. Good management can be done by lots of people, but good leadership is much rarer, more precious, and needs to be harnessed better.'*



There is no ready recipe for success as a leader. However, the work of organisations like the *National College* helps us understand some of the essential characteristics of leadership behaviour. The challenge is to translate these behaviours into different working modes in schools. Inspired by practical case studies, some commentators have sought to list the types of leadership skills that guide the development of training courses. To learn more, see more detail in Appendix 2.

In the last two years, the *National College* has been through many changes, and it is still all too early to assess fairly the reasons that have driven these changes. One very concrete factor in today's global reality has been the global financial crisis. The *National College* suffered governmental financial cuts of more than 50 per cent and today, instead of being an independent organisation, it is part of the Department for Education and, as such, is much more susceptible to the direct influence of the government.



An important role that the College had recently was to evaluate proposals for schools to become recognized teacher training centres, the so-called *teaching schools*, as we shall see later. These schools will have a strategic role in the training of new leaders with a vision to strengthen the identification and training of middle leaders, the future heads of schools.

In the words of the *College* itself, their focus is centred on:

“Improving the quality of the educational workforce and help schools help each other to improve. We will work with schools to develop a school system from 0 to 18 years that would involve training of teachers and leaders, continuous professional development and school to school support, all done locally by partnerships led by the best headteachers.”
*DfE, The National College for Teaching and Leadership:
Aims 1-2, 2013*

National Leaders of Education

One of the main legacies of the *National College* was the creation in 2006 of *National Leaders of Education (NLE)*. The group of NLEs was formed by the *National College* following the identification, following careful analysis, of school leaders believed to be outstanding, and who then received tailor-made training. The initiative to encourage mutual support among school leaders has been maintained since its implementation, despite the change of government, and by the end of 2015 it is expected that the number of NLEs will reach 1,000 professionals (to support the potential twenty thousand schools run by the state).



“The government of the time was concerned about what to do about schools that were not being well led. At the time, the only solutions were to close the school and give it a fresh start or to try to persuade a good headteacher to lead it. The trouble was that people knew even in those days that if you left your school to go in to be a head of a school in special measures it was a risky career move and too many headteachers had gone to do that and had come unstuck. So the model changed to identifying the best heads and enabling them and their staff to work alongside the school in trouble, improving the school’s capacity. This was a key shift in policy and meant that you didn’t have to, as a headteacher, leave your own school in order to help another one.”
Steve Munby (former Chief Executive of the *National College for School Leadership*)

In order to become a *NLE* the headteacher had not only to be leader of an outstanding school, but also to have the necessary skills and experience to work as a trainer of peers and to work in a collaborative manner with other schools. The system recognises that not every great headteacher is necessarily suited to this new role.

In addition to the new *NLE* role, the idea of *National Support Schools (NSS)* was developed. These are the schools of *NLEs* which offer to support schools in difficulty by deploying not only the headteacher in a support role, but other key professionals as well. Such support lasts for a limited time, but usually not less than one or two school terms.



Both the school of the *NLE* and the supported school receive money from the Department for Education (equivalent to the Ministry of Education in Brazil) to enable school-to-school support work to take place. This allows teachers to be released from their normal duties and cover to be provided without damaging the teaching of their students.

As suggested by the title ‘national leader of education’, these professionals can be deployed anywhere in the country. The work of leaders and their schools includes:

- ✓ Support for teachers in aspects of classroom management and planning;
- ✓ Classroom observation and feedback to teachers on the quality of their teaching;
- ✓ Analysis of data to identify students who are having difficulty in learning and the reasons why;
- ✓ Reciprocal visits of staff from both schools;
- ✓ Participation in school leadership team meetings and of the Governing Body;
- ✓ Support with financial management.

The development of a national network of schools which share their experience with each other and, when necessary, take control and rescue failed institutions, has introduced a powerful mechanism for change to the school system.

After they are appointed, national leaders are deployed by the *National College* to work with specific schools. Essentially, four steps are covered in the partnership process:

Beginning: the national leader takes time to build a relationship with the headteacher of the school receiving support, using *coaching* and *mentoring* techniques.

Engaging teachers and immersion in the context: there is committed effort to develop open relationships with teachers in the school receiving support and gradually deepen understanding of the school’s problems.



Promoting the work and making it happen: once the problems have been understood, the national leader will act quickly to implement improvements and provide evidence of results in order to create a sense of achievement and possibility of change.

To remain resilient and generate sustainable change: the *NLE* will expect some setbacks and some resistance to change, but will stick with the task and ensure that change will be permanent and not just temporary.

Avril Newman is a national leader with considerable experience. Her school, *Sir William Burrough Primary School*, has much in common with many schools in Brazil: it is located in one of the most vulnerable parts of London, and yet is just a few kilometres away from the largest financial districts in the country, with their sumptuous skyscrapers. Students at the school are mostly (95 per cent) children of immigrants from Bangladesh and English is not the mother tongue for more than 70 per cent of the children.

In this challenging context, Avril and her team took the school to the top of league tables and it has remained there for over ten years. The headteacher points out that key to this result has been the development of a compact, dedicated team which shares a whole-school vision. She is omnipresent in the corridors, in the playground and in classrooms. She has a keen familiarity with data on pupil performance and monitors carefully the impact of each strategy designed to improve results. The school's deputy headteacher, Anthony Wilson, despite having significant leadership responsibilities also manages a class of children of his own.

For headteacher Avril and her deputy, Anthony, the *NLE* model is exciting. For them, the process of support from school-to-school is a key factor in the improvement of those schools which have difficulty in turning round poor performance.



“In the *NLE* model it is co-constructed work and the support headteacher and school learn as much as the supported partner. It is co-constructed because you cannot transfer what works well in one school to another. It depends on context, what works well in individual places. When we were working with a failing school we learnt from them the advantages of joined-up script in handwriting and our teachers had to learn from the other school’s teachers that it was the right way to work. It is very much a two-way programme.” Avril Newman e Anthony Wilson



This chapter has shown that support work between schools is predicated upon the existence of a strong team in the supporting school in terms of its leadership and management, but especially its quality of teaching. The supporting headteacher must be able to call upon senior and middle leaders who have the qualities and skills not only to teach well, but to train and develop others as well.

Shared Leadership

Today, in almost all schools, there is a clear leadership structure designed to respond to the circumstances each faces. In some schools, a top-down structure exists, with the headteacher clearly at the top. In others, there is a more horizontal structure, indicating that the workload is shared in a more balanced way among several experienced leaders.

Headteachers usually have one or two deputy headteachers and possibly assistant headteachers – as seen earlier, the school has the autonomy to define the composition of the leadership team and that of the middle leaders. The duties of each member of such teams are clearly defined and cover most aspects of school life, from curriculum and assessment to behaviour, from the professional development of teachers and other staff members to finance and community relations.

The leadership team and the Governing Body regularly discuss the school's needs and look to recruit staff members able to take on the roles and tasks the school needs. Vision and experience are key to creating a balanced team. If no one within the school has the required qualities, external recruitment takes place with a clear job description and person specification being drawn up. In order to create a strong staff team, headteachers are always in search of colleagues with the talents required to meet the current needs of the school.



At all levels of the school, responsibilities will be shared by teachers and non-teaching staff. For teachers, there is an understanding that their work is not limited to what goes on in the classroom. Their work may involve responsibility for coordinating colleagues who teach students of the same age or who teach the same subject. Some teachers may be specialists in behaviour or in general aspects of teaching and learning. Others may lead a subject (mathematics or English, for example) or a 'phase' in a primary school.

“The growth of leadership teams sits with the transition from ‘administration’ to leadership, and the expansion in responsibilities of leaders which necessitates that leadership is not a one-person role. This is supported by the research which puts leadership second only to quality of teaching as a determinant of outcomes for pupils.” Andy Reid

In essence, each teacher is considered to be a leader: of a group or groups of students taught, but also as a leader of a specific area of school life for which responsibility is held. When a teacher's work is reviewed annually, the performance evaluation process focuses on classroom work and on the area of school-wide responsibility. Teachers with greater responsibility receive higher pay and need to account for how their work contributes to school improvement.

Sharing of leadership assumes that the school leader, the headteacher, need not have ready answers to all detailed questions about the school - but must have a colleague who does have the answers! The headteacher's mission is to create a team capable of supporting all aspects of the school which require development.



The ability to delegate has become an essential quality of successful headteachers. Given the accountability pressures imposed on them, the temptation for heads to centralise responsibility is great. However, the accepted notion that *leadership of people depends on the confidence we have in them* has become part of the everyday life of headteachers.

School leadership is too complex to be left to one person, even in small schools. Sharing the responsibilities of leadership is essential for success. The best school leaders are adept at sharing roles and responsibilities. In this context, the concept of middle leadership becomes fundamental.

Middle leaders

For many years the most progressive school leaders have been giving space to students to contribute to school leadership. Today there are few schools that do not have a school council or parliament. Four year old students can be seen discussing school issues and offering suggestions.

Subject leaders and leaders of year-groups are often described as 'middle leaders' and, in the last ten years, the importance and the volume of their work has increased. Besides being great teachers, they support and lead adult teams – teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff – and they know what's going on in the classrooms of those who are part of their team. This awareness of what is happening ranges from assessments of the quality of teaching and learning (obtained through regular observations in their colleagues' classrooms) to familiarity with data on the students themselves.

While English schools have the autonomy to organise themselves as they see fit, it is generally understood that good schools need middle leaders who share leadership responsibilities. Generally, middle leaders are identified and appointed by the Headteacher and the senior leadership team - a teacher identified as a potential leader is trained by the leadership team before taking on a position. Such training normally takes place in the school on a daily basis and will move through a number of phases, with ever increasing responsibility.



The role of middle leaders includes observing fellow teachers and giving feedback¹⁴, gathering and analysing the results of assessments, identifying areas of work that require more attention and dealing with the needs of team members. Middle leaders work 'on the ground', every day, and are seen as essential members of the school team.

It is clear that middle leaders are seen as future leaders and headteachers. In this sense, their exposure to whole school issues is essential preparation for their development as leaders. Today, classrooms in English schools do not just have one teacher and a group of students, but teaching assistants, nursery nurses, (in classrooms for children under four), learning mentors etc.

Nearly two years ago, Annette Szymaniak took over Grange Primary, a primary school assessed by Ofsted as 'requiring improvement' which since then has been monitored by inspectors. A key strategy for Annette was to identify key members of staff with the knowledge and experience to form a leadership team capable of reversing the fortunes of the school.

We can consider the Governing Body of a school to be a key element in the school's leadership. A good Governing Body will monitor student achievement, work collaboratively to invest in the school's infrastructure and staff, as well as challenge the headteacher to look at tricky issues. It is crucial that the headteacher be able to be open and transparent about the condition and progress of the school and it is also crucial that the Governing Body support and challenge the head. However, it should not be interpreted as unconditional support – students always come first. A successful school head cannot ignore the Governing Body and its needs, because it is one of the most important elements that make up the school community.

14. The *feedback* includes reports that suggest ways of improving the practice of observed teachers, but it also represents a way of discussing innovative practice that can be shared with other school colleagues. It is an opportunity for exchanging ideas about classroom practice.



“Each team leader arranges regular four-weekly sharing sessions of work in children’s books when individual teachers show what they consider to be excellent examples of work. Within phase groups this develops a shared sense of what is expected. Phase leaders will report to the senior leadership team the result of the book sharing and the areas they have decided to make the focus for the following term. It is a very powerful way of improving learning and is essential to see alongside teaching observations – because some teachers can turn on a wonderful lesson but if the children are not learning... We cannot judge teaching to be good or better if there is no evidence of progress in learning in the children’s work.” Annette Szymaniak (headteacher of *Grange Primary* and inspector of *Ofsted*)

Currently, all teachers at *Grange Primary* are formally observed, with prior warning, three times a year. In addition to this, informal observations take place much more frequently. Often, outstanding teachers and senior leaders work alongside weaker or less experienced teachers.



"We also arrange more occasional 'blitz days' when we take in all the books of all the children and examine them thoroughly to see how they are progressing. It also allows us to see whether teachers are achieving 'quality first' marking which is considered essential if children are to learn from what teachers say about their work. It also shows us whether there has been progress in learning over time. It has been the biggest driver of improvement for us because in the past, before my time here, *Ofsted* inspections always commented on how the marking of work was not helping children to improve. When we observe a lesson we look to see whether that day's lesson links to previous learning or is a 'one-off' lesson to impress the observers – a showpiece lesson! I suppose we have become a little less trusting. Throughout the rest of the year, the senior leadership team members are going into classes non-stop and informally observing the quality of learning and teaching. We also talk to children about their learning and their targets to see if they know and understand what their priorities are."

Annette Szymaniak (headteacher of *Grange Primary* and inspector of *Ofsted*)

The biggest challenge for school leaders is to ensure high quality not in patches, but throughout the school, and all of the time. The best schools provide ample opportunities for collaboration among teachers, to learn and improve together – it is the equivalent of peer-to-peer support at classroom level.



School to School support

As if leading a school was not challenging enough, there was another demand waiting for school leaders: some of them would also have to become the new leaders of the entire school system by supporting schools in difficulty. The idea that the system needs to improve itself has become a priority in the English education system and has been driven by the changes introduced since 2000: the reduced role played by local authorities, the financial crisis that led to budget cuts and the increasing number of headteachers who have begun to work as 'system leaders'.

When school-to-school work started, schools that offered support received financial support. The idea of schools improving the school system as a whole is incredibly ambitious and its effectiveness has yet to be confirmed. More and more headteachers, however, have become involved in school-to-school work, and the national leaders' programme shows it. If a school receiving support is persistently under-achieving despite the support, its headteacher runs the risk of being fired. This does not, of course, apply to the headteacher who has been offering support.

"I feel uplifted at the moment by the example of a school I have worked with which has been linked with another school, one which has been judged 'good', not 'outstanding', with a very effective headteacher who has become the executive headteacher of the school I am working with. That school, currently in 'special measures', is turning itself around at a rate of knots! That really is the model working well – so well, in fact, that the school I am working in will probably end up being a better school than the school giving its support!"

Andy Reid (former head of *Ofsted*)



Anthony Seldon, head of one of the leading private schools in the country, *Wellington College*, is a pioneer in school-to-school support – and has developed partnerships with publicly-funded schools. From his point of view, in order for such work to be successful, the parameters of cooperation need to be clear from the outset: *'It all depends how it is set up and on the quality of the school which is providing the leadership. If they are genuinely exceptional, and if they have the spare capacity to offer support and encouragement to other schools, this can be an excellent way of securing improvement. Schools understand each other better than anybody else so school-to-school support can be an excellent solution.'*

A turning point for London's state-funded schools: the case of London Challenge

In the collective memory of English educators, nothing shines more brightly than *London Challenge*. This programme was discontinued with the change of government in 2010, partly for financial reasons, and partly for political reasons. But its influence persists. It was a pioneering initiative in collaborative school-to-school work, especially in those districts with the most vulnerable pupils and poorest performing schools. The impact of *London Challenge* endures thanks to the ability of that programme to raise the standards of achievement in the most challenging schools and for them subsequently to be seen as among the best schools in the land.

Funded by the Department for Education, *London Challenge* was set up in 2002 with the ambition of changing the overall performance of London schools – especially the secondary schools. The situation was particularly serious in some boroughs, and the initial emphasis was on them, but it was later disseminated throughout the capital, and extended to include primary schools. The Chief Commissioner of London Schools¹⁵ and later Chief Executive of *London Challenge*, Sir Tim Brighouse, was charged with developing a radical reform programme of these schools.

15. Equivalent to an Education Secretary.



“The ambition was to develop a system that was not merely good, but excellent – matching the best anywhere. To do that it was necessary to harness the dynamism and innovation already in the system to meet the scale of the challenge, whose key elements were... strong shared values, system leadership and partnership working, school-to-school support, benchmarked data within families of schools, ‘keys-to-success’ schools, bespoke school improvement programmes, the teaching and learning syllabus, and expert advisers able to broker and commission support.”

Sir Tim Brighouse (chief executive of the London schools)

‘Keys to Success’ schools were under-performing schools located in disadvantaged areas of the capital. They were often viewed with suspicion by parents and, therefore, received students who had failed to enter in the best-ranked schools. Starting the programme with these schools was a shrewd strategic choice: if they just managed to break the link between poverty and low educational performance, any school should be able to do the same. Eight advisers specialized in school improvement were recruited, and each of them coordinated the support given to a group of twelve ‘Keys to Success’ schools.

London Challenge was the seed of many of the ideas that took root in the next ten years. In practice, the programme started giving shape to something that until then had just been a theoretical notion: schools as the leaders of improvement to the wider system. The headteachers of schools rated as outstanding had an important role to play in supporting colleague headteachers who were facing problems, achieved by deploying their senior and middle leaders to work with staff in the supported schools. Once the *Challenge* advisers had commissioned support from successful schools, the ‘Keys to Success’ schools were obliged to



accept certain conditions, among which the development of precise tracking systems for assessment of pupil progress and what was described as 'forensic attention to detail'. For the *Challenge* to be considered a success, the improvement of assessment data would be essential. Schools were also required to develop precise procedures for self-evaluation, and these were subject to thorough scrutiny by advisors.

Dame Sue John was an exceptional leader deeply involved in the *Challenge*, and her work as leader of the London Leadership Strategy, an arm of the *London Challenge*, influenced the subsequent development of the idea of the 'teaching schools' which is discussed below.





“Under the *London Challenge* it was assumed that you would need two years to turn things round, not a year. You might improve the data in a year but it would probably not be strong enough underneath, it seems to me. That is the easy bit – to make a quick improvement. The harder bit is the long-haul. It was a kind of ‘mooring alongside’ approach which developed a bespoke package of support. The idea was always to make those schools self-sustainable. We worked, for example with *Lilian Bayliss School* in Lambeth (south London) which was a ‘keys to success’ school at the time. It is now an outstanding school which has become a *teaching school*. We were privileged in *London Challenge* because as schools began to improve, the pool of local leaders grew and in the second phase of the programme we were able to develop programmes to move people from good to great, ‘securing good’ programmes, and supporting all new heads, that sort of thing. It became a much broader improvement package than how it had started off – which had been to deal with key London boroughs and ‘keys to success’ schools. And we were given the funding to do it.” *Dame Sue John* (headteacher of *Lampton National Teaching School*)

Evaluations of *London Challenge* emphasise the importance of individual solutions having been developed for individual needs. No school received support identical to that given to another or followed the same path to success. Tailor-made solutions are important both to tackle the specific problems of each school and to give their leaders and staff the feeling that they are the owners of the solution, and not being



‘subjected’ to it. The results of London’s schools moved from significantly worse than the national average to above average.

In addition to inspiring strategies that later drove education policy, *London Challenge* inspired other parts of the country to implement a radical change in school leadership and management, by strengthening mutual support among the schools. The account below refers to the *Somerset Challenge*, primarily focused on secondary schools in the county of Somerset, a rural area with its own vulnerabilities. Primary schools have benefited from the initiative, but it is the secondary schools that have required greater support. In terms of impact, the improvement of primary schools has been greater: the percentage of institutions evaluated as good or outstanding by *Ofsted* rose from 65 per cent in 2012 to 85 per cent by 2014.

Somerset Challenge: a collaborative model

“I was seconded to develop the Challenge after a conference for heads last June (2013). We have an agreement that it will be a collaboration of schools, led by practitioners with the aim of raising achievement for all young people in Somerset – including closing the gaps (between children from deprived backgrounds and others). We consider them to be ‘all our children, wherever they may be’. ‘Accountability for some, responsibility for all’ is a phrase that has been used. We have a number of themes: developing internal and external learning partnerships – not being so insular, by what has sometimes been called ‘letting the light in’; internally we have five families of schools working together. Externally we have a number of partnerships such as London Leadership Strategy, Education Endowment Foundation etc.; we want to develop the idea of ‘The Somerset Teacher’ – which includes Somerset leader and means that Somerset is a good place to work and here are the things we will do with and for you throughout your career to try and address some of the recruitment problems we have (we do not have problems with retention!); closing the gap is another big one.

Collaboration is a core aspect of all of these and we have made some strides. We have gone through the period of novelty and excitement and now we have the challenge of how to deal with the day-to-day reality. Professor Michael Fullan and Alan Boyle talk about a model of ‘push-pull’, saying that you need both and where initiatives have failed it is because they have been all ‘push’ from the centre. In London Challenge they seem to have got things right and we are wrestling with the balance. We have set up the groups and have told them to get on with it without too much direction. I don’t want it to become too ‘top-down’. Initially, the Somerset Challenge is for three years. The families have set their own agendas. We have provided data for them – but they haven’t really made much use of it so far. They have tended in these early days to talk about things they feel comfortable with.



Some families are already well developed with a programme of shared meetings between, for example, heads of subjects from the schools having reciprocal visits to their family of schools. Other families are having more difficulty. One has a single focus on literacy which is considered to be the top priority. We have given feedback to the families about their initial plans but the thing that will add the sharpness is through the link with the London Leadership Strategy. We are employing national leaders of education (NLEs) to work with some target schools ('keys to success' schools in London Challenge terms) and one national leader (NLE) will be attached to each family and charged with supporting, challenging and reporting back, so it is internal, school-led, but with externality to add a bit of edge to it.

Schools described as 'keys to success' seem all right about the term because they are considered to be key to the overall Challenge, not because they are being pointed out as a naughty school. They are key, and we want to work with them. None of the schools we identified was in any way surprised and we were gentle in saying we wanted to offer this arrangement and they have all accepted. They have met the London NLEs and I think they are schools that recognise they are in challenging circumstances. Each family receives an allocation of funds. Some of our schools have been on the 'from good to great' programme offered by the London Leadership Strategy. People have been incredibly generous with their time – not necessarily through any planned process but networking. We did think about having families of schools with similar characteristics (inputs), statistically similar schools, and I created groups along those lines, but we decided on mixed families of socio-economic background, geography and Ofsted gradings etc. Only one group has had difficulty because of distance between schools. The reason that the families do not include primary schools is that the pressure has been on secondary. Primary results have been rising and are just above national averages while secondary are just below. In 2012, Ofsted's list of schools which are judged good or outstanding, we had 65% for both sectors, but that has changed dramatically in primary and is now 85%. It takes longer to show improvement in secondary because there are fewer schools being inspected each year.

I hold dear the fact that leaders are doing things not just for their own but for other schools. The programmes in the London Challenge and London Leadership Strategy were all led by heads and ours need to be led by heads. We are not there yet, with worries about time and capacity and so on. Several schools are vulnerable in terms of potential Ofsted judgements and some have new heads whose focus has to be on their own school for now."

Simon Faull (Director, Somerset Challenge)

The *London* and *Somerset Challenge* initiatives involved strategies with medium- and long-term goals, and were designed to be used with a set of priority schools in vulnerable areas. Other examples of school-to-school support are of shorter duration and are managed locally in response to short-term needs. In the following example, a school needed a headteacher and had difficulty recruiting one. One solution was to



'borrow' the headteacher from another school, as reported by headteacher Julie Fellows. She was effectively running two schools simultaneously and undertaking the same tasks in both – administrative tasks, meetings of the Governing Body, classroom observations, meetings with parents, meetings with the Parent-Teacher Association:

"I was approached by the governors of the other school and then they met our governors. It was a tricky negotiation with several meetings because our school has historically had to develop its communication strategy with parents and we had reached a certain point when there was the possibility, the risk even, that I would be seen to be going off elsewhere. But we did joint communications from the two schools, everything being carefully coordinated. Fears were allayed and several people commented on how it was good for both schools and was fostering good links between the two. It is not an easy role because normally, an 'executive headteacher' would have a 'head of school' in each school with the job of dealing with the day-to-day management. I don't have that and I feel that I am not in classrooms as much in the other school. It has been good for our school, because both sets of governors have wanted to do training together and both schools have shared training on a project called 'Building Learning Power'. It has helped us to realise that many of the things we are trying to develop are being developed by other schools facing the same challenges. When the partner school has its own headteacher from September 2014, I hope the link will remain." Julie Fellows (headteacher of *Fairford Primary School*)



Teaching Schools: School-based Training

The best place for medical practitioners to learn their profession is a hospital. By analogy, those responsible for deciding education policy in England have concluded that the most appropriate place to train teachers is not a university, but a school. There has always been a partnership between university departments and schools, but now the pendulum has strongly swung towards the schools, where students can undertake their training within the school system. The aim is for *teaching schools* to train and develop members of the profession at all levels, from student teachers to experienced headteachers.

The model was piloted at first, but since 2010 the government has promoted the initiative in the hope of strengthening it as the preferred approach to teacher and leadership training and the creation of a collaborative network of training schools.

The headteachers of *teaching schools* have the task of overseeing initial and in-service training in their own schools. They are supported by members of their senior leadership teams who have specialised training responsibilities – a development which underscores the important roles played by senior and middle leaders and the emphasis given to leadership training throughout the careers of teachers.

The role of the new organisations was specified very clearly by the Department for Education:



"Teaching schools are expected to identify, demonstrate and disseminate best practice through their role in initial teacher training, the professional development of teachers, leadership development, succession planning, school-to-school support, and research and development (R&D), so as ultimately to improve outcomes for children. Although *teaching schools* are expected to reflect excellence in the education system in England, they are emphatically not intended as elitist 'lone rangers'. They are the designated leaders of school alliances in which building knowledge and social capital and sharing leadership across partners are important ingredients of success." (Department for Education, 2010)

Schools that apply to become *teaching schools* are judged by *Ofsted* to be outstanding. In assuming the role, they have to create strategic alliances in their regions with other schools, universities or local authorities. Such alliances manage targeted support aimed at raising standards in response to local needs. A *teaching school* that loses the 'outstanding' *Ofsted* label following an inspection also loses its credentials to be a *teaching school*. There is consequent pressure on teaching schools to maintain their own high standards while extending support to others.

For a long time, the main national goal was that all teachers should be trained at a university. Some student teachers studied academic subjects relevant to education for three or four years during which they spent periods of between six and eight weeks undertaking school-based practice. This was the preferred route for many primary school teachers. Secondary school teachers, as well as a minority of primary school teachers, studied an academic subject of their choice for three years at university and then undertook postgraduate university studies in education, which took another year. These students had much less time for learning 'on the job'.



Times have changed and today the trend is for the main pedagogical element of study to be carried out in schools through placements in what is called the *School Direct* programme that consolidates the training alliance between university and school. The majority of schools approved to offer *School Direct* places are part of a *teaching school* alliance.

Proponents of the new approach say that students need to spend more time in classrooms, alongside top class teachers in order to learn the art of teaching. Critics argue that the change of method could endanger the status of teachers by reducing it from a profession to mere craft.

The *teaching school* movement is relatively new, and in debates within education there are various views on the possible potential of the initiative. Universities, for example, have to review their role, while schools offering school-based training may demand a different type of support if they are to maintain high-quality training. Such questions are widely debated, but it is hard to imagine that there will be any going back on the belief that the school is a prime location for initial training.





REFLECTIONS ON THE BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

It is self-evident that the English system has invested heavily in leadership development at all levels. In this chapter we have discussed various strategies that have contributed to the building of a rich world of headteacher collaboration, starting with identification of outstanding leaders who are doing an exemplary job in their schools. Amongst the strategies, we might highlight:

✓ **The establishment of a national college for leadership training and of a national qualification for headship.**

This, together with the creation and deployment of a strategic group of outstanding leaders, is a recognition of leadership research which sees the school headteacher-leader as the key figure in improving public-sector schools in the English system.

In Brazil, initiatives to create a leadership college are still in their early days within departments of education. Studies and surveys of Brazilian headteachers reveal the gap that exists between the initial training they receive and what is actually necessary to perform the role effectively. Part of the explanation lies in the meagre focus given in courses to the role of leadership and management. A college dedicated to training school leaders could contribute to their recognition as pivotal to the improvement of schools. A key factor for Brazil is its sheer size and its federal organisation, with autonomy of the federal, state and municipal tiers of administration, and whether the establishment of a college for school leadership would not be more effective if designed according to the characteristics of the local tier that intends to set up such an initiative.

✓ **Developments in England generally reflect widely-accepted descriptions of the role of a school leader and the set of skills that the training of this professional needs to ensure. Mentoring of school leaders by their peers in the practice of leadership and management has become fundamental.**



Another important aspect is the emphasis given to 'learning by doing'. Initially, the *National College* saw a significant emphasis given to centralised training with seminars and discussion of theory, but experience has shown that it lacked sufficient emphasis on the practical application of knowledge. The logic that underpinned such an approach was critically reviewed and more time was subsequently given to learning within the school.

✓ **A qualification to become headteacher was introduced in England in an attempt to improve the quality of those responsible for running schools.**

Currently, the qualification, while not compulsory, is recognised as important to the *curriculum vitae* of those who intend to take up a leadership position. Linking a qualification to a structured training framework could be an option for Brazilian school networks that appoint or elect headteachers. Such a strategy could contribute to guaranteeing basic standards for those professionals seeking to take on school leadership.

✓ **The creation of networks of collaborating schools in the English public education system is a simple initiative in terms of structural changes, with great potential to help schools that are struggling.**

As we have seen in this chapter, this strategy was chosen primarily as an initiative with focus on the secondary schools of London, which had very low standards of achievement. The identification of experienced and outstanding headteachers and school leaders is the first step in establishing a collaborative network – and, to this extent, there are already some signs in Brazil of good school experiences. Starting from this point, secretaries of education might develop further the identification of strong leaders and establish ways for schools with greater difficulties to benefit from this local human resource. This is more than just a description of best practice, it involves the planned intervention of these leaders in the daily life of schools experiencing difficulties, working side-by-side with colleagues in the schools. This is a relatively simple initiative with great potential for improving schools.





SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT



Studies of educational reforms in systems around the world show that investment in the system is crucial to improvement in the quality of learning and the ensuring of equity for all students.

In these terms, the English education system has undergone several major changes. This chapter will highlight the organisational choices the system has opted for and what has been introduced to improve the quality of schools. Evidence will be explored to show how new structures, which for the most part were introduced only recently, have fared so far.

Academies

When faced with a stubborn number of schools that seemed incapable of breaking a persistent cycle of under-performance within a culture of low expectations, the Blair government of 2000 took decisive action. Legislation was introduced which allowed failing schools to be closed down and then given a 'fresh start' under a new name and with a new image. These schools were called 'academies', to distinguish them from schools run by local authorities, and they were managed directly by the national Education Department. Initially, they also had to have a private sponsor – a person or organisation to contribute financially and collaborate with the creation of a new ethos in a school reborn as an academy. Often the academy had a new and very distinctive building. Discipline was given top priority. By 2010, there were only 203 sponsored academies.

During the time of the coalition government elected in 2010, any school could suddenly choose to become an academy. The status once reserved for schools with chronic problems was offered as an incentive to entrepreneurial school leaders. The main incentives for the adoption of the new status were enhanced autonomy and more money. While schools receive from the local authority about 93 per cent of the funds allocated to them by government – the rest being held by the local authority to pay for services such as special educational needs and school improvement – an academy receives almost the full amount. Despite the small percentage difference, in terms of funds used for purchasing services it was



significant. Today an academy also has autonomy over implementation of the national curriculum and freedom to set its own salary structure.

By 2014, there was a dramatic increase in the number of academies, with about 4,000 in the country, responsible for about 20 % of the publicly-funded sector.

During a period of recession, many schools were tempted to apply for academy status for the additional initial resources on offer. Many headteachers admit that they went for academy status because they needed funds for a new building.

For other headteachers, the possibility of greater control over the school's *ethos* is the carrot. Andrew Wilcock is headteacher of *Bishop Ramsey Academy*, an Anglican school with 1,200 students, that has been growing significantly, becoming first a *teaching school* and then applying to open a *free school*, another new kind of





school discussed below. It is a church school with some existing independence from the local authority, and further autonomy had great appeal.

“In 2006, we were recognised as ‘outstanding’ by *Ofsted*. It was a great fillip to the school. In 2010 we wanted to claim a dividend from the outstanding category and I applied to be a national leader (*NLE*) having been a local leader previously. It gave the school a chance to gain some recognition and enabled us to do something I had always thought should be part of the Christian mission of the school, which is to support other schools in the neighbourhood and not to be a kind of island of success and semi-privilege.

The next milestone was ‘academy status’ in 2011. I was keen on this because we were very much a semi-detached organisation from the local authority but it seemed more sensible to take control of our own destiny by taking advantage of academisation.” Andrew Wilcock (headteacher of *Bishop Ramsey Church of England School*)

With the extra funds, *Bishop Ramsey* invested in a major structural overhaul of its building, making it more attractive and better equipped for its students. There were changes to the curriculum and the organisation of classes, and teachers became even more involved in whole-school decisions about teaching and learning. It became possible to create a more competitive salary structure compared with that in the affluent locality, which in turn helped attract top professionals to the school.



Federations

The key unit in the traditional education system was the individual school, but this is undergoing a profound change. In the last two decades, various governments have sought to reduce the power of local authorities, which traditionally monitored the schools' work, and the emphasis has shifted to collaboration among schools. According to a 2012 report by the *National College*, *'we are moving from an old hierarchical structure, wherein the fundamental unit was an isolated school, to a chaotic emerging structure in which the basic unit is a group of schools.'*

In simple terms, schools are encouraged to consider the possibility of forming 'chains' or 'federations', grouping of schools which work together collegially, and independently of local authorities. This is in line with the same rationale that underlay other initiatives such as the introduction of the initial academies, the reaction to how to deal with schools which were struggling, or dealing with the challenge of recruiting a new headteacher.

A federation may be 'loose' or 'hard'; it is up to the schools to decide on the best arrangement. Local solutions were encouraged and, in many cases, it meant a modification to the model of one headteacher per school. The change often saw a single leader taking responsibility for a group of schools. It is a strategy that has caused much debate.

Schools that make up hard federations require academy status to be involved. Governance arrangements normally require one body – a trust – to oversee the work of all academy members of the federation.

For a school which has faced persistent and often overwhelming difficulties, joining a federation or trust can be attractive and there may be no choice but to go this way.

The *Park Federation Academy Trust* is an example of a successful federation whose story illustrates the process of creating families of schools of this kind. Dr. Martin Young is chief executive of the federation whose member academies additionally



have a 'head of school' of their own. One interesting feature of the *Park Federation* is that it specialises in 'turning round' schools suffering from significant under-performance.

The Start of a Federation

In 2008, *Cranford Park Primary School* was chosen by the *National College* to become a *National Support School (NSS)*, while Martin Young began working as national leader of education (*NLE*).

At that time, *Cranford Park* was rated by *Ofsted* as 'good with many outstanding features'. The local authority requested that, as a national support school, Martin support a local primary school with over 400 students that had been warned by *Ofsted* that it needed to improve:

"It involved me working directly with the headteacher and also 'putting some boots on the ground'. For example, a senior teacher worked weekly in classrooms with their teachers. In 2009, that school was re-inspected and came out of the 'notice to improve' category with a 'satisfactory' grading"

That same year, the local authority asked him to support *Wood End Park Community School*, just three kilometres away. Martin said he was interested but had no autonomy to decide alone: he would have to consult his school Governing Body. "I spoke to my governors about what was called a 'hard federation'". This would mean a single but shared Governing Body (existing Governing Bodies of both schools would be dissolved), and Martin would become chief executive of the federation, with a leader in each of the two schools. In May of 2009, *Wood End Park* was judged by *Ofsted* inspectors to 'require improvement', and in November of that year, a joint Governing Body was formed.



“At Christmas of that year, the head of *Wood End Park* was to retire, which made things quite straightforward. Between May and November of 2009 a great deal happened, because the governors at *Cranford Park* were saying, ‘We are a really good school, really popular, why would we take a risk with our reputation, resources and capacity potentially being negatively affected?’ And the governors at *Wood End* were thinking, ‘Who are these people coming along and thinking they can run our school?’”

Children in two schools, two-and-a-half miles apart, in a very similar community and with a gap in the performance of the two schools from the low 50% (of children achieving the expected level of attainment at age eleven) at *Wood End Park*, and high 80%-low 90% at *Cranford Park*! Very similar communities, but vast gap in performance.

“The federation went ahead. We decided to have ‘number one leaders’ in each school – both very big primaries at over 800 pupils. We used the term ‘head of school’ to signal that this person was the Number One Leader in that institution. In the summer of 2010, both schools had an *Ofsted* inspection and *Wood End* came out of the *Ofsted* ‘requiring improvement’ category while *Cranford Park* moved from good to outstanding.”



Martin was contacted by the *National College* about a school over ten miles away in Slough. The Slough school – James Elliman School – had a similar intake of pupils, 80-90% ethnic minority, and similar numbers (700 plus). It had gone into the bottom *Ofsted* category, 'special measures'. Martin was asked about performing a national leader support role there. He accepted:

"I met the local authority representative and the headteacher and started doing *NLE* work there. It was very much support for the headteacher, who was extremely experienced and had decided that he was going to 'turn the school round', to bring it out of special measures and so my ability to influence was indirect and fairly limited – especially since *NLEs* have no positional power at all. It is all to do with the amount of influence they can or are allowed to secure through interpersonal skills – soft skills, relationships, empathy, sympathy. That is how you get an entree as an *NLE*, but the hard stuff (e.g. improving the quality of teaching, developing leadership) is done in the background."

The school was in special measures in February 2011, when it received an *Ofsted* monitoring visit and was evaluated as having made insufficient progress. The local authority negotiated with the headteacher, who decided to retire at the end of April 2011. The school's Governing Body asked *Cranford Park* for significant support, which included Martin's time as executive headteacher there.



“However, we made it slightly more formal by introducing the idea of the ‘partner school’. There was a one year commitment by both parties – no governance changes at this stage – to work together. *James Elliman’s* governing body remained sovereign at this stage.

It was like an engagement before a marriage. It was a twelve month agreement, but after six months, both parties would decide whether to take the next step, which was the school joining the federation, or agreeing to part at the end of the twelve months.

The fixed twelve months agreement would prevent *James Elliman* being ‘left in the lurch’ if they decided not to federate after the six months were up, and remained in special measures with no support package in place.”

Martin became executive headteacher of *James Elliman*, the deputy became Head of School, but it remained a community school with its own governing body under the control of the Local Authority. After six months, both governing bodies decided, in principle, they wished to move to full federation (but the *James Elliman* governing body remained until April 2013 by which time the federation had already become a formal ‘academy trust’ with a newly established relationship with Central Government and with no formal relationship to Local Government).



“The new government in 2010 decided that primary schools could become academies. Things changed fast: lower funding for councils (local authorities) and fewer services provided to schools; more and more schools converting to academy status; and we wanted the federation to grow. We wanted to provide better care, education and safeguarding for more pupils – if we can’t deliver on these fronts, we shouldn’t be growing – and without being an academy we couldn’t expand any more at that stage. So we decided to become a multi-academy trust (1st September 2012).”

The trust covered *Cranford Park* and *Wood End Park* schools; *James Elliman* school joined later, in April 2013. During autumn 2012, the federation was asked by another school in Slough, *Montem Primary School*, to make a presentation to the governors, along with three other potential partners, and was selected in this competitive process, to be their main support. This was with the idea that if it worked well, the school would, in time, join the federation. *Montem* became a ‘Partner School’ to The Park Federation in the same way that *James Elliman School* had in 2011. The headteacher at *Montem* decided to retire, and *Montem* became an academy member of the trust on 1st December 2013. *Montem* was the fourth academy to join the federation.

Also in autumn 2013, the federation was approached by *Western House Primary* to take part in a competitive tender – together with three other competing academies – and was successful. *Western House* was in the same Local Authority as *James Elliman* and *Montem*. It became the fifth academy on 1st August 2014. Also in 2013, a brand new school was to be built locally and the federation participated in a competitive bid and was selected. The new *Lake Farm Park School* opened on 1st September 2014.



Governance

The *Park Federation* had a strategy group to study governance, and the group spent literally months and months working on it. It is worth recalling that, today, the foundation is one of the largest employers in the area: it has more than 500 employees and a budget of £15,000,000.

There is an 'academy council' (like a Governing Body) in each school, to give it a local voice. Each council has nine members. Three of them are school staff representatives, two of whom elected, one being the school headteacher; three are elected parents and three are community members.

As a result, when each school joins the federation it has an Academy Council with some devolved authority from the main Federation Board. The main Federation Board has eight Directors/Trustees. There are four non-elected Board Directors: an independent chair, the chief executive; a Director with oversight and scrutiny of finance, and another with oversight and scrutiny of 'operations' (i.e. all other back office functions apart from finance). There are then five representative Directors who are there to represent the academies in the federation. Therefore, nine in all. None of the eight Directors/Trustees is paid for work on the board.





“Schools are the cornerstone of a community. They have history, spirit, personality, character. You can’t start dismantling those things. They are the things which will make those schools outstanding if they aren’t already.

We have a few non-negotiables. If we worked with a school which was the most fantastic in terms of attainment and progress but had total lack of respect for families in their community we wouldn’t be able to work with them – the same if they failed to support vulnerable groups academically. It wouldn’t fit with our culture.”

Each academy has an academy head, who is the number one leader and works under the terms and conditions of a school headteacher. Martin, as executive headteacher, is there to challenge them and give them support. It is a federation that was not built upon a charismatic leader, as he well sums up:

“The idea has always been that if I fall under a bus, the federation will continue! It is not built on one individual. My job is to see that the academy principals could become chief executive if they choose to.” Dr. Martin Young (chief executive and principal of the *Park Federation Academy Trust*)



A focus group was held as part of this research report with the aim of exploring further the example of the *Park Federation* example. The focus group included heads of school of each academy. Quotations below give an insight into the leadership development of the heads involved.

Developing Leaders

Learning to collaborate is much more than just sharing best practice. It takes time and constant practice.



"The chief executive, Martin, is the key person in challenging us. It takes time for us to become challenging of one another. We have had initial visits to each other's school, and that has been a time to share good practice, asking for clarification of what lies behind the good practice, to inform ourselves. The next step will be to challenge. It works in layers. There is the chief executive, then there are the governors, our reciprocal colleague visits which are more about networking and feedback. For colleague teachers, we are still at the finding-out stage.

As principals, we meet each other quite regularly and can talk about teaching and learning. We make presentations to each other about standards and it may not be formal challenge, but it is challenging! I listen to the other three principals and start challenging myself with questions such as, 'Am I doing this at the right level?' Even during tours of each other's schools we see beautiful displays of work and ask ourselves whether we can reach those standards. There is a lot of personal challenge."



Each school in the federation now has an annual 'two- day review'. These are led by an Ofsted inspector, together with members of the senior leadership team of the school being reviewed, and senior leaders from the other schools in the federation – but not the principals from other schools. The observers work in pairs, judge the quality of teaching, and give feedback to the teachers.

“From the point of view of the observers, it is really good because it is often confirming our judgements – we find they are the same as judgements in another school. But there were also some good debates when there were some border-line judgements. It is a challenge – but it is a challenge done supportively. It is supportive because it is based on concrete evaluation.”

Working as a group of schools has allowed professional development work to improve. An outstanding teacher in one school can mentor peers in other schools, for example. Expected standards operate across the federation and apply to all those working in the federation academies.



“For me, it is all about the quality of the staff. When I joined our school I benefited from being able to use the teachers at *Cranford Park* to provide high expectations of standards and vision in a school which was very similar and not far away geographically. It provided a model. The same is true of the latest school to join us in Slough, which has found being able to see examples from outside very powerful.

Some teachers who are unable to meet our standards move on, and it enables us to recruit new staff. Getting the expectations right has been crucially important. Acquiring a senior leadership team was also very important in becoming rigorous in implementing the expectations, and the improvement was driven by sharing the expectations with middle leaders. The staff who have stayed are the ones we have wanted to stay.”

The headteachers of the federation acknowledge the importance of having a chief executive, to facilitate and challenge everyone’s work. At the same time, they see enough space for each federation school to retain its own character, its own identity, its school culture.



“In Martin’s words, each of us is ‘the number one leader’ in our respective academy. We are the headteacher of our schools. We have more focused responsibilities than local authority headteachers, because within the trust we have a central chief operating officer who will help manage the premises and finance and staff. I think it is one of the things that has helped me focus on teaching and learning. So I don’t actually have the traditional role of headteacher (e.g. having to lead on back-office processes as well as teaching and learning) and am quite glad! We oversee the premises and finance and personnel but have that extra support. However, we still have the final say.

I think I have a lot of autonomy but there are certain things I would check with Martin first and if he disagreed it wouldn’t necessarily mean that it wouldn’t happen. He would not insist that he had the final say on everything. The staffing arrangements for the new academic year are down to me, for example. There may be a general vision of what we are aspiring to, or model that we are expected to follow but adding to it is up to us.



We do retain our own school 'feel'. *Montem Academy*, for example, even after significant improvements, still feels like *Montem*. There are similarities among the academies, but the staff would object if we tried to enforce things. We have different make-ups of staff, different families and history and it is important to retain that feel."

The federation provides a range of development opportunities for its staff, either in leadership or in teaching. Being part of a group of schools, a talented professional has more chance of being seen, recognised, enhanced.

"The *programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)* for newly-qualified teachers is run by teachers from different academies in the trust. If we were geographically further apart it would be harder to organise because of the travel time.

We are all large schools so that in itself creates more opportunities to go up the career 'ladder' and to work in other schools as well, providing support. That is where the leaders are grown." Sarah Evans, *Cranford Park Academy*; Surjeet Johra, *Wood End Park Academy*; Liz Herod, *James Elliman Academy*; Ann Probert, *Montem Academy*



Diversity and the size of school collaborative groups⁹

Some of the essential questions for leaders of chains, networks, associations and cooperatives concern the optimal number of schools or academies in a group and how widely might sensibly be distributed across the country. There is, of course, no single answer. The most common answer is to delegate such decisions to the local level.

Networks that run schools in different parts of the country are tending to form geographical groupings within the larger system and to create an appropriate administrative infrastructure to support them. In the case of the *Park Federation*, Dr. Martin Young feels that the academies that make up the *Park Foundation* should not be more than 20 minutes drive away from each other if the goal is to keep a sense of partnership between colleagues. Issues of distance and how to preserve the family nature of the partnerships are crucial.

Many schools, however, simply do not want to get into formal partnerships with others, and the system offers this alternative for schools that have a strong identity and choose to remain more isolated or attached to the local authority. However, the experience of the English system shows that this is less of an option for schools in significant difficulty: being part of an alliance of schools provides opportunities for mutual support which has proved to be a powerful motor of change in schools with the lowest standards of achievement.

It is difficult to define the extent to which schools and academies in chains and federations are benefiting from the formation of new partnerships. The example of *Park Federation* is one of great success, with schools previously deemed to be failing now doing well. But is not the case for all networks and federations. Statistics have to be treated with caution. *Ofsted* still inspects schools that are part of a network or federation as individual institutions. There is pressure for federations or networks to be inspected as a whole, because at this stage, it is almost impossible to draw conclusions about an entire group, since their individual schools are inspected at different times over a period of two to three years.



Leadership of school groups

Anyone who reaches the position of leader of a group of schools is a *de facto* 'system leader', the new type of leader who is seen as crucial in a school system that improves itself. These leaders may have different titles, the most common being trust principal and 'chief executive'. Training for such a role is still in its infancy. Currently, there are a few confident headteachers who feel prepared to face the bigger challenge and are able to convince their Governing Bodies of their preparedness for the role.

The role of chief executive of a group of schools, with leadership over a very large number of people, requires very different skills from those of the headteacher of a single school. Critics question whether this role is sustainable and whether short-term gains might not last.





Case study: Corsham Primary school

Corsham Primary is in the wonderful and unique position of being one school, but on two sites at either end of Corsham town. Corsham Primary Pound Pill is a two-form entry school with a total of fourteen classes, and Corsham Primary Broadwood is a single-form entry school with a total of seven classes. This means any parent can feel reassured that their children will be taught in single-age classes. The sites are just two miles apart, and managed as one school with staff working in both. Parents have the choice to join either site depending on its location, as underlined by the headteacher, Fiona Allen:

"We have worked hard to create a supportive, family-oriented community school; if you walk into either site you will see the same high quality teaching and learning environments for the children. In fact, even the carpets and curtains are the same colour! Our size brings with it a large budget and our Board of Trustees ensure it is spent wisely, consistently providing the children with fantastic resources and attracting a large, outstanding team of teaching and administrative staff."

In 2006, Fiona was supporting Broadwood School, which was in a very difficult situation. There was no way that someone without previous headship experience could have taken it on. She created what was then called 'a hard federation' which meant that the schools became part of one organisation. For headteachers like Fiona, there is no future for rural schools unless they start working in collaboration.

"We had one governing body and so we became one school on two sites. The standards at Broadwood were diabolical and so it was a big risk for us. Over a two-and- three-quarter year period the school moved from inadequate to outstanding. At the same time we were doing support for other schools. Just before the election in 2010 we were about to take on in the federation four more failing schools. With the change of government this was halted and it was tricky because members of our leadership team had been ready to take on further responsibility in those failing schools. There is no future for rural schools unless they start to work collaboratively. There is all kinds of research about the optimum number of schools in chains and federations but some of the academy trusts have taken on too many of what are called 'basket cases' too quickly and have not put in adequate infrastructure to cope. I feel the optimum number is between six and ten. You have to have an infrastructure in place and grow slowly and have commitment from all the schools. What we are looking to do is to have a trust of no more than ten schools." Fiona Allen (headteacher of Corsham Primary and Ofsted inspector)





The Arrival of *Free Schools*

Additional creative turbulence was added to the scene in 2010 when community groups were given the opportunity to set up brand new local schools. These schools were called *free schools*. The idea was to enable frustrated parents and community groups to develop for their children a new kind of response to local needs. The *free schools* were also a way of responding to the very rapid population growth that the country was experiencing - and continues to experience.

Technically, *free schools* are a form of academy, receiving funding direct from the DfE and having the same freedoms. They receive set-up funds and are seen as introducing innovation, variety and stimulus to the range of provision on offer.

As noted earlier, *Bishop Ramsey Academy* applied to be able to open a *free school*. If approved, the new school will serve students in the region who are not religious. Another attraction is the economy of scale that comes with the increased number of school families served by the school.

“Our admission criteria for *Bishop Ramsey* require church attendance, while 75% of the places in the free school will be on a locality basis. It reflects a long-held view of the governors that we have a good education to offer and we would like to extend it. The *free school* should allow economies of scale – grounds and premises staff, IT staff, finance systems and personnel and office staff. We hope to be able to appoint teaching staff to the academy trust who will work in both schools and help with covering curriculum subjects in the two school.” Andrew Wilcock (headteacher of *Bishop Ramsey Church of England School*)



From one point of view, the *free school* has the potential to allow poorer families to develop the kind of school which wealthier parents are able to pay for. It is seen as having a democratic intention and a role in addressing the issue of equity. The alternative view is that the schools offer more middle class families the opportunity of providing their children with a privileged education free of charge, and that many of the schools have a religious allegiance which contributes to increased community separation rather than cohesion.



A seminar organised by the *National College* in January 2012 set a number of goals for free schools and posed questions about their future. *Free Schools* will:

- ✓ drive through deregulation, encourage enterprise and create a way of opening up the system to bright young people with the ambition to do things differently;
- ✓ mobilise energy within communities, and engage parents by convincing them that the system is on their side and that it is possible for them to make a difference;
- ✓ provoke local authorities into taking the action that is needed to improve neighbourhood schools so that they become more competitive.

The government needs to:

- ✓ be clear about how free schools will be accountable; experience in the United States and elsewhere suggests that this matters;
- ✓ demonstrate how it will intervene in the case of failure, because this will be the acid test of its commitment to quality;
- ✓ be explicit about the role of free schools within chains, and whether they might be compromised by becoming part of another system.

The free-school debate raises any number of questions about the role of the state and the challenge that is being offered to the existing social contract:

- ✓ are *free schools* testing teachers' pay and conditions which have so far remained largely intact, despite the freedom for academies to introduce variations?
- ✓ are *free schools* simply an opportunity for the middle classes to reassert their ability to take ownership of the system?
- ✓ will *free schools*, many of which are also faith schools, play havoc with the admissions system and create problems of social cohesion?
- ✓ does the bureaucracy associated with establishing a free school promote or stifle entrepreneurship?

By January 2014, there were only 174 *free schools* out of a total of 21,000 publicly funded schools (7 per cent of students between five to 18 years go to independent schools). The initiative is still fairly new, and there is time to assess the real impact of the introduction of this new school model. It remains a live debate within English education.



Attracting New Leaders

It has become very, very difficult to recruit new headteachers, especially in some types of schools and in some areas of the country. The job can seem unappealing – the pressure, the complexity, the high price of failure to get things right immediately. For the chief executive of the *National College*, *'one of the issues is persuading people to step up, and making sure the accountability framework doesn't discourage people'*.

The headteachers themselves agree: *'the pressure on heads is multitudinous and it seems that heads are protecting their teachers, enabling them to concentrate on their main task, but the pressures on heads beyond the classroom are putting people off. One of the biggest reasons is Ofsted'*. Tony Halstead

Steve Munby estimates that around 40 per cent of vacancies for headteachers are advertised more than once, but he does not believe that this percentage has increased a lot. He is sure, however, that some schools face greater difficulty than others in recruitment:

"Some of it is economic, depending on other jobs which may be available at the time. The three kinds of school that are hardest to recruit to are: schools that are in trouble, where unless you can turn it around quickly you don't last as a headteacher; secondly, Catholic schools because only practising Catholics are able to apply, which reduces the number of potential candidates; and the third is outstanding schools which are not attractive to people because it is hard to show what improvement you may have made."
Steve Munby (former chief executive of the *National College for School Leadership*)



A partial response found by one local authority in London was to provide specific and guaranteed support for newly appointed headteachers. *"The job is too complicated for a new person to face alone. We believe that a contract with an experienced headteacher should be the right of all newly appointed headteachers because of the pressures and expectations now made on school leaders."* Angela Doherty (senior adviser for secondary schools in the local authority of Ealing)

Given the scarcity of candidates, some schools are taking advantage of the new flexibility in recruitment to look for candidates for the post of headteacher among people from totally different professional backgrounds.





“There are alternatives to deputy heads becoming headteachers, but my sense is that class teachers ultimately become leaders. But how good a class teacher you are is not necessarily a good indicator of how good a leader you will be.

The reason class teachers may make good leaders is that they may have an educational vision – which I still think is very important: that passion that children should have exciting experiences at school, wanting children to be inspired, and learn about themselves, the world and have the skills to have a positive future.

It is the case, however, that not all ‘advanced-skills’ or specialist teachers would make good leaders. They are phenomenally good at their subject and passionate about it, but they are not driven by passion for leadership and management. You can be highly successful as a class-teacher but when angry parents, or *Ofsted*, or awkward governors come in on you, you need resilience.

It is essential to invest in the continuing development of school leaders. They are never the finished product. They need to have a restless intellect. It is a great attribute in a school leader – they are never satisfied.” Neil Suggett (Chief executive of *Suggett Coaching* and national leader of education)



In rural areas where there are many small village schools, the lack of applicants for the head's post may force schools to consider joining together to form federations or chains, with a single over-arching leader. In larger schools, the approach is different: the strategy is deliberately to seek to nurture the talent within the existing teaching body for future leadership roles.

Secondary headteacher, Pete Devonish says: *"Our policy is to grow our own leaders. We have recently converted a teaching assistant into a class teacher; we have just promoted an internal candidate to a deputy head position; we have recruited abroad someone who has moved to a leadership position. Getting people to take on leadership responsibility is a big aspect of our work. We find ways of giving extra responsibility and paying people for accepting the responsibility – as coaches, for example. The ethos and atmosphere of the school which this creates encourage people to stay."*
Pete Devonish (headteacher of Dereham Neatherd High School and Ofsted inspector)

Successful school leadership does not follow a single path, but some basic leadership practices have been found from studies of heads and these can inform the process of identifying potential new leaders. For illustrative purposes, in **Appendix 2**, there is a description of the phases through which a successful headteacher goes.

When a headteacher resigns or leaves a school, the Governing Body is responsible for the process of seeking a replacement. Expert advice from consultants or the local authority is sought. A job description and a person specification are drawn up and then the post is advertised nationwide. When deputy headteachers see the vacancy, they can send their applications in writing. The governors consider all the applications and draw up a provisional list of selected candidates. Interviews are carried out, which may include the observation of the candidates teaching or leading a meeting. The candidates will have to present their vision for the development of the school. The Governing Body decides who to appoint as the new headteacher.





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CONCLUSION



No single approach to improving the education system of a country ever exists. There has been a boom in research looking at key factors to school improvement and it sits alongside abundant international comparisons which also have sought the magic ingredients. The reality is that each country needs to understand its own history and reality and not be lured into believing that ready answers are to be found on the other side of the ocean. Nevertheless, some consensus can surely be achieved, with the strategic importance of school leadership being one very good example.

It is worth reiterating that development of school leadership in England took place over decades. It sat alongside a wealth of other initiatives starting with the Education Reform Act of the 1980s and was far from being a 'ready package' of reforms. It involved a series of decisions designed to improve the education of thousands of English school students and which required political courage and will. Key features of the changes include:

✓ **Local Management of Schools**

The 1988 decision to give headteachers virtually full responsibility for their budgets, and for personnel and premises matters, is seen as the first radical departure in reforming the contemporary English education system. Judged by many to be a 'revolutionary' change, it transformed the role of headteachers, giving them increased autonomy and a distinctive leadership role compared with many found around the world.

✓ **National Curriculum and assessment data**

The same period saw the introduction of a national curriculum for all schools. The rationale for this move was that students throughout the country had a 'right' to equality of provision. Critics, however, saw it then, and many still do, as an intrusion by politicians into the detail of school work. Simultaneously, there was a great expansion of testing of students' achievements to include children aged seven, eleven, fourteen and sixteen. Subsequently, test results have offered parents a simple measure of school success and have become crucially important for the schools themselves – in terms of reputation and appeal. Today, data is available on individual pupils virtually from the start to the end of their schooling. Profiles can be produced about individual pupils,



groups of pupils, and schools in different areas. Data management has become a crucial part of school life and can determine the future of many schools.

✓ **Inspection System**

Another major innovation in the 1990s was the transformation of the role of the national inspectorate, *HMI*. Formerly a relatively small group of highly respected inspectors who reported to politicians on aspects of the national schools system, the inspectorate's role suddenly expanded dramatically. All schools would now have regular inspections and information about schools would be disseminated openly and very widely. A new army of inspectors was created, not all of whom had school experience, and their work has become an essential element in the accountability of schools in England.

✓ **Emphasis placed on English and mathematics and the effort to raise standards**

The interest of the politicians in the classroom expanded during the Blair government, particularly in relation to the introduction of strategies for the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. These strategies required new teaching methods to which the schools were not used. Results on national tests have since improved considerably. The emphasis on basic subjects in tests and in inspections has continued, and many educators think that as a consequence, the wealth of achievement in other curriculum areas has had its importance diminished.

✓ **The *National College* and the introduction of a qualification for headship**

Policy makers agreed that school leadership is a critical determinant of school success. A wide range of initiatives have been launched to improve the quality of school leaders. The *National College for School Leadership* was probably the first college of its kind in the world, and it was hailed by educators. The *College* commissioned research, shared evidence on effective leadership, promoted conferences and courses with an international reputation and developed the *National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)*. This was, for a decade, required of all candidates for headship, and is believed to have significantly improved the quality of school leadership. Since then, the role of the *College*



has been reduced, and the qualification for headteachers is now optional, not mandatory.

✓ **Leadership is a shared role in which all adults have a role to play**

‘Everyone a leader’ could be a slogan for school staff! The reason is that today’s schools accept that each adult in a school is, in one way or another, leading an aspect of school life. It is the case of the school cook, the secretary, the finance officer. Leadership must be shared, and all have to accept the responsibility that comes with it. This idea took many years to develop, but it is fully accepted today. Every teacher is expected to take responsibility for improving an aspect of teaching and learning, and these responsibilities are taken seriously. Some responsibilities are accompanied by additional payment. Schools describe many teachers as ‘middle leaders’ if they are responsible for other adults or for an important aspect of school life, and as ‘senior leaders’ if they are close collaborators of the headteacher. Regular meetings of these leaders are held to monitor and assess progress. The professional development of teachers includes leadership training for all, as well as training in teaching and learning and the curriculum. The development of the potential leadership qualities of staff members is seen as a function to be shared by the headteacher and other senior leaders.

✓ **Schools are encouraged to consider their role in improving the national education system**

Initiatives such as the *London Challenge* created partnerships between high and low performing schools. National leaders have been identified to work with headteachers whose schools are in trouble. In the past, schools in London were among the worst performing in the country and are now among the best. National Leaders of Education (*NLEs*) are playing a similar role, working with headteachers whose schools are under-achieving, and helping many of them to improve. Collaborative initiatives among schools have multiplied and have resulted in improvements.

✓ **Teaching schools: stringent standards in teacher training**

Schools are increasingly seen as the key place where teacher training is undertaken. Student teachers spend most of their time working in classrooms



rather than sitting in university classes. Schools play an increasing role in the initial training of teachers and in their on-the-job training (continuing professional development). The new title of *teaching school* has been given to those outstanding schools which wish to coordinate local teacher training, since the emphasis is gradually moving from the university to the school as the place where this work takes place.

✓ **Reduction in the powers of local authorities**

The role of local government in the management of the English education system has been greatly reduced over the past 15 years. Different governments have offered incentives to schools to leave the system in which they were 'maintained' by local authorities, encouraging them to become 'academies', with freedom to decide many aspects of their future development independently, but together with their Governing Body. This has happened in a context of increased emphasis on the market-place, with parents being encouraged to choose the school that would be best for their children. Today, schools must strive to keep their students – and the budget that goes with them.

✓ **Collaborative networks among schools**

New linkages among schools have been forming, and some of them have gone as far as the creation of precisely defined structures with the sharing of school governance. Schools which have had poor outcomes from inspections or poor test results have been encouraged to form alliances with other schools, often accepting that leadership will be taken on by an 'executive headteacher', who may lead a number of schools and introduce new policies. The headteachers of schools deemed to be failing often lose their jobs.

✓ **Boom of new schools and extended schools**

The idea of schools having different shifts for different groups of pupils is unknown in England and would run contrary to the expectation that all schools develop their own *ethos* and culture. Currently, the number of students in schools is on the rise, particularly in London. The response to this has been a major expansion of many existing schools and where there is demand, the construction of new ones. In some cases, demand is



satisfied by the creation of free schools, created by community groups, but funded by the Department for Education.

We have sought in this publication to show how leadership of schools in England has developed, with its successes and challenges. The reader has been offered the chance to draw parallels with what happens in Brazil and consider which of the examples discussed might fit the Brazilian approach.

Although the situation in England is markedly different from that in Brazil, comparisons can be made and similarities detected. In Brazil, forms of collaborative school work have been tried out, for example. The use of mentoring and peer-to-peer support have been recognized as a strategic approach to professional development. Recurring themes in Brazil include the balance between autonomy and accountability, national standards and the local context, and especially between quality and equity. This last has provoked several initiatives and has also turned out to be the main catalyst for significant change in Brazil.

The English experience shows how investment in continued development of school leaders can ensure the improvement not only of their schools but also of an entire education system.

A daily challenge, very familiar to policy makers and Brazilian educators, remains: that of ensuring quality education for all of our children and young people. The quality of the headteacher and the relationship with other local leaders working collaboratively in system-wide support can make all the difference.





ATTACHMENTS



Attachment I

National College leadership training

Topics covered:

Leading and improving teaching

Learn how to develop, improve and sustain high-quality teaching across your school. As part of this module, you'll learn about:

- ✓ effective teaching and the head's role and responsibilities in leading and improving teaching;
- ✓ the *Ofsted* inspection framework;
- ✓ holding all staff to account for performance;
- ✓ high standards of behaviour;
- ✓ classroom management in relation to high-quality teaching and positive behaviour;
- ✓ monitoring, evaluating and improving teaching;
- ✓ teacher appraisal, including how to improve teacher performance and address underperformance;
- ✓ how to work with pupils and parents to improve pupil attainment.

Leading an effective school

Learn about the key management systems required in an effective school, particularly teacher performance, pupil behaviour and financial management. As part of this module, you'll learn about:

- ✓ the main management processes (including behaviour, personnel and financial management);
- ✓ governing body and headship accountabilities;
- ✓ managing performance, professional development and sustained school improvement;
- ✓ managing misconduct and grievance;



- ✓ behaviour management;
- ✓ strategic financial planning and operational budget management;
- ✓ HR law, including pay and conditions, and employee rights;
- ✓ health and safety in schools;
- ✓ child protection.

Succeeding in headship

Learn about the essential legal and accountability components of headship and governance with a focus on how successful heads operate in practice.

As part of this module, you'll learn about:

- ✓ the non-teaching aspects of the *Ofsted* framework;
- ✓ how to establish yourself as a headteacher, including building trust and credibility with governors, staff and parents;
- ✓ how to manage your time and maintain resilience;
- ✓ effective leadership in high-performing international systems;
- ✓ main management tools, including operational and strategic planning;
- ✓ implementing change effectively.

Further study modules

You need to complete 2 of the following modules as well.

- ✓ Closing the gap;
- ✓ Curriculum development;
- ✓ Freedoms and constraints;
- ✓ Leading change for improvement;
- ✓ Leading inclusion: Achievement for All;
- ✓ Leading staff and effective teams;
- ✓ Relationships and reputation;
- ✓ School improvement through effective partnerships;
- ✓ Using data and evidence to improve performance.



Attachment II

Types of Leadership

There is a danger in attempting to describe leadership 'types', but this has by no means inhibited researchers from doing so. The encouraging thing about the descriptions we have available is that they are, in the main, based on evidence.

Robert Hill, adviser to leaders in government, is author of countless papers on recent developments in leadership of schools and he has elaborated a typology of the six C's of successful leaders. [Hill, R., *Park Federation Annual Leadership Lecture*, 2014]:

Cleverness

- ✓ Strategic thinking
- ✓ Reading situations and spotting problems
- ✓ Reading people
- ✓ Listening to advice
- ✓ Seeing and acting on opportunities
- ✓ Ducking and diving
- ✓ Reflecting and changing course

Competence

- ✓ Mastering the brief
- ✓ Doing homework
- ✓ Knowing how things work
- ✓ Asking the right questions
- ✓ Managing people
- ✓ Managing crises



Courage

- ✓ Acting on the vision – even against the flow
- ✓ Being innovative
- ✓ Standing up to vested interests
- ✓ Taking on your supporters
- ✓ Marshalling the troops for the cause
- ✓ Knowing the limits

Communication

- ✓ Telling a story
- ✓ Empathising
- ✓ Capturing the mood
- ✓ Simplifying complex issues
- ✓ Persuading

Charisma

- ✓ Inspiring
- ✓ Bringing people with you
- ✓ Valuing people
- ✓ Encouraging others to achieve
- ✓ Using the team

Character

- ✓ Demonstrating integrity
- ✓ Commanding respect because of who you are
- ✓ Being authentic
- ✓ Avoiding hubris
- ✓ Resilience



In their extensive work, Andy Hargreaves and Alma Harris sought to find out what leaders *de facto* do under exceptional circumstances. The study explores how organisations in the private and public sector can achieve exceptionally high performance, given their history, size, client base and previous performance. It probes what it means to exceed expectations, the different definitions of performing beyond expectations that exist and prevail, and the leadership practices within organisations that enable these organisations to excel and outperform others. [Hargreaves, A. and Harris, A., *Performance Beyond Expectations*, 2012]

Leaders whose performance exceeds expectations

- ✓ develop and articulate an inspiring dream for and with their people.
- ✓ call for great and inspiring storytelling by themselves and those around them.
- ✓ pause before succumbing to the temptation to sweep aside everyone and everything with a new broom.
- ✓ do not go for fearless leadership but stay calm and focused.
- ✓ put down firm foundations within the organisation and create a strong platform for others to excel.
- ✓ invest in the long term.
- ✓ surprise people. Sometimes, do the exact opposite of what others expect if it will achieve the right results: 'embrace the oncoming wind that gives you more swing; go the other way'.
- ✓ decide what they value, then determine together how they will measure it; they care about numbers, metrics, targets and indicators as ways to monitor and motivate performance.
- ✓ get the best out of their teams.
- ✓ use failure as an opportunity to galvanise themselves and their community to turn around, get back, sort it out and manage problems.
- ✓ see neither collaboration nor competition as ends in themselves, but means that are creatively combined to serve the greater good of their own school and other schools within and beyond the immediate community.
- ✓ exhibit a fusion of qualities and characteristics within themselves, across the community and over time.



- ✓ are hybrid leaders – a mixture of styles and combination of opposites.
They are personally integrated – often outwardly dynamic and enthusiastic, but inwardly at ease with themselves. They are charismatic, humble, utterly extraordinary, yet also nothing special.
- ✓ have inspiring dreams, but are not idle dreamers.
- ✓ “People of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things” **Leonardo da Vinci**

Attachment III

Ben Levin set up state systems in Canada. For him, Seven practicalities all leaders need to manage if they are to lead improvement in student outcomes [Levin, B., 2012]:

- ✓ establish a vision and goals.
- ✓ build a strong team.
- ✓ create and support the right culture.
- ✓ communicate vision, direction and accomplishment.
- ✓ recruit, develop and retain leaders.
- ✓ build internal and external support.
- ✓ maintain focus on teaching and learning.



Attachment IV

For the researcher Christopher Day, successful leaders go through three identifiable phases. (Day, C., *et al.*, 2010, *Ten Strong Claims about Successful School Leadership*)

Initial Phase

- ✓ They improve the school's physical environment in order to create more positive conditions that give more support;
- ✓ They define, transmit and implement student behaviour patterns that will be valid throughout the school;
- ✓ They restructure the senior leadership team, their roles and their responsibilities;
- ✓ They implement performance management systems for all employees, having the effect of promoting greater distribution of leadership and lead to the development of a set of organisational values.

Intermediate phase

- ✓ They prioritise a wider distribution of roles and leadership responsibilities;
- ✓ They implement a more regular and targeted use of data to support decision making on progress and student achievement;
- ✓ They expect the learning objectives to be used and targets be defined.

Later stage of their work

- ✓ They use strategies linked to customising and enriching the curriculum;
- ✓ Ensure a wider distribution of leadership.



GLOSSARY

Academy

A school that receives funding directly from central government, and not from a local authority.

Department for Education (DfE)

The government ministry in charge of education.

Federation

Two or more schools that share a single Board of Governance.

Free School

School created by a group of parents, a charity or an independent group, funded the same way as an academy.

Governing Body

Equivalent to school boards in Brazil, but with greater decision-making powers on administrative and pedagogical issues in the school. It has community representation and elected school staff.

Her Majesty Inspector (HMI)

The elite inspectorate branch of *Ofsted*.

Middle Leader

A teacher with extra responsibilities for a subject or group of teachers in the school.

National Leader of Education (NLE)

An outstanding school leader who offers support to other schools.

National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)

An optional qualification for those experienced leaders who wish to become headteachers.

National School Support (NSS)

The school of a national leader of education whose staff work with teachers in other schools.



Ofsted

Office for Standards in Education: the organisation that regularly inspects all publicly funded schools in the country.

Pupil Premium (additional student allowance)

Additional funding received by the school for each student who is entitled to free school meals.

School Direct

Teacher training which takes place in schools rather than in a university.

Teaching Schools

Outstanding schools which are designated by the *National College* to: coordinate the training of new teachers alongside other partners, such as universities; lead peer learning (including the use of leading experts in education), identify and nurture leadership potential; and support other schools.



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